

A Magazine Devoted to The Living of the Higher Life

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THEOSOPHY COMPANY (INDIA) PRIVATE LTD.

40 New Marine Lines, Mumbai 400 020, India
email: ultmumbai@mtnl.net.in ♦ Phone : 22039024
website: www.ultindia.org

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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ON MAGNETIC AND KARMIC AFFINITY

AFFINITY means attraction. In human relationship it is defined as a spontaneous or natural liking or attraction for a person or a thing. The alternative words for affinity are empathy, sympathy, harmony or rapport. Magnetism is described by H.P.B. as a force in nature giving rise to polarity; to attraction and repulsion. A magnet has North and South poles and around the magnet there exists egg-shaped sphere of influence, called magnetic field. If a piece of iron enters this magnetic field, it gets magnetized by induction, *i.e.*, it gets power to attract other pieces of iron. Reichenbach stated that the body of a human being is filled with an aura, “dynamide,” “fluid,” vapour or influence and it is specially given off at the head, hands and feet, and it is polar, like the aura from the magnet. The whole left side of the human body is positive and when one applied left arm to the body of a sensitive, the sensitive reported that it imparted warmth. Likewise, the whole right side of the body is negative and imparts coolness. This auric fluid is magnetic force.

Robert Fludd, a Rosicrucian and a fire-philosopher, has given his views on the positive and negative electricities of men and women, and the mutual attraction and repulsion of everything in nature. “When two men approach each other, their magnetism is either passive or active; that is, positive or negative. If the emanations which they send out are broken or thrown back, there arises antipathy. But when the emanations pass through each other from both sides,

then there is positive magnetism, for the rays proceed from the centre to the circumference....This magnetism or sympathy is found not only among human beings but also in plants and animals,” writes Fludd. (*Isis*, I, 171)

A Master of Wisdom points out that the law of sympathy works at all levels. “Nature has linked all parts of her Empire together by subtle threads of magnetic sympathy, and there is a mutual correlation even between a star and a man.” There exists a sort of universal magnetism. Father Kircher said that there is but One Magnet in the universe from which proceeds the magnetization of everything existing, and that magnet is the Central Spiritual Sun, or God. He observed that sun, moon, stars and planets become highly magnetic by living in the universal magnetic fluid or Spiritual light. Paracelsus asserted that man is in a direct affinity with the stars. There exists a mutual attraction between the two, both being magnets. The identical composition of the earth and all other planetary bodies and man’s terrestrial body was a fundamental idea in his philosophy. Paracelsus proposed that the nourishment of the body does not merely come through the stomach, “but also imperceptibly through the magnetic force, which resides in all nature and by which every individual member draws its specific nourishment to itself.” According to physiologists the most remarkable physical property of organic tissues, is the property of *imbibition* or absorption. Given that the human body possesses property of absorption and attraction, it should not be difficult to accept the theory of Paracelsus that our body gathers into itself the astral and sidereal influences. “The sun and the stars attract from us to themselves, and we again from them to us.” Man gives off the magnetic emanations. (*Isis*, I, 168-69)

Isis Unveiled (I, 209-10) mentions that there exists a mysterious sympathy between the bodies of plants, animals, and humans. There are plants that are especially attracted to the sun and some others to the moon. For instance, the plant known as the Githymal follows the movement of the sun, even when it is invisible due to fog. Sunflower, Egyptian Lotus and acacia show affinity towards sun,

open their petals at the rising of the sun, and close them at its setting. Vine feels natural antipathy towards cabbage but sympathy towards the olive-tree. Such sympathy and even antipathy exists between various parts of the same organism. For instance, in the case of the Mexican pomegranate, whose shoots, when cut to pieces, repel each other with the “most extraordinary ferocity.”

