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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

**A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life**

W.Q.J. --- GREATEST OF THE EXILES	163
THE PATH TO PROSPERITY	168
ASTROLOGY—SCIENCE OR FRAUD?—II	173
INSANITY—WHAT IS IT?	178
ATTAINING THE GOAL OF LIFE	183
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	189
IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	194

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सत्यत् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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W.Q.J.—GREATEST OF THE EXILES

That great and wise man, W. Q. Judge, whose very memory seems to have been forgotten by present-day Theosophists. I think he was a true adept in that sacred lore and I have never found in those who came after H.R.B. and Judge the same knowledge, wisdom and Inner Light.

—GEORGE W. RUSSELL

WE are advised to begin our day by thinking of Great Beings and the virtues they embodied. They are called *Pratah Smaraniya* or those who must be remembered every morning. We may think of Buddha, Jesus, Krishna, the Mahatmas, Sages and Seers, and we might add to this list the names of great Theosophists like H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge. Though almost every day we contact their real being and their minds, through the teachings they have left behind, reflection upon their life and work inspires and spurs us on, bringing alive the virtues of forgiveness, patience, perseverance, one-pointed devotion, compassion, etc., which otherwise would remain empty abstractions.

There has been a double atmosphere around both H.R.B. and Judge. As Mr. Judge points out, the *real* H.R.B. was masquerading under the outer, mortal garment known as "H. P. Blavatsky" to the world. So is it true of Judge, who is said to have been an advanced soul using a borrowed body. Mr. Crosbie observes that there is such a thing as an Ego leaving a body intact and inhabitable, and another Ego, by

W.Q.J. --GREATEST OF THE EXILES

agreement on higher planes, using that deserted body. If we knew anything about the occult laws governing the entrance and the exit of the egos from the body, we would know that the ego thus entering into a borrowed body would necessarily be a highly developed being. The life of Mr. Judge shows that a boy called William Judge, born to Irish parents, Mary and Fredrick Judge, died at the age of seven and then suddenly revived. After this the boy began to show interest in mystical subjects and he would be found engrossed in reading books on Mesmerism, Magic, Religion, trying to discover their real meaning.

It is said that H.P.B. was *born* great, while Judge *achieved* greatness. Col. Olcott writes in his *Old Diary Leaves*, that when Judge first met H.P.B. in 1874, in New York, when he was barely 24 years old, he was just an ordinary young man with a depth of occult tendency that was not visible outwardly. But when H.P.B. and Olcott left for India, there was a sudden vacuum. However, as Olcott writes, from 1874 to 1878, H.P.B. and Olcott had planted the seeds in American minds, and Judge was the husbandman who nurtured those seeds with patience and perseverance. It is during that period that he conducted the meetings all alone, for seven consecutive years.

He was called the one who revived Theosophy in America and of him H.P.B. said, "He of all the chelas, suffers the most, and asks or even expects the least." His personal life was far from happy. Add to this his frail health; yet, he did the work of several men. He expressed the difficulty of working through a *borrowed body*. The physical tendencies and the heredity of the body he used, always interfered with and never allowed full expression to all the great thoughts and feelings of the Ego that was using that body. Then there were attacks and obstacles put by the very people he had helped to find their way in life—helped to understand how to work for Theosophy. These continuous vexations and pain took the toll of his health. As a result the body that he was using was dying quicker than expected.

It is these difficulties and sufferings and lessons learnt from

them that made it possible for him to write those very instructive and illuminating "Letters" which touch the heart. We feel his presence in those letters, and as he says, he has opened his heart in them. The trials and tests of discipleship and the advice he gives, are all out of his first-hand experience.

He was called the "Greatest of the Exiles" and also the "Friend of all Creatures." This latter title was applied to him half in jest by his intimate friends, because he firmly believed and enforced the doctrine of total acceptance—accepting all men and all things, provided they work for Theosophy. For him Theosophy was everything. He lived up to the words of H.P.B., "Theosophy first and Theosophy last." Mr. Crosbie sums up his approach towards people, thus:

He has extraordinary powers of organization, with a perception that could look into the very motives and minds of others, could see traitors around him, could read the hearts of those desirous of injuring him, and yet in all his intercourse with them, paving the way for them, remaining ever kind. For the one who most injured him, he had only this to say: "Never mind what others do. Put no one out of your heart. Go on with the work you see. Work will tell in time, and all these follies of others—follies of ignorance—will fall to nothing. Then, when the time comes, we will all have gained strength; when those who have fallen away for a while come back, there we will be with open arms as strong brothers, to help them find the path and smooth out the effects of errors that they have created through ignorance."

Similar sentiments were expressed by Jesus on the cross, when he said: "Forgive them Father; they know not what they do."

His last words were: "There should be calmness, hold fast, go slow...." The qualities of calmness, tenacity and patience were exhibited by him during his life. He said that calmness comes from firm reliance on the Law and one's Higher Self. By worrying, we put an occult obstacle in the path of what we want to get done. Every sincere student is bound to come to a stage in his spiritual endeavours when he experiences loneliness and despair. He might even develop positive

aversion to everything to do with Theosophy. It must be treated as a temporary phase. It is like not seeing the road because of the fog. He says, "I would simply sit down and wait; I would not allow the fog to make me think no road was there, and that I was not to pass it. The fogs must lift."

He asks us to *holdfast* In-the kind of work we have undertaken there would be disappointments. Things may not work out, people may not respond, but we have to work on. Having decided to live the life according to theosophical principles, there should be no turning back. The opinions of the people around—in family, society or office—should not influence our basic decision. It is so easy to get carried away and think that we have made a mistake, that other things must get priority, and so on. That is why *The Voice of the Silence* cautions: "Beware of change! For change is thy great foe." Mr. Judge exhibited tenacity right from his childhood. It is said that in his boyhood, while his companions could swim and go to the other shore of a stream, he could not. When his friends jeered at him, he determined to go across. Taking a plunge, he swam, sank, ran a few steps on the riverbed, again swam, and finally reached the other shore, half-unconscious—but never gave up. Similarly he continued the work after the passing away of H.P.B., devoting all his energies to it from the age of twenty three to the age of forty five, when death claimed him.

Next, we are asked to *go slow*. *Kshanti* is described as "Patience sweet, that nought can ruffle." His letters abound with advice on being patient in living the higher life. We must not seek to bring about sudden change, but instead have a gentle control that is firmly unrelaxed, because then the opposition aroused will not be strong. By being hasty we show that we do not have enough faith in the Law. He is called the "victorious disciple." He explains the concept of the *Guruparampara* chain.

It is the chain that extends from the teacher who taught us our alphabet up to the highest spiritual guide. He states that in the East, this relationship is held very sacred, so that if one were to be disrespectful to one's teacher

even in thought, it would harm his moral being. Every link in this chain is important. We find that in all his books the first chapter is devoted to the Masters. Again and again, he points out that where there is no faith in the Masters, the work goes down. On the other hand, when the work is done with the attitude that it is Master's work we are carrying on, there is an added impetus.

Phrenology is the science of judging the character and abilities of a person from the shape of the head, etc. A sculptor, August Lindstrom, who had never seen Judge in his life, was asked to make his bust after his death. He made a cast of the dead man's head, from which he modelled the bust. He expressed that he was struck by the shape of Judge's head. Most heads of remarkable men show development of one or more faculties in particular, at the expense of other faculties, but here he could see that there was uniform and high development of all the faculties. There could be seen tremendous will power with an equal development of gentleness; gigantic intellect going hand in hand with selflessness and modesty. "There are only two heads that I know of in history that compare with his—Michael Angelo's and Savonarola's," he said. In addition to the death mask, the sculptor had six photographs of Mr. Judge to assist him in modelling the bust. He remarked that if one compared his head at the age of twenty with the one at the age of forty, one could see that by tremendous effort of will this person had overcome all the youthful tendencies and changed the shape of the skull. The sculptor observed that if such a man as he would devote his life to Theosophy, then it must have a great mission. It inspired and induced Lindstrom to join the Theosophical Society. Thus, even in death, Judge influenced people!

THE PATH TO PROSPERITY

From discipline of yoga springs Wisdom; from lack of it there is loss of Wisdom. Knowing this twofold path of progress and decline let a man bend his way to the Path of Progress.

—*The Dhammapada* (verse 282)

THE POVERTY and misery that we see around us today are but reflections or shadows of spiritual poverty and soul misery. Lord Buddha solved the problems of spiritual poverty and soul misery, and his devoted disciples, for over 2500 years, have tried to follow in his footsteps. The above-quoted verse from *The Dhammapada* hints at ways and means of treading the Path to Prosperity. The verse refers to two paths—one leads to prosperity and the other to adversity. All of us recognize that there are two great manifestations in the human world—misery and happiness; prosperity and adversity; success and failure; inner contentment and inner dissatisfaction. The *Gita* says, "Light and Darkness are the world's eternal ways." While all fully accept this first proposition, differences of opinion arise as to the second principle laid down in the verse.

What is the second proposition? Wisdom brings prosperity. The verse implies that wisdom is the cause, and prosperity the effect; on the other hand absence or lack of wisdom produces adversity. Many people do not agree with the latter half of the proposition. They would say, "Look at so-and-so—he is a fool of the first order, but prosperous in many matters." Is economic prosperity real prosperity? Do we not know very rich men and women who are unhappy, restless, discontented with the very things they buy with their money? Even that type of prosperity which comes with wealth, depends upon the intelligence, the knowledge and the wisdom of the man.

Health which is the material symbol of prosperity cannot be acquired without energy—*Virya*—and without wisdom—*Jnana*. *Laxmi* is the goddess of prosperity, but even she cannot succeed in blessing her devotees unless *Durga*, the goddess of strength and energy, and *Sarasvati*, the goddess of wisdom, assist her. True prosperity,

even of the physical or worldly kind, has to be acquired by work and labour which entails our energy, and success in any task or business requires intelligence and knowledge. Hence the second proposition of the verse holds true, even in a worldly sense.

But there is a *third* proposition: From Yoga comes wisdom. It is true that many persons attain worldly prosperity by their might or energy while they use their intelligence to exploit the weak or to rob their neighbours, and so on. One of the most potent factors which gives birth to hatred in the hearts of the poor against the rich is this method by which the rich have acquired wealth. Not only are some of the rich people of the world unhappy in their own hearts, but they also suffer from the very forces they have generated in acquiring their money. Was it not Confucius who said, "The tears of the weak shake the thrones of kings"? In that there is a great deal of truth. Jesus said that those who live by the sword shall perish by the sword. By the same principle we may infer that prosperity cannot last when it is acquired by ways other than the right way—through wisdom. Those who believe that "Might is Right" soon find out that this is *not* true. The might of Alexander and Napoleon—where is it? A mere memory which is devoid of radiance or fragrance! But the wisdom of Gautama and Jesus is a life-giving force, which inspires, energizes and helps millions. Look at it from the Hindu point of view: do we suppose that all those who have made money have come to possess the blessings of Goddess Laxmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity? Of course not. How could Laxmi approve of misery and suffering, visited upon thousands, for gaining wealth? When a person fully recognizes his debt to the whole of Nature and has prepared himself to act as the *trustee* of all he received from Nature, then only he attracts to his abode the benediction of Mahalaxmi.

"From yoga springs Wisdom." Yoga is often translated as contemplation. But it is more than that. Yoga is a *Method of Living*—the only Right Method of Living. In a hundred different ways this method of yoga is explained by different sages. The *Gita* is a Book

of Yoga; so are many of the *Upanishads*; so is the *Dhammapada*. People have a wrong conception about Yoga. What does Buddha have to say?

Not nakedness, nor matted hair, nor filth, nor fasting, nor lying on the ground, nor besmearing the body with dust and ashes, nor posture squatting can cleanse the mortal who is full of doubt. (Verse 141)

But he who is tranquil and serene and calm and lives a tamed and restrained life of holiness and has ceased to injure living things, though richly attired, he is a Brahmana, an ascetic (*Samana*) and a monk (*Bhikkhu*). (Verse 142)

So "matted hair" and "deer skin" are of no use, if the inner attitude is not right. Lord Buddha tried to purify and exact the method of yoga through the establishment of the *Sangha* (order) and did not hesitate in accepting properties and gifts for that *Sangha*, but he showed the principle of Trusteeship. Take another point whose significance is not always understood. It is said that sages at the court of Shuddhodhana (Buddha's father) predicted, at the birth of the Buddha, that the prince would either become a wandering mendicant and attain to enlightenment as the Buddha, or become "*Chakravartin*—a mighty king," such as arise to rule once in a thousand years. Holding to the doctrine of Reincarnation and Karma we might well ask what relation there is between the fruit called Buddhahood and that called Kingship. Lord Buddha's Karma was ripe to produce either of these two results. The relation between them is that of *real prosperity*. By persistent efforts in the long past, for many lives on earth, the great soul had made himself ready to use the channel of Enlightenment or of kingship and both spring from the selfsame causes. As a king *Chakravartin*, he would have served Humanity holding all its wealth and prosperity in Trust. Yoga, the right method of living, which brings wisdom and prosperity, is not confined to outer asceticism, but is a matter of Inner Asceticism. Prosperity born of Wisdom holds in trust whatever is obtained.

Let us consider this method of living called Yoga that results in Prosperity. Fruitfulness, prodigality, honesty, is writ large everywhere in Nature. The sum total of prosperity in Nature is immense, and yet Nature does not produce the problems which men and nations have brought about, creating on a huge scale what we call "goods" for consumption. There is a wise adjustment between production and consumption in Nature, and that which is not consumed is utilized for fresh and new kinds of production. In the human kingdom we produce and produce, and much of it is destroyed while millions sorely need that which is destroyed! The lesson to be learnt from this function of Nature is that prosperity does not consist in possessing and holding what is created, but in consuming it rightly. We all create—some by hands, others by brain; as a result of our creations we become possessors of what we create. Holding on to that possession is often considered prosperity; it is not. Not what we possess but what we consume (or use wisely) of our creations marks real prosperity.

In the *Gita* it is pointed out that sacrificial action produces prosperity. Rain is the symbol of creative prosperity. Food, whether physical or mental or spiritual, nourishes the body, the mind or the heart, and each of these three members of our being does require to be fed, though most people do not think so and practically starve their minds and their hearts! Food, our sustenance, comes from rain—rain is the direct agent that makes the earth fructify. But the *Gita* says rain itself is the result of sacrifice. *Yajna* or sacrifice is performed by action, *karma*. Prosperity springs from actions performed as sacrifices.