H.P.B. mentions that there are two kinds of magnetic attraction: sympathy and fascination. Sympathy is a holy and natural power of magnetism, while fascination is evil and unnatural. Spiritual love, of the mother for her child, or as pure friendship, is purely magnetic manifestation of sympathy in congenial natures. “Kircher accounts for every feeling in human nature as the result of changes in our magnetic condition. Anger, jealousy, friendship, love and hatred, are all modifications of the magnetic atmosphere which is developed in us and constantly emanates from us.” The breath of a boa or the poisonous toad, which irresistibly attract smaller insects, reptiles and animals, to their destruction, is an example of fascination.

Our thoughts also follow the law of affinity and work on the principle of “like attracts like.” We are interconnected on the inner plane. One person’s unhappiness pollutes not only his own inner being and of those around him, but also the collective psyche of which he is an inseparable part. Further, any negative inner state is contagious: Through the law of resonance, it triggers and feeds latent negativity in others.

We are compelled to take birth on account of unexhausted karma and unspent karmic affinities. “The Law of Affinity acts through the inherent Karmic impulse of the Ego, and governs its future existence,” writes a Master of Wisdom. Is our birth in a given family, race or nation, a mere chance? It is under Karma that Ego is drawn to particular parents, family, race and nation, following the law of economy. “Whatever group of affinities is the strongest, those affinities will lead it to the point of manifestation at which there is the least opposition.” Among other things, an Ego seeking birth may be attracted to a family because most of its predominant

tendencies and character are similar to and in harmony with those of the family. *Or*, the circumstances obtainable in a particular family may offer the best possible opportunity to the Ego for the gaining of such experiences as would strengthen its character, develop virtues and overcome vices.

Our parents, brothers, sisters, are the result of karmic affinity. Sometimes the karma of the Ego may be only strong enough to make him take birth into a family, but then, new karma operates and the child is adopted by rich parents, and is thus thrown into different surroundings. Not only when we love someone but also when we hate someone, we could be thrown into a closer relation with that person in the next life, say, as a wife, husband, brother, son, etc. The evil child may be born to good parents, on account of past unspent affinity. It is then a chance for redemption to the child and the occasion for punishment for the parents. There is an incident of a Buddhist person in Ceylon who hated the British, only to discover that his own son exhibited the qualities of Englishmen. He preferred bread to rice; he could handle fork and spoon; he had an urge to hunt animals and drive cars. He had a vague memory that he was a British pilot during World War II and his plane crashed near Ceylon. Many of his claims were verified and found to be true.

Our affinities created through love or hatred not only force us in very close and intimate relationship—like a single soul dwelling in two bodies—but it might result in two souls having to share almost the same body. Siamese Twins or Conjoined twins, are identical twins whose bodies are joined. When one looks closely at the case of conjoined twins, in their twenties, living in the United Kingdom, one wonders how easy it is for two people to inhabit one body. With two sets of lungs, two hearts, two stomachs, one liver, one large intestine and one reproductive system, they have learned from a young age to co-ordinate their body, with one twin controlling the right hand side and the other, the left. Their parents did not take the risk of operation to separate them as that would have proved a highly dangerous and complex process. Due to difference in their heights,

their two legs are different lengths, so that the shorter twin has to stand on tip toe, on her leg, to ensure they maintain their balance. They have to learn to reach their compromise on everything from food and clothes to social life and entertainment.

Our affinities save and also damn us. Often, past affinities may draw us into friendship with a drunkard or gambler, who could be the cause of our downfall. On the other hand, through past affinities, one person can help to hasten the spiritual progress of another. Mr. Judge explains: Suppose in some past life a person had established a deep and interior intimacy with a friend. Death separates them, and in subsequent lives he pursues pleasures while this friend seeks truth and wisdom. After many lives they meet again and the old intimacy asserts itself. Then the former friend has a strange power to touch his inward life, and wake him up to search for truth. Through unexpended affinity, nature works his salvation.

We see this in the story of Amrapali, a beautiful courtesan, who fell in love with a Buddhist monk, who at her request was allowed by the Buddha to stay with her for four months. At the end of that period Amrapali entered the Sangha as a Bhikkhuni. And what she said was something strange, “I could not seduce your young monk, but his spirituality seduced me to become like him.”

On the other hand, in *Zanoni*, the occult novel by Bulwer Lytton, Zanoni, the Adept of vision and compassion, is not yet beyond the touch of human passion, and therefore endeavours to lift up Viola Pisani, the pure and beautiful but unawakened soul. Zanoni has sympathy for humanity, though that sympathy has yet to be purified into full intelligent compassion. That is why in spite of his great powers as an occultist, his love for Viola is a fetter upon his soul. He strays from the path, for we see that after his union with Viola, he goes away with her to a pleasant island, caring no more for the rest of mankind. The happiness which he would have rejected for himself as selfish, he wishes for Viola—and loses his universal outlook. That is his true fall. At the end, Zanoni realizes the vanity of his hope to raise Viola to his own existence. The problem of love

is one of the highest tests that the occultist has to pass on his way to Adeptship.

At its simplest level, love between man and woman is but irresistible attraction—physical, emotional and even mental, which can result in intimacy and sympathy that can lead to appreciation of unity and identity, “that masquerading under very different appearances, the soul of man and the soul of woman are the same.”

We meet and interact with people, at home, in the office, in the neighbourhood, on the road. The number of people we interact with is limited, and with some there is instantaneous attraction, while with few others we may experience a feeling of repulsion or dislike. What is it that determines our affinities? When we feel drawn to a certain person it is the result of positive karmic affinities formed by us with that individual in some past life, so that in this life we readily agree with all that this person says or does. Even if his views are wrong we are ready to believe and put our faith in them. Often, getting a true or false spiritual teacher is a matter of karmic affinity. Quite the reverse is the case when we have negative karmic affinity with a person. No matter how sincere, good and loving that person may be, we continue to harbour feelings of dislike or even aversion. However, we can transform negative karmic affinity with a person into positive affinity by deliberately choosing to be kind and cordial, and having a lot of goodwill towards that person.

No man becomes our friend in the present life by reason of our behaviour in the present life alone. If he was our enemy in the previous life he will be now, even if we do him service and be good to him, because these tendencies always last for more than three lives. So, towards those who are hostile to us, if we practise charity, kindness, and love, then this tendency of enmity will be one-third lessened in every life. On the other hand, if we continue to be hostile, we put off the day of reconciliation by three more lives. Ultimately, when we stop clinging to the object or the person, with affection or dislike, there will no longer be a karmic link between us and that person or the object.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THEOSOPHICAL FUNDAMENTALS: A DIALOGUE

THE BOY’S scratched face was tense and puzzled....“Father, I fought a boy today, and I never had before. In Theosophy is it bad to fight? We were talking about the temple most people go to, and I said that Theosophy was the only truth and this made several boys angry, and one of them made me mad by saying that Theosophy was not as old as his religion and was not worth anything.”

“Why do you think I can tell you if fighting is evil ‘in Theosophy’?”

“People come to ask you questions about Theosophy, father, and you give lectures and you have all the Theosophical books.”

“But one of the things I say to these people, son, is that Theosophy does not ‘tell’ anyone anything about what they should or should not do, or what is good and evil. That in Theosophy which can be passed on from Wise Ones to ourselves is a set of principles; if we find ways of understanding these principles we may come to *see for ourselves* what is good and what is evil, but neither a book nor another person can tell us. Each one’s inner self is the knower and the ‘teller’ for *him*. But I wonder son, why you felt you could say to the other boys that Theosophy was the only truth? How do you know this? Have you grasped all the ‘principles’ of Theosophical philosophy, and have you applied them all for yourself?”

“No, father, I have not, but I believe that everything in Theosophy is true!”

“And the boy whom you fought with, didn’t he also ‘believe’ strongly in his religion?”

“But Theosophy is not a religion, father! Everything about it is so different.”