We all aspire to be prosperous; why not then adopt the correct way to prosperity? Any and every one of us can do two simple things as we live from day to day. First, give ourselves time to nourish our minds and to nourish our hearts. Self-examination nourishes the mind. How? When we examine our deeds and words, our moods and morals, we are able to see that some of our actions and thoughts have been wrong; but we do not know how and why they are wrong. This inquiry leads us to the study of right psychology and right philosophy. Through self-

examination we come to study the nature of consciousness, what Karma and Reincarnation are, and examining and surveying ourselves by their light we find self-knowledge springing up in ourselves. But there must also be heart-nourishment. By right prayer or inner communion we feed our heart. It is not sufficient to be only attentive to check errors and moods; moods will return and blunders follow them if we do not grow in the wisdom and peace of the Heart. Within us is the Supreme Spirit. In most people that Spirit sits quiet, does not function. Every morning we must make an effort to activate that Spirit and make the God within manifest outwardly. Real prosperity comes when we regard all actions as sacrifices to be performed.

If we were to follow in the footsteps of the Enlightened One, we would not find the way of sacrifice very difficult. Buddha abandoned his palace and went out to seek the cause of disease and death. He sacrificed his kingdom to find out the Truth of things. He sacrificed his happiness with his wife and son for the greater good of all. Finally, He sacrificed the Bliss of Nirvana to serve suffering humanity. Who is really prosperous? The only prosperous Race is the Race of Buddhas. Let us endeavour to become members of that deathless Race.

EVERY man I meet is my superior in some way, in that I can learn from him.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

ASTROLOGY—SCIENCE OR FRAUD?

II

EVERY Ego is born with a backlog of Karma to be exhausted in a given life. The position of the planets at the birth of an individual is the result of the causes generated by the entity seeking birth. Mr. Judge goes to the extent of saying that the stars are inextricably linked with the Karma of the man, but, if we have reached the stage where we are not making any more Karma, then the stars and planets have nothing to indicate for us. For others, it is just the fulfilment of the Karmic law. H.R.B. points out that we are inextricably linked and that there is ONE LIFE that is connecting human beings, the stars, the planets and the heavenly bodies. Our thoughts and actions produce vibrations and they are impinged upon *Akasa*, and knowing the laws that govern these vibrations, Astrology makes predictions. Thus:

It is a well-known principle of Occultism that the ONE LIFE which pervades ALL connects all the bodies in space. All heavenly bodies have thus mutual relation, which is blended with man's existence, since he is but a microcosm in the macrocosm. Every thought, as much as action, is dynamic and is impressed in the imperishable Book of Nature—the *Akasa*.... All our thoughts and actions thus produce vibrations in space, which mould our future career. And astrology is a science which having determined the nature of the laws that govern these vibrations is able to tell precisely a particular or a series of results, the causes of which have already been produced by the individual in his previous life....The position of the planets at the time of the birth of an individual—which event is aggregate result of the causes already produced—gives the true Astrologer the data on which to base his predictions. (*The Theosophist*, June 1884)

Infallibility of the prediction would depend upon the infallibility of the astrologer. Making predictions or interpreting a horoscope is a very complex mathematical science. Interpreting an individual's horoscope

ASTROLOGY -SCIENCE OR FRAUD?

involves taking into account the sign and the house in which each planet is situated and the aspects (angles) each of them makes with other planets, and so on. It would give rise to an immense number of permutations and combinations and the interpretation, so as to take them all into account, requires more than mere mathematical acumen. A computer firm which claimed accurate predictions was once sent the data of 10 criminals who were to be hanged in a day or two. However, the computer predictions were quite different and said nothing about the hanging. If horoscope interpretation and prediction depended only on mathematics, the computer, which can perform all sorts of complex computations, could have predicted accurately. But astrological predictions require something more. H.P.B. points out that in addition to mathematics, intuition on the part of the astrologer is necessary. Thus:

.. an element of clairvoyance is necessary to constitute a true astrologer....The ancient Rishis had, by observation, experiment and deep occult knowledge, taken account of all conceivable combinations of various causes and determined with mathematical precision almost to infinitesimal point their effects. But yet, since the cosmos is infinite, no finite being can ever take cognizance of all the possibilities of Nature....First condition of success in astrology is a pure life, physically, mentally and spiritually. This was intended to develop psychic capacities of the astrologer who could thus see in *Akasa* the combinations, not alluded to in the written works, and predict their results....True astrology teaches us what particular causes produce what particular combination.. and thus gives us means to obtain knowledge of how to guide our future births. (*The Theosophist*, June 1884)

Astrology is a science, but it appears to be a fraud because astrologers lack the necessary purity and intuitive perception. Moreover, it is an incomplete science in the hands of modern astrologers and deals only with the personality of the person. If the *Rishis* and Sages have studied it, and if Plato and Pythagoras talked of it,

then there must be something more to it. For instance, the Zodiac is not athen there must be something more to it. For instance, the Zodiac is not a mere cluster of stars but is a great storehouse of knowledge. It is a track or belt divided into twelve imaginary divisions, termed as Zodiac Signs. Each division has got certain constellations, or group of stars. Originally, only ten signs of the Zodiac were known to the public and included Virgo-Scorpio as a single sign. Later, two mystical signs were inserted, which were known only to the initiates. However, to conceal their true names, Virgo-Scorpio were split into two—Virgo and Scorpio—and a new sign, Libra, was added. Within these secret signs lies hidden the explanation of the gradual transformation of the world, from its spiritual and subjective, into the objective—the mere reflection of the former. They hide the whole secret of creation and the origin of "good and evil." (*Isis*, II, 456)

The signs prior to Virgo-Scorpio represent spiritual races which were produced without the union of the sexes, while Virgo-Scorpio represents Jehovah or Hermaphrodite man. The Virgo-Scorpio split denotes separation into sexes that happened in the later part of the Third Race. Libra, the balancing sign that was added later, represents Enoch and half-divine, half-terrestrial man. The signs following Virgo-Scorpio represent physical races, produced through union of the sexes. In giving this explanation, H.P.B. mentions that she has given only one turn to the key and that seven turns must be given in order to understand the mystery of the Zodiac completely. T Subba Row gives illuminating explanation in the article, "The Twelve Signs of the Zodiac." He points out that the Zodiac represents various stages in the evolution of the universe from the Unknown to the physical, objective universe of *panchamahabhutas* or five elements.