“Yes, son, but everything about people is much the same—whether they are studying Theosophy now or following the doctrines of their ancestors. There is always a good side and a less good side to belief, whatever is believed. Sometimes beliefs help us

to respect each other, but sometimes they are used as excuses for fighting each other.”

“You mean that Theosophy changes with people?”

“Yes, son, Theosophy changes with every person and from moment to moment *as far as that person is concerned*. Principles do *not* change, but no two applications of the same principle are the same. But this helps explain why some people who have never heard of Theosophy get hold of its main propositions and practise them better than some who say they are ‘Theosophists.’ These principles which H.P.B. gave are not the property of any man, or any ‘Master.’ They are the birthright of all mankind; they can be found expressed in different ways, to some degree, by the followers of all religions and all philosophies and sciences.”

“Is it a ‘principle’ that fighting is always bad?” “No, son, there is no principle in Theosophy which says ‘Thou shalt not fight.’ But there is a principle which suggests that we should *fight only when it is really necessary*—and when we are sure that more good will come from fighting than from not fighting. But we can never be sure of this when we are angry, can we? So it must be a Theosophical principle never to fight, even with words, when we are angry or feel we want to hurt anyone. It has been said, and it seems true, that no one is angry at another, but only at himself. If we feel compelled to fight and are angry at the same time, it must mean that the ‘fighting’ is partly the outgrowth of mistakes we have made. We feel angry at the person, whereas we would be facing the truth more directly if we were angry with the ‘fight situation’ itself—and at our stupidity in helping bring it about.

“We can’t avoid conflict son, but we can avoid violent conflict. The three fundamental ideas of Theosophy show us many ways to get the faith that man can overcome feelings of violence and turn every situation towards the growth of the soul. But to understand these ‘fundamentals’ we need to train our minds by asking ourselves a great many questions about each one of the ‘fundamentals.’ For instance, do you imagine that there is one fundamental in particular

which you can apply to this question of fighting? Would you like to think about this, and then tell us what you have thought?”

“I am not sure father. What we call the first truth in Theosophy School says that all men are part of the One Life, and are brothers and if we harm one it is as if we harmed ourselves.”

“But aren’t there times when for other people’s good it is necessary to oppose some man strongly or even to use physical force in restraining him from something harmful that he might do? It would seem to me that the first principle of Theosophy only suggests that we should try to act in such a way as to benefit the greatest number.”

“Well, the second fundamental tells us that if we do violent things, violent things will come back to us under Karma in another life, even if not in this one.”

“Yes, son, but if we fought someone and were violent in a truly good cause, how could that bring back bad effects to us?”

“Then could it be the third fundamental, which says we should always help other beings along in ‘evolution’?”

“Yes, that is the most direct principle which the Theosophist can apply to ‘fighting.’ Those things which help on the evolution of beings are ‘good’ and those which work against the evolution of beings are ‘bad.’ And we must bear in mind too, that ‘self-induced and self-devised’ evolution means first understanding, and then *making part of our conscious selves*, the nature of all other beings—somehow taking all their qualities and tendencies into our own nature and giving them something of ourselves which is helpful. ...So when we discover that someone else has a tendency to hate us or to be angry with us, we can realize that this same tendency is in ourselves, and see if we can in some way work upon this tendency in us, rather than trying to fight the other person. There would not have been any fight yesterday if *you* hadn’t the *tendency* to fight.”

“No, father, I suppose not. It would have been better for me simply to have said what the principles of Theosophy were, instead of saying that Theosophy was the only truth. Then he would not

have felt that I was criticizing his religion.”

“The reason why you did not speak more philosophically and less dogmatically was, you hadn’t yet given the necessary time and thought and discipline to knowing how to fit the three principles of Theosophy to every need, even though you say you ‘believe’ Theosophy. Wouldn’t it be well to learn this sort of understanding, even though it takes much thought?”

“Yes, father, when I come to think of it, it seems that I really know very little about these ‘fundamentals.’ It may be that I really *feel* them, but that isn’t enough. But somehow I felt how different their religions were from Theosophy.”

“But isn’t Deity, the Spiritual Principle, the essence of the first fundamental of Theosophy, and don’t all your friends have some belief in this? And don’t these friends, too, have some idea of what ‘justice’ is, and don’t they all have a feeling that they ought to be better boys? It seems to me that all people everywhere are studying the three fundamentals. The difference is that while one person may ‘study’ them for only a single moment in his life, others may ‘Study’ them in one way or another every moment. If we don’t study often and therefore our study is interrupted we can’t ever see more than a single portion of any Truth at once. That is what a religion is—a formulation of Partial Truth, and while a religion is occasionally a form of study for the soul as discipline, it is always *interrupted study*.”

“If a particular set of beliefs is claimed to be perfect, it means that the mind tends to rest rather than to flow, that is, the creative mental fire burns only at rare moments. There are only three fundamentals of religion or philosophy. We call them Theosophical fundamentals because it is the tradition of Theosophy to give constant, conscious thought to them. I think this sort of beginning is necessary before one tries to state the ‘first fundamental,’ because that is simply the essential unity of all that lives and breathes.”

“Everyone passes through moments in which he does feel a temporary sense of Universal Identity, or Oneness, with the living currents of the Universe. Such feelings do not come from our

emotions and sentiments, but from the actual fact that there is a Permanent Unity. The third fundamental proposition is that individuality is permanent, and the second is that the tendency to restore equilibrium and establish Justice is permanent because it is inherent in life itself.”

“How can there be both unity and individuality?”

“If there were not, son, there would be no such thing as ‘evolution,’ or growth or learning. There can only be an ‘individual’ when there are changing circumstances in the relationships of life, but it is also true that evolution or growth or learning is possible only because of the *permanent point of perception* within the being who is evolving. All between pure spirit and pure matter you might call individuality. You are not different from your friends in your spiritual nature, for all have that in common. You are ‘different’ because the relationship between the spiritual and the ‘terrestrial’ forces in you is different from that in others. This is because you, in your long past, have made a different use of your bodily and psychic instruments from the use other people have made of theirs.”

“Mr. Judge has said, ‘It is not high learning that is needed, but solely devotion to humanity, faith in Masters, in the Higher Self, a comprehension of the fundamental truths of Theosophy, and a little—only a little—sincere attempt to present those fundamental truths to a people who are in desperate need of them.’”

He is the one who has emphasized over and over again that all the fundamental truths of Theosophy must be illustrated, like Buddha did, and applied. “The great allurements that Theosophy holds for those who follow it is that its doctrines are universal, solving all questions and applying to every department of nature so far as we know it. . . . It is not necessary for us to have constant communication with the Adepts in order to make sure of our ground; all that we have to do is to see if any position we assume agrees with well-known principles already formulated and understood,” writes Mr. Judge. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 3*, p. 3)

STUDIES IN THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN—I

THE SEVENTH Discourse is entitled *Jnana Vignyana Yoga*. The term *Jnana* means “knowledge,” and the word *Vignyana* means “Knowledge with discernment.” Thus, it is union through the knowledge of the Higher Knowledge. The Higher Exact or Absolute Knowledge is Absolute Wisdom or Spiritual Discernment in Theosophy. As seen earlier, the *Gita* is divided into three definite parts which thereby constitute a triad. The seventh to the twelfth will be a second triad, repeating the first triad, comprising first to sixth discourse, on a higher scale. However, in the seventh Discourse we will not have repetition of the teachings in the first discourse because the first is simply the historical discourse of the *Gita*, introducing the philosophy. The Seventh and Eighth treat really of the same subject and they repeat the second discourse. The Second Discourse is distinctly divided into two portions, the first one presenting to us the answer to Arjuna’s afflictions from the point of view of the Sankhya Philosophy, the Science of numbers, and the second portion presenting the answer to the same problem in terms of the *Buddhi Yoga* philosophy.