The first sign Aries (*Mesha*), Ram or *aja* the unborn, represents *Parabrahm*—the self-existent. The second sign is Taurus (*Rishabha*) which is shown to represent *Pranava* or *Aum*. It may be taken to correspond to *Shabdabrahmam* or the "Ethereal Vibrations diffused

throughout Space" or the Unmanifested Logos (*The Theosophical Glossary*) Next, there is Gemini or *Mithunam* or Divine Androgyne, or Adam Kadmon, *i.e.*, Manifested Logos. The fourth sign Cancer (*Karkataka*) represents the sacred Tetragram; the *Pranava* resolved into four separate entities corresponding to its four *Matras*; four *Avasthas* or states of consciousness—waking, dreaming, dreamless sleep and *Turiya*; four conditions of the Sacred Word—*Para*, *Pashyanti*, *Madhyama* and *Vaikhari*, and so on. The fifth sign Leo (*Simha*), even in exoteric astrology is described as *Putrasthanam* (house connected with son) and represents *Jivatma* (Monad) or the son of *Paramatma*. The Sixth sign is Virgo (*Kanya*), which means virgin and represents Sakti or *Mahamaya*. It indicates that there are six primary forces in nature, and their unity represented by the Astral Light. The Seventh sign Libra (*Tula*) marks the turning point and it corresponds to number 36 and represents 36 *Tattwas*. Subba Row explains that the difference between *Jivatma* and *Paramatma* is that *Jivatma* gets encased in the *Tattwas* and hence gets bound, while the other is free. The Eighth sign Scorpio (*Vrischika*) represents Vishnu or that which expanded, and hence it indicates universe in thought or universe in divine conception. The ninth sign Sagittarius (*Dhanus*) is equivalent to number 9 and corresponds to nine *Prajapatis* (or Sephiroth)—assistants to Demiurgus and involved in the construction of the material universe. The tenth sign of the Zodiac, Capricorn (*Makaram*) may be taken to represent both Microcosm and Macrocosm. Subba Row explains that *Ma* means five and *kara* means hands or sides, in Sanskrit. Hence *Makara* means five-sided figure or Pentagon. It indicates that the universe is bounded by Pentagons on all sides and its shape is Dodecahedron or 12-sides. The eleventh sign is Aquarius (*Kumbha*)', when represented by numbers, it is equivalent to 14 and represents 14 *lokas*. The last sign Pisces (*Meenam*) is equivalent to 5, and represents five elements. We can see that the first six signs represent the spiritual world, while the last six represent the process of manifestation up to the most material level. Coming to deeper aspects, astrology is not just about personality, it also deals with the individuality of

man. It is that aspect of man which is not perishable, which goes from one life to the other, the Reincarnating Ego. Thus:

The star under which a human Entity is born, says the Occult teaching, will remain forever its star, throughout the whole cycle of its incarnations in one Manvantara. But *this is not his astrological star*. The latter is concerned and connected with *personality*, the former with INDIVIDUALITY. (*S.D.*, I, 572-573)

There are seven hierarchies of divine beings governing the universe. At the head of each of these hierarchies is a being called Dhyani Buddha. Dhyani Buddha is the "Angel" of that Star under which the human entity is born and he is the guiding "Angel" "in every new rebirth of the monad, *which is part of his own essence.*"

Should we be interested in knowing our future? Astrological predictions only tell us about the results of the causes sown by us in past lives. Then why not accept what comes to us under Karmic law? Why should we know in advance about our misfortunes or good times? Why not just trust the law of Karma? We have free will, and using that we can make another kind of birth possible. The danger of trying to find what is to happen in the future—in more or less detail—is that we tend to live in hopes or fears of the future and become slothful of the present. We tend to take the negative attitude of life instead of using that knowledge as a mariner uses the stars to guide his course. The secret knowledge of the science of Astrology is still secret and very few possess it.

(Concluded)

INSANITY may well be considered the sphinx of science. It is the most mysterious of all mental ailments, the nature, cause and cure of which is almost beyond modern psychology. Often, it is the condition of uncontrolled emotions, so that we say of an extremely angry person that he is *mad* with rage, or he has lost his mind or he is out of his mind. Insanity could be caused by various factors. It is also called *madness* or *lunacy*. When there is sudden and intense joy or sudden and intense pain, we totally identify ourselves with that pain or pleasure so that our sense of "I" is centred in that one intense feeling, and this may lead to insanity—the loss of identity.

If it is true that there is only a thin line between sanity and insanity, it is also true that geniuses have been often labelled eccentric or "mad." The classic case narrated by H.P.B. is of Daguerre, who discovered photography. There was an anecdote current among Daguerre's friends. At an evening party, his wife, Madame Daguerre, had a consultation with one of the medical celebrities of the day about her husband's mental condition. After explaining to the physician the numerous symptoms of what she believed to be mental aberration, she added, with tears in her eyes, that the greatest proof to her of Daguerre's insanity was his firm conviction that he would succeed in nailing his own shadow to the wall, or fixing it on *magical* metallic plates. The physician listened to her very attentively, and answered that he had himself observed in Daguerre, lately, symptoms of what, to his mind, was an undeniable proof of madness. He closed the conversation by firmly advising her to send her husband quietly and without delay to Bicetre, the well-known lunatic asylum. Two months later, a profound interest was created in the world of art and science by the exhibition of a number of pictures taken by the new process. The *shadows* were fixed upon metallic plates, and the "lunatic" proclaimed the father of photography. (*Isis*, II, 619)

The real centres of perception are within the astral body, which is the model body for the physical. At times, physical sense organs are unable to perceive correctly, due to some defect, while the inner, astral organs

perceive correctly. Such discrepancy may lead to mental aberration as explained in Vernal Blooms, in the article "Occult Vibrations." We are told that in case of a colour-blind person, the same amount of vibrations corresponding to, say, red colour, reach his physical eyes, as would reach the eyes of a normal person. But the physical eyes of the colour-blind man pick up or perceive only a certain amount of vibrations and he sees the colour corresponding to those vibrations, while the astral senses are able to see the true colour-picking up the correct number of vibrations. However, the vibrations of the physical eyes seem to overcome for a time those of the astral senses and so the astral man reports to the brain that it saw correctly. In every case, the outer stimulus is sent to the inner man, who is forced to accept the message and confirm it as true. But in many cases the inner man is able to overcome the outer defect and make the brain see the difference. In many cases of lunacy the confusion among the vibrations of all kinds is so enormous that there is no correlation between the inner and outer man and then we have a case of aberration. In some of these unfortunate cases the person inside is all the time aware that he is not insane, but cannot make himself be understood. Thus, people are often driven truly insane by wrong treatment.

In milder cases of insanity, the man becomes, for long periods of time, some other person and does not have memory of his former state. Such a person alternates between two personalities. Broadly, we may define insanity as the condition in which the Ego loses all control over the psycho-physiological side of his body without losing the body itself. Our mind is connected to the body through certain electric and magnetic channels. Just like water leaks out of the tank, which has cracks, so also our hold on the body could become weak and we are not able to remain in possession of these channels. Then we leave the body for some time when other forces of intelligences-good or bad-take over. But the Ego is able to take possession of the body for a short term, intermittently, so that the insane man exhibits lucid intervals. Finally, a time comes when all the magnetic and electric channels are so clogged or destroyed that we have to leave the body forever. ("Forum" Answer, pp. 32-33)

Another form of insanity is witnessed during the state of hypnotism.

In the article "Hypnotism," Mr. Judge explains that in a sane person body, soul and astral man are in proper and harmonious relation with one another. In the hypnotic state, the channel in the brain through which Ego, the real man, controls the brain is paralyzed, so that the person receives only the impressions from the hypnotizer. Thus, a hypnotized man is not wholly sane, because the relation between the Ego and the astral man is temporarily severed. Acute maniacs are those in whom the disjunction between astral man and soul is complete. During the hypnotic state the connection with the brain is broken. This is the reason why no memory of that which transpires in that state is retained by that subject. But such a disjunction between the soul and the astral man, releases the latter from the limitations ordinarily placed on it by brain and its memory. In such a state the inner memory (the memory of past lives) may be revived and then the person begins to enact some part of his former life or lives. But a second possibility also exists---that by this process another and different entity may enter the body and brain and masquerade as the real person. Such disembodied entities do exist in the invisible realm. These are the astral shells of men and women long since dead. If they enter the body of another living being, the person becomes insane; and many a maniac is simply a body inhabited by an external/foreign entity that does not belong to it.