In reading and studying our Seventh as our Eighth Discourses, we must bear in mind that they are going to give us again the teaching received by us in the Second, only from a different angle, and from a higher point of view, which is the metaphysical presentation of these teachings. In the first six chapters the teachings were presented more with their individual application, *i.e.*, the great facts of nature and the great laws of the Universe as applied to man himself. In this discourse those laws and facts are described in metaphysical or universal terms, which we must try to apply at individual level. Man the microcosm is exactly the copy of the universe. The whole of the universe, and there is not a power, force, or aspect of the universe which we cannot find reflected in our own being and nature.

So far, we had thought of Krishna as a being, a unit. His nature

was presented to us as a unit, as a one-fold Being. Here, Krishna gives us the explanation of his own constitution, and it is a three-fold one. First, he describes to us what he calls his lower nature, in Sanskrit *Apara Prakriti*, the inferior Nature, and then he goes on to explain that he has a Higher or Superior Nature, or *Para Prakriti*. “Prakriti” means Nature. Then Krishna speaks of Himself as being distinct and separate from both the Higher and the lower natures, and it is here we get the distinction of three different aspects of this classification. There is Krishna, the One Self, the real Universal Principle of Life, and two aspects of that One Principle: one is the objective side of Nature, the inferior side, or *Apara Prakriti*, and there is Higher Nature of Krishna, separate and distinct from Krishna Himself, which is the Higher or *Para Prakriti*.

This three-fold classification is, of course the same teaching explained in our usual seven-fold classification. Though, we, as students of Theosophy, are familiar with the seven-fold division, we should not get confused because we will try to understand the same subject from a different angle. We can see that the Seventh Discourse corresponds exactly with the first fundamental proposition given in the *Secret Doctrine*. The First Fundamental Proposition mentions *Mulaprakriti*. This material aspect of manifestation is simply this *Apara Prakriti* of Krishna, his lower or inferior nature. The first fundamental mentions that there is a higher nature than matter, it is a nature which is electrifying or animating principle of *Mulaprakriti*, which is described as *Daiviprakriti* or Divine Nature. This *Daivi-prakriti* is simply the same as the Higher, *Para Prakriti* of Krishna. There is Spirit Itself in the first fundamental which is linked by this *Daivi-prakriti* to *Mulaprakriti* or Nature.

This Spirit, the Self, is Krishna. It is his own nature, His Real Self, which is distinct from His lower nature or *Mulaprakriti*, and also from *Daivi-prakriti* or the Higher. The first fundamental explains the principle of the Universe by giving the idea of an Absolute Reality or *Parabrahmam*, which must perforce be the background of any and all Manifestation. When Krishna is speaking of Himself as the

Universal, He is not the Absolute Reality or *Parabrahmam*, but He is, so to speak, the emanation from this Absolute, a principle which is co-eval and co-eternal with the Absolute Reality, so that Krishna really is the Spirit or Divine Ideation or Divine Thought of the First Fundamental Proposition. The lower nature of Krishna is substance or *Mulaprakriti*, and we have a link to unite Divine Ideation to Eternal Substance, and that link is Fohat. It is the vital principle of the Higher Nature of Krishna. Now Krishna, though he explains to us and describes to us in detail both his lower and higher nature in this discourse, he stops there, and only hints as to what His true and real nature is, but in pursuing our studies of the *Bhagavad-Gita* we shall meet again this Nature of the Real Self.

In the Thirteenth Discourse again Krishna divides Himself into three, calling his objective side or body *Kshetra*, and the Knower, *Kshetrajna*, and speaking of a Higher aspect of Himself which is Wisdom or Knowledge Itself, different from the body and the Knower of the body. Again in the Fifteenth Discourse, there is three-fold division of all beings in this manifested universe. Thus, there are beings which are divisible, and those which are indivisible. But there is an aspect of the Universe, the Supreme Being Himself which is superior to both the divisible beings and the indivisible beings. We find the same truth expressed in different terms. This Seventh Discourse and the ones that follow are preparing us to receive the more difficult and metaphysical teaching.