Hence, one of the forms of obsession is insanity. Obsession or possession is a very old phenomenon. H.P. Blavatsky mentions several cases of obsession and exorcism in her book *Isis Unveiled*. The more passive a person is, the more he becomes suggestible. A time comes when that medium becomes perfectly and completely passive. It is then that his own astral body may be benumbed and even pushed out of his physical body, which is then occupied by an elemental (or even the "elementary," t.e., disincarnate spirit) who proceeds to use it as his own. Like the purity of the mesmerizer in healing the sick, the purity of the exorcist is emphasized. People like Apollonius, Plotinus, Porphyry, etc., had around them the atmosphere of such divine beneficence, created through superhuman morality and sanctity and sanctity of their lives, that they caused evil spirits to flee before them (*Isis*, I, 487).

INSANITY----WHAT IS IT?

Lunacy or loss of mind, as it is very suggestively called, is explained in Occultism as being primarily due to the paralysis of the higher functions in *Kama-Manas*, the physical mind and, in case of incurable insanity, to the reunion of the superior portion of the lower with the Higher Divine Ego, and the destruction, in consequence, of Antaskarana, the medium of communication, an event which leaves alive in man only his animal portion, whose Kamic mind lives henceforward on astral plane.

In other words, in case of incurable insanity, the connection of the lower and higher man is destroyed forever and the lower mind functions on the astral plane, and hence is not connected with the physical body. Elsewhere, H.P.B. explains that unlike temporary insanity where the principle of intelligence is paralysed, in case of incurable insanity, intelligence deserts the body forever, and the link between the animal and the divine essence is severed.

There are various other factors that lead to insanity. For instance, in one case, a young man was judged insane and was confined to a lunatic asylum in Illinois (U.S.A.). his madness was caused by an overwhelming shock of electricity given to him by some ignorant companions. The American journal reporting this case remarked that there is a great danger in suddenly passing a strong electric current, through the delicate nerve-matter of brain and spinal cord, and that in such cases the best and only remedy is the application of the vital magnetic current of some powerful mesmerizer or “healer”. However, H.P.B. comments that it is equally dangerous to saturate a nervous patient’s brain with mesmeric fluid.

The human vital force is the most potent of all known agencies, and the health of body or mind is only possible when there is a perfect magnetic equilibrium in one’s system. The “healer” heals simply by restoring that balance in his patient by the force of his benevolent desire and will. (*The Theosophist*, September 1881)

INSANITY----WHAT IS IT?

Some people wanted to know whether by any occult means it would be possible to ameliorate the mental condition of a person who had been insane for eleven years----the supposed cause of the insanity being a shock received when in the somnambulic trance. H.P.B. says that someone awakened suddenly from a somnambulistic trance and becoming insane as a result could only be recovered with enormous difficulty; that it is just possible that, by watching for a similar state and repeating the shock, a reversal of the current might take place.

The article, “Whence the Name ‘Lunatic’?” mentions that the moon acts perniciously upon the mental and bodily constitution of people. Even if a person of remarkably strong nerves sits or sleeps in a room lit by moonlight, his health would be adversely affected. Lord Bacon used to fall unconscious at the beginning of every lunar eclipse and would regain consciousness at the end of the eclipse. “Charles the Sixth, in 1399, became a lunatic at every new moon and at the beginning of the full moo.” Many nervous diseases---especially epilepsy and neuralgia---coincide with certain phases of the moon.

He best can pity who has felt the woe.

JOHN GAY

ATTAINING THE GOAL OF LIFE

Like threads of silver seen through crystal beads, Let
love through good deeds show.

—*The Light of Asia*

WHATEVER his station in life, each person cherishes a goal round which his life revolves. It may be that he is not aware of his having chosen an objective, but it is there. Unconsciously, but nonetheless surely, it exerts its pull upon his faculties and drives them in a larger or a tighter orbit round itself. Most often, it is some form of ambition that rules the man, and so powerful is its hold upon him that all else but the one dominant end is brushed aside and often enough is not even noticed. The more intense the desire to achieve, the more concentrated becomes the effort. The starving man loses sight of all else but the gratification of his appetite. So does the devoted man who braves all and everything in order to attain to wisdom, and so too does the evil man who goes wrong and deliberately chooses the darker side of existence.

The average man is a bundle of desires—some of them conflicting—and even these are wont to change with time, circumstance, the stage of growth from adolescence to old age and the maturity or decadence of his thoughts. The man of manifold desires divides his energies, giving to each a larger or a smaller portion of his vitality. His desires thus lack the backing of an undivided concentration and can only colour his life with insipid hues. Under such circumstances, the man finds himself divided, with a mental state bordering on continued distraction. It is this state where man oscillates between one desire and another that makes him unstable and therefore incapable of lifting himself from out of the particular stratum of thought into which he has fallen. Being in such condition, he is not capable of developing that kind of energy that will make him receptive of the knowledge that pertains to planes above the one where desires prevail. Shut off from the stream of divine knowledge, he remains ignorant of the great forces and energies that would otherwise have been his, and his incarnation may close on a note of frustration for the indwelling soul. Man has still to

ATTAINING THE GOAL OF LIFE

learn that his lower desires can be stilled only by a force which is superior to them. This force resides and has to be searched for within the secret recesses of his soul and spirit.

For the majority, the culmination, the coveted end of any effort, is the act of possessing, the glory of having achieved, the attaining in fullest measure of a sense of reflection or the losing of all interest once that the goal is attained. In each such case, the end of any effort is the securing of something for oneself as a being distinct and separate from others. However, the act of attainment is seldom the close of all ambition. Satisfied in one direction, it springs up in another. The desire-motivated energy now turns towards the protecting of the fruits of effort against the claims, longings and depredations of others. Wading through dubious or even corrupt practices towards his seat of power, the man seeks to retain his hold on it by the use of the very forces that raised him. He thus perpetuates a string of falsehoods, iniquities and deceits and even stoops to torture and death. He does this because the forces that he used to raise himself to power are the forces that are familiar to him, and he relies on them to see him through all difficulties. The ends which the bad among men covet are several and the means to attain these are as varied as the tortuous ingenuity of man can invent.

Since man is a compound marvellously mixed of the animal and the angel, he finds that he is a strange mixture of the bad and the good. Ignoble aims rub shoulders in him with noble aspirations and he finds that if at one time he has the potentialities of a Dr. Jekyll, at another time he lapses into the evil ways of a Mr. Hyde. This oscillation between good and evil tears a person apart unless he grasps his individuality firmly and by the force of his awakened spiritual perceptions he crosses the threshold and enters his place of peace. It is a tragedy of life that man, because he is so near to the forms of matter, gravitates towards them, not realizing that too great an alliance with perishable things is bound to result in evil.

The deliberate choosing of a goal for the entire lifetime is no light exercise. The man must know and be cognizant of all choices that are open to him lest in his ignorance he omit that choice which alone can make him more than man. But long before he can exercise his power to choose, he has to make his perceptions far freer than before from killing action. Unless he is willing to play at blindman's buff and yield himself to the vagaries of chance, he has to train himself to see things and events as they get revealed under the benign light of spirit. It thus happens that the search for a goal becomes an end in itself and may in some cases require the devoted pursuit of a lifetime of effort. That search requires the stifling of the voices of erstwhile desires and the letting go of ambitions that may still appear desirable. The past karma of wrong choices may retard progress, but it is inevitable that what one has sown, one must also reap. These stages have to be gone through as the first hesitant steps towards living. They are important lest later, when pursuing the true goal, the latent force of an unrequited desire may raise its head and precipitate a fight at the very moment when the soul needs calmness for its efflorescence.

The average man pursues life as though he were a thing apart from other men and from the teeming life that surrounds him. He makes of himself a pivot round which his world of make-believe revolves. He will no doubt have virtue and charity; but these are his to display and crow over on appropriate occasions. But apart from such persons who think only of themselves, there are others— and they are not few either—who view life differently. They know intuitively that all souls have emerged as sparks from the same great fire and must return to and be absorbed by it, some sooner, others later. If this is the destiny of the spark that indwells the man, then he cannot but be a unit in a vast Host that was led out of its homogeneous existence to go forth and achieve. The complete plan for the manifestation of a universe remains in the safe custody of him who heads the Host of emanations; while the plan for any man of his numerous incarnations remains with the Higher Self and is perceptible

by him who desires perception. The aspirations, the longings and the ambitions—if one can call immortal leanings by that name—of a man who sees life in such perspective are vastly different from those of the common run of men. His vision is different, his aim and purpose become different; and the power which can lift him out of the morass of misery producing desires is also different.

Many a great mind has formulated the fundamental truth that outside of true Religion there is no solace for man. It is Religion alone which indicates that there is a plan consciously formed and as consciously being executed that bridges life and death and spreads its ramifications over trillions of years. It is in accordance with that plan that the march towards ultimate progression and perfection is undertaken. This great knowledge about evolution and the essence of things is no religion as the world knows "religion." It is not of the variety that depends on bell, book and candle; nor is it that which is being sold by self-styled Swamis and heads of sects that are mushrooming at present and are doing a flourishing business in both the East and the West. There is today, as there has been in existence for millions of years, a Wisdom which is ancient and which has come down to us unaltered. Men have called it the "Wisdom-Religion." Modern Theosophy is an exposition of such portions of it as can be grasped by the average human. The student of life requires time to take the fundamental propositions of this Wisdom-Religion to heart. The Secret Doctrine enters his life unobtrusively and, strange as it may seem, the import of one page after another gets revealed only as he advances along the Path. No explanations from outside can reveal to him the "secret" within the "Doctrine." The key to understand the inner, hidden meaning, has to be fashioned and forged by himself— unaided. In this task, the ethics of performance assume their full and total importance. Any misguided aim (all personal longings are that), any misshapen means raise a cloud of doubt and ambiguity which envelops the mind and the doctrine of the ancient wisdom continues to remain secret. To make the man ready for the receiving of Wisdom, ethics have to be invoked to

translate metaphysics into action—into a living, throbbing, vitalizing force for good. It is one part of the ultimate aim of any man that he make the great universal ideas a living power in his life.

Without the study of the genesis of worlds, Gods, Powers and Man, the student will not be able to grasp the true import of that much used and often misunderstood term "Universal Brotherhood." If he cannot see himself as an integral part of the vast whole, then must his philosophy of life and the manner in which he sees himself vis-a-vis other men lead him into erroneous ideologies (as regards ends) and dangerous conclusions (as regards the means). The fanatics of any religion have an imposing array of weapons in their armoury ranging from persuasion, pressure and casuistry to subjugation, torture and death. Inquisitions and burnings on the stake were common means to a benighted clergy for achieving their ends. Their spirit of intolerance has not disappeared and is traceable even in this century, now in politics, now in science, and may yet revisit large sections of humanity. The sectarian and the bigot try to portion out the Absolute and put up barriers to the Infinite. What sordidness such aims can hold is seen mostly in the retrospect. What degeneration can befall man is seen also in the retrospect by examining the means he uses to achieve those ends.

Once that the goal of life is visualized and formulated, the means for the attaining of that end have to be sorted out. The intrinsic value or worthlessness of any means lies in its moral and ethical content. There are and there will probably always be Robin Hoods of religion—they who go on robbing their Peters to pay their Pauls. Regardless of their motives, their actions bear the tinge and colour of robbery. The ill-gotten gains get saturated by the hurt feelings of the person robbed and will sooner or later produce weeds where roses were expected to bloom. Money has this peculiarity that it seldom carries the message of life to the masses. If it had that power, the Christs and Buddhas of the race would have revelled in riches. The life of poverty (without the stigma of insolvency) is a way of life and becomes a means to reach the goal. Poverty is a legitimate means to achieve humility of spirit and becomes a gesture by which the

man acknowledges his kinship with large masses of men.

The real and perhaps the only means to reach the great goal are within the man himself. His own individualized incarnation was according to a plan and had a distinct purpose which took in its sweep not only the man himself but his family, nation and race. This plan remains in the custody of the Inner Ruler—the true Krishna who guides the chariot of life now here, now there, so as to place the disciple in the midst of such circumstances as are needed for his experience.

No plan that stems from out the spaceless Soul can base itself on any principles save those of Brotherhood, Altruism and Sacrifice. Not one of these but reflects the other two. These are the "means" to open the gates to fulfilment. In the final analysis, these three are both "ends" and "means"; the goal, the resting place, the asylum and the friend of him of the mystic and the fast-moving Soul.

TIME is an equal opportunity employer. Each human being has exactly the same number of hours and minutes every day. Rich people can't buy more hours. Scientists can't invent new minutes. And you can't save time to spend it on another day. Even so, time is amazingly fair and forgiving. No matter how much time you've wasted in the past, you still have an entire tomorrow. Success depends upon using it wisely—by planning and setting priorities.

—DENIS WAITLEY

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

[In this section we seek to answer frequently asked questions, at U.L.T meetings or during private conversations and discussions with people who seek the answers in the light of Theosophy. Answers given in this section are by no means final. Only a line of thought is being offered by applying general principles of Theosophy.]

Question: Can Heart be trusted, as the lovers do in their sentimental moments? Are the poets justified in extolling the passionate fondness between lovers as a high feeling and calling it a sacred flame?

Answer: Vast literature has been penned on the ever-appealing subject of human affections, especially between "lovers." We are aware that in the present world most relationships are motivated by some conscious or unconscious self-interest or self-love. And yet, great poets have been inspired by the phenomenon called "Love" between human beings and the much touted centre called the "Heart" with different shades of meaning, from the most mundane and sensual to the most noble and exalting. Commonly speaking the "Heart" is associated with ardent emotions ranging from the "sacred flame" of aspiration to what Edgar Allen Poe called: "O *human* love! Thou spirit on Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!" This *human* side makes the world romanticize the lovers in legends and popular fiction. All these have generated an extravagant fantasy and hallow around the common attraction and fondness between a man and a woman.

Human life is a school of experience where we learn the art of proper relationship. Here the human soul grows as it unfolds its psychical and spiritual powers and qualities, through tender and heart-warming experiences of pure sympathy and fondness as well as passionate loyalty and blind rapture!