The same correspondence is to be found with the second and third items in *Isis Unveiled*. The second item gives a three-fold classification, corresponding to the one given here, in metaphysical terms, and the third item explains the same classification from the individual point of view, that is in relation to man's constitution. The second item mentions: "Nature is triune: there is a visible, objective nature; an invisible, indwelling, energizing nature, the exact model of the other, and its vital principle; and, above these two, *spirit*, source of all forces, alone eternal, and indestructible. The lower two constantly change; the higher third does not." The

objective side which is the visible and the physical side is *Mulaprakriti*, or *Apara-Prakriti* or Lower Nature of Krishna Himself. The energizing vitalizing model of this objective nature and its vital principle, both correspond to the Higher Nature of Krishna. Above the objective nature and the vitalizing nature is the Spirit, which alone is real and eternal and immortal. The first two change constantly, and only the third, the real Self does not change.

The third item mentions: "Man is also triune: he has his objective, physical body; his vitalizing astral body (or soul), the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third—the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity." Above both the objective physical body, and the inner astral man, there is the Spirit, the Sovereign Lord, who is alone immortal and eternal, and if man is to know his real essence and become an immortal being, he must unite himself to that Sovereign Lord, and the union is the very central point of the *Gita*.

If we examine the detailed description that Krishna presents as but his lower nature, his *Apara-prakriti*, we see that it is presented as an eight-fold nature. There are eight constituents making up this lower nature: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, *Akasa*, *Manas*, *Buddhi*, *Ahankara*. Mr. Judge translates the word as *Akasa*, but it really means lower strata of *Akasa*, for the Sanskrit original is not *Akasa*, but *Ka*, and the word *Ka* means Ether, which is simply the shadow or reflection of *Akasa*. It is also interesting to note that the word used for fire is not the usual word *Agni*, but a different term, *Anala*, which represents the shadow of the fire. When *Manas* and *Buddhi* are mentioned as being principles of Krishna they are not the usual principles of reasoning mind, discernment and intuition, but simply the shadow of these principle in the lower self. In all lower planes of the Universe, we find these shadows of the higher realities.

There is not a single principle or aspect of our higher nature that is not also to be found in the lower self. There is a certain mind, intelligence or consciousness and a certain power of discernment to

be found simply as the shadow of the real principles. We should not be confused by the *Buddhi* arising here if we keep in mind that in this very discourse in the tenth verse, Krishna says that he is *Buddhi* in those who possess *Buddhi*. Thus: “In all creatures I am the life, and the power of concentration in those whose minds are on the spirit....I am the wisdom of the wise and the strength of the strong.” In the footnote, Mr. Judge explains that Wisdom in the Sanskrit is *Buddhi*, and we know that the original reads *Buddhi-Manas*. I am *Buddhi* in those possessing *Buddhi*. This is clear, and should indicate that *Buddhi* can be used to represent different aspects in nature or in ourselves; in fact in the Eighteenth discourse we find that *Buddhi* has three aspects. Hence, we should not mistake *Manas* and *Buddhi* in the lower nature for the *Manas* and *Buddhi* in the Higher Nature, nor should we quote one single separate verse of this discourse, or interpret that verse without taking into account what precedes and what follows.

What is this eighth aspect of Krishna which he says is *Ahankara*? It simply means the tendency which makes “I.” The word *Ahankara* is derived from “*Aham*” means “I,” and “*Kara*” means the maker of the “I.” Here again we must remember that the personal ego, and our own sense of identity as separate beings, is after all a result of our lower and not the Higher nature. If we say, “I am so and so,” we identify ourselves with something temporary and evanescent, *i.e.*, our personality or lower nature. But the highest aspect of the personal ego or man must necessarily be the link connecting the lower and the higher. *Ahankara* or the notion that we are I, myself, separate from other beings and creatures, is also the link between his lower nature and the Higher Nature. We could call it the highest aspect of the lower nature, or the lowest aspect of the Higher nature. It is from the Higher Spiritual Divine Principle in us that personality has come and been created, as also egoism or *Ahankara*.

(To be concluded)

ON GRAFTING THE LIMBS

WOULD the hands of a dead man, grafted on the arms of a living man (who had lost his by accident), retain memories of their own? Could they affect their new owner with the feelings he had never before experienced? Could they give him a kind of memory of events he had not passed through? Would they bring him under the influence of the former owner and try to make him do something “they” wanted to do? These were some of the questions raised by a play *Duet for Two Hands* that was performed in London in the year 1946. The new owner of the hands seemed to say they can; the doctor who performed the operation—a great surgical triumph at that time—was of the opinion that they cannot; the author believed that they can.

Theosophy not only answers these hypothetical questions in the affirmative but gives the rationale and explanation of the phenomena. The hands do have memory of their own for “every organ in our body has its own memory...every cell must of necessity have also a memory of its own kind” (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, p. 68). Moreover, in the play, the former owner of the hands was executed, and did not die a natural death. According to theosophy, he was not really “dead,” and hence could affect the present owner. Mr. Judge writes: “Executed criminals are in general thrown out of life full of hate and revenge, smarting under a penalty they do not admit the justice of...whenever they can gain touch with a sensitive living person, medium or not, they attempt to inject thoughts of murder and other crime into the brain of such unfortunate.” (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 114)

In the play, the present owner of the hands “composed,” he thought, a piece of music while convalescent in the hospital after the operation. He said that it took him some time to do. We are told that the piece of music which the person, after the grafting of the hands, thought he composed, was actually the piece played often by the former owner of the hands. A possible explanation of this

could be found in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism* (p. 70): “It is they [the organs of the body] which originate according to their animal needs and desires the electro-vital sparks that illuminate the field of consciousness in the Lower Ego, and it is these sparks which in their turn awaken to function the reminiscences in it.”

As the present owner had never heard the piece before he could have no reminiscence or recollection of it, so to him it appeared new. Why should not the touch of the piano have awakened the memory of fingers just as the sight of a stick will recall to a dog a former beating? Similarly, we are told that when the present owner of the hands shook hands with those who were strangers to him, felt that he knew them. Likewise, when he visited a certain place, he felt it was familiar. Later, this person with grafted hands, found out that the strangers were friends of the former owner, and the strange place was home of the former owner.

The present owner of the hands was unable to feel that the hands belonged to him because he was haunted with the feeling of their former owner, and he also found it difficult to write poetry as he used to do before.

Further light is thrown on the influence of the former owner through H.P.B.’s story of “The Ensouled Violin.” Here we are shown the strength of the contact between the suicide and parts of his body now forming the strings of a violin. We see, too, the effect on the violinist. In “Chinese Spirits” (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, p. 93) we learn that St. Athanasius “was accused of the black art, for having preserved the hand of Bishop Arsenius for magical operations.”

The moral question as to whether we are justified in grafting the limbs or organs of one person on to the body of another, was only partly taken up in the play. The present owner of the hands was not happy with them for they were not his, and he constantly asked what the original owner was like. The point made in the play was that the hands should be those of a “good” man, willingly given.

THE PEEL AND THE PULP

“THE SWEET pulp of the orange is inside the skin, Sahib,” wrote a Master of Wisdom. Though it is often repeated to us that we are entangled in the net of illusions and delusions of life, we fail to use this knowledge in our everyday living. All over the world today men are living in fear because they look only at the dark side of things, emphasize it, and fail to take note of the tiny sparks of constructive thinking and action that are also present. Since thought builds images and gives vitality to them, the evil is strengthened by thinking about it; and, because no thought is given to them, the tiny sparks of good die down untended. It is one of the missions of the Theosophical Movement to give life to these sparks of spirituality which burn dimly here and there; and fan into brighter flames whatever sparks