Granting that all this adoration and infatuation sooner or later lands us into a world of delusions and personal attachments— sometimes failures and heart-breaks—such experiences are necessary stages in human growth toward maturity. Here, the sensibility of the so- called

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"heart" stands for an insecure disposition, possessiveness and sometimes fascination. Therefore, this "heart" cannot be "trusted" as stated in the above question. At best, the paramour may be willing "to sacrifice all," for a time being, for the sake of his overpowering love. But it does not deserve so much adulation, as even Zanoni, the good Adept-in-the-making learnt at a great spiritual price. John Keats, the young surgeon turned poet, died of tuberculosis at the age of 26 (1821) while pining for his lady-love Fanny Brawne, and the inspiration led to his renowned narrative poems, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and "The Eve of St. Agnes." The inscription upon his grave, at his own request, reflects the agony he felt. "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

The only "sacred flame" in world scriptures is to be found in one's inner sanctuary—the devotional heart—which having kindled no human affection or yearning can detract. Love that "seeketh not itself to please, but for another gives its ease," as said by William Blake, is a condition of an aspirant to the higher life, *before* he progresses to that unconditional and wider love of collective humanity. This is required as a rule from a neophyte or a probationer. A Master of Wisdom writes: "Until final emancipation reabsorbs the Ego it *must* be conscious of the purest sympathies called out by the aesthetic effects of higher art, its tenderest cords respond to call of the holier and nobler *human* attachment." This is his advice to a devotee "for whom the love of collective humanity is his increasing aspiration." It is a love which bestows no special favour upon any one object but is directed to all things alike. "Equal-mindedness is called Yoga." Such a one is described in the *Gita* (Ch. VI) as the most excellent Yogi. For him, the form in which the Eternal resides, is a matter of secondary consideration. However, for us students, any tender, steady response, without overwhelming yearning toward the beloved ones, leads to selfless concern for their well-being, and both the giver and the recipient together grow. Even though all affections arise from *Kama* or the Desire principle which is the mainspring of human life and which directs our Will, *Kama* itself, the great creative power, has its origin in the

highest Love, variously called Venus, Eros, *Kama-deva*, etc. If we can conquer fascination and learn through the magnetic affinities between the opposites to appreciate real sympathy and to bring it under the influence of one's higher nature, we can nurture a *sattvic* state of consciousness. To love then could mean to nurture, to protect, to warn, to guide and to forgive. It is a necessary stage, preparatory to the still higher form of Universal Love.

Question: In the course of theosophical study sometimes it may happen that the person may not be mentally lazy, yet may find high metaphysics difficult to understand, and as a result he feels gradually inclined to give up such study. What should one do in such circumstances?

Answer: H.R.B. clearly puts down the approach to theosophical study at various places. However, in the Preface to *The Key to Theosophy* she emphasizes the need for mental exertion, saying, "To the mentally lazy or obtuse, Theosophy must remain a riddle; for in the world mental as in the world spiritual each man must progress by his own efforts." Similarly, *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36* points out that in each one's heart there arises the desire for knowledge at some time, but if he thinks that his desire will be satisfied without making any effort and that like the little bird in the nest he only has to open his mouth to be fed, then he will be disappointed. "Mentally lazy" does not refer only to people who make no efforts at all to understand the teachings, but includes even those who give up after a slight effort. The attitude to be cultivated is, not to ask, "is this the right answer?" but "what is truth"? There must be an ongoing quest. What is it that comes in the way of understanding the tenets of Theosophy? Often, there is a clash between theosophical doctrines and our preconceived notions and learning acquired from schools and colleges. There is a need to unlearn, in order to learn. Anyone who has studied theosophy for a while, knows that it is a folly to approach these books in a casual manner. Sooner or later, we will be forced to give up inattentive and superficial methods of thought. The

article, "The Perfect Listener," in *Thus Have I Heard*, mentions that Arjuna was the perfect, resolute, patient and attentive listener. It alludes to three stages of learning: Listening (*shravana*), reflecting (*manana*) and constantly keeping it at the back of one's mind. We may say that the right method would be to read or listen carefully and then make its application to any and every question.

Some hints as to our approach to abstruse tenets of Theosophy are to be found in the booklet "Some Observations on the Study of the Secret Doctrine" which shows the necessity of preparing the mind before taking up such serious study. Thus:

If the student sits down to his study with his lower mind emptied of all thoughts, and entirely at rest, at peace with itself and all the world, if he approaches his study with a feeling of willingness, nay eagerness, to grapple with a difficult subject and a determination to attempt to contact the Mind of the writer of the book, then may he hope for real results.

We are also asked to meditate, for a while, on the particular subject that we are going to consider for study. There must be no cross currents created in our mind by unnecessary debate and doubts. Such a study is never a wholly intellectual exercise. No doubt, we may do necessary spadework, perhaps by collecting all the references on a subject under consideration. But we cannot go very far unless there is an intuitive flash which can show things as an integral whole. We are then taken from phenomena to noumena. Mr. Judge recommends reading between the words and using the light of the spiritual lamp. In case the ideas of the esoteric philosophy do not coincide with our preconceived ideas, we must be prepared to lay them aside for a while. John Middleton Murray speaks of negative capability, which he calls the mark of a genius, where a man is capable of remaining in uncertainties, mysteries, and doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. People have a tendency to make a total system out of the few fragments of facts. To develop this sort of negative capability calls for intellectual honesty and openness. We may be holding one belief and we may have

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Lack of faith in the inherent goodness of human nature has led us to fear and hate our fellowmen. We depend too much on sense data and proof of its validity, and then we may come across a fragment of truth that does not gel well with our belief. Then we need not be in a hurry to reject it or try somehow to fit in with our belief; but we need to just wait. In order to grasp the real meaning of the teachings we are compelled to use all our mental and psychic powers.

We are advised to practise careful and constant concentration of mind not only while studying these teachings, but also while performing every duty. The very bent of our desire must be towards acquirement of spiritual knowledge. We are promised that in case of constitutional lack of capacity to assimilate the teachings, if the person keeps working at it diligently and earnestly, without relaxing the aspirations, then help will come from unknown quarters.

FOR most of life, nothing wonderful happens. If you don't enjoy getting up and working and finishing your work and sitting down to a meal with family or friends, then the chances are you're not going to be very happy. If someone bases his happiness or unhappiness or major events like a great new job, huge amounts of money, a flawlessly happy marriage or a trip to Paris, that person isn't going to be happy much of the time. If, on the other hand, happiness depends on a good breakfast, flowers in the yard, a drink or a nap, then we are more likely to live with quite a bit of happiness.

—ANDY ROONEY

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Does telepathy exist? The majority of mainstream scientists disbelieve in telepathy as a paranormal power. However, they do believe that telepathy will exist in the future, thanks to technology. It is predicted that in the next 25 years, augmenting our 100 trillion relatively slow inter-neuronal connections in the brain with highspeed virtual connections, *via* nanorobotics, would enable us to enhance our normal brain capacities in terms of memories, overall thinking capacity, etc. It would allow us to directly interface with computer intelligence and with each other. Such techno-enabled telepathy is termed "techlepathy." Researchers have demonstrated that, using wired implants, it is possible for a person to move the cursor on a computer screen just by thinking about it. That day does not seem far when wireless technology will enable thought communication between two or more people. Initially, it is expected to be a uni-directional transmission of thoughts (unspoken words) from one person to the other. Later, it may become bi-directional and also enable the transmission of nonverbal signals such as consciousness and emotions. Ultimately, we may have an Internet of connected minds, involving more than two people. It is believed that "techlepathy" will become the primary form of human communication and being techno-enabled, firewalls could be created to restrict unwanted intrusion. "Yes, there'll be hackers going in-mind from time to time and mind-bloggers going openly public but, in general, techlepathy should be as safe as having a mobile phone inside one's head," writes Mukul Sharma. (*The Times of India*, January 4, 2007)

Telepathy is the natural power to convey ideas or thoughts from one mind to the other—no matter how far away and even in the face of intervening obstacles. "To communicate with another mind at any distance the Adept attunes all the molecules of the brain and all thoughts of the mind so as to vibrate in unison with the mind to be affected." Mr. Judge points out that each moment we are telepathically communicating with each other, but to use it perfectly, *i.e.*, even against obstacle and distance, is the perfection of occult art.

Yet it will be known one day even to the common world. Telepathy exists also among the birds and the beasts, and operates instinctually.

We are warned against misuse of the power of sending and receiving thoughts from other minds. There is a rule in occultism that we have no right to enter into the mind of another who has not given permission, and take from him what is not ours. When we break this rule, we become mental and psychic burglars. Again, we may take from another mind what is for the benefit of all, but not for our personal gain, use or advantage. Since we are far from being perfect, it is likely that many of us would be tempted to influence other minds, which is tantamount to hypnotism or committing thefts on the unseen plane. Hence, "Masters of Wisdom do not aid our defective natures in getting of weapons that would cut our own hands." (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 201-02).

Messaging technologies such as e-mail and SMS have changed the face of interpersonal relationships—combining the features of close and remote relationships. "In on-line relationships, people are neither close, intimate friends nor complete strangers," writes Aaron Ben-Ze'ev in *The Social Net*. Social scientists view these as a threat to human bonding, intimacy and sensitivity. "Be it the joy of engagement or childbirth, or the shock of accident or demise, chances are that the recipient of your messages may only fleetingly partake of those feelings, for they may receive them anywhere but in the right place or at the right time....From breaking off over SMS to sending e-cards for special occasions, the wired world is making it easy for people to evade direct communication," warns Harsh Kabra (*The Times of India*, January 7, 2007). Some people use this technology as a mask to hide their private and personal emotions and as a result many of them already experience difficulty in expressing themselves freely, says Aarthi Sridhar, a Chennai-based counsellor. "They don't come with the same intensity as telephone calls or letters and therefore the sensitivity with which they are received is different,"

says social scientist Shiv Vishvanathan. It is felt that excessive recourse to technologies, especially in unpleasant circumstances, can thwart dialogue, prevent people from learning to handle emotions, and turn them into uncompassionate people over time. No doubt, these messaging technologies provide easier, quicker and cheaper ways of communication, but the personal element is missing in them. However, there are divided opinions regarding usefulness of these technologies. Ben-Ze'ev sums it up by saying, "Human beings have never before had access to such an ambivalent type of personal relationship. This possibility presents an entirely different ball game in the field of personal interactions. In this exciting, novel game, the rules and consequences are also different."

Machines, however efficient, can never take the place of human beings. Human intelligence exceeds machine-intelligence and so also technology-enabled communication can never substitute *real* communication—pervaded by warmth and concern. It is the inner attitude and the feelings that accompany the message that are important. How often do *we* feel sorry *or* feel genuine sympathy, though we may send e-Card or SMS? No external formalities are necessary when the heart is in attunement with the other person, no matter how distant. A mother may sit silently by the side of the suffering child and yet something warm and comforting spills out of her heart and the child feels it too, and it goes a long way in making him feel secure and reassured.

Every tangible communication carries with it thought-vibrations of the person and the recipient feels it. Behind the carefully worded SMS or e-mail there might be the feeling of hostility or indifference and the recipient is sure to be affected. H.RB.'s remarks about New Year greetings are equally applicable to all communications.

Thus:

According to our theosophical tenets, every man or woman is endowed, more or less, with a magnetic potentiality, which when helped by a sincere, and especially by an intense and indomitable *will*—is the most effective of magic

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

levers placed by Nature in human hands—for woe as for weal. Let us then, Theosophists, use that will to send a sincere greeting and wish of good luck....Let us try and feel especially kindly and forgiving to our foes and persecutors, honest or dishonest, lest some of us should send unconsciously an "evil eye" greeting instead of a blessing. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 28*)

True *bhakti* or genuine faith, like poetry, is the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." Genuine and practical *bhakti* and faith are not passive qualities, rooted in surrender and helplessness. They are not restricted only to religion or expressions to God "but also include, even in agnostic aspirants, passionate devotion for any chosen field of activity or working with courage of conviction for a noble cause," writes K. Vijayaraghavan (*The Economic Times*, January 1, 2007). Thus, true *bhakti* and faith must find their expression in meaningful actions, referred to as "works" in the Bible. Conversely, all dynamic and well-intentioned actions assume fulfilment only when they have at their base peace, joy and love, which are expressions of *bhakti*. True wisdom or fully mature knowledge constitutes *bhakti*, but knowledge attains meaning only when accompanied by inner purity and broadness of outlook. Love and faith can move mountains. A single *tulasi* leaf placed with humility and simple devotion, by Rukmini, could match Krishna on the weighing balance while Satyabhama's haughty display of all jewellery and possessions proved ineffective. True *bhakti* and faith are involved in the performance of *Nishkamya karma* or work without motive, where work is its own reward. However, the power flowing from such actions brings forth its due reward. Genuine *bhakti* and faith originating from the core of one's being, gives rise to powerful and sublime thoughts, words and deeds.

Though the *Gita* speaks of three paths—Knowledge, action and devotion, it is not possible to follow one to the exclusion of the others. Faith is the very basis of man's nature, inherent in every human being—a power of the Soul. A man of faith knows that the universe is governed by Law and that there is fundamental justice in the Cosmos. Lack of faith in the inherent goodness of human nature has led us to fear and hate our fellowmen. We depend too much on sense data and

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

cold reasoning, so that we have developed our intellect at the cost of intuition. True knowledge or Wisdom is intuitive knowledge and is the faculty of the soul. It is because of want of faith that knowledge of things divine eludes modern man. With faith, power of will is strengthened; we acquire courage to face all obstacles. With the right kind of faith we can discharge our duties in a spirit of worship and sacrifice. Says *Light on the Path*:

At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope and love....The skeptical laugh at faith and pride themselves on its absence from their minds. The truth is that faith is a great engine, an enormous power, which in fact can accomplish all things. For it is the covenant or engagement between man's divine part and his lesser self.

When we speak of devotion to music or to mathematics, it involves offering *a part* of ourself, as needed for that particular field. But on the spiritual path, devotion implies offering our *entire self*. It is love or singleness of attachment, but when directed towards a personal god or a religion, it degenerates into fanaticism, instead of being true *bhakti* or devotion. Only a man of true devotion (*bhakti*) is able to renounce doership (*kartabhav*) and say, "I am doing nothing in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing...." (*Gita*, V, 8)

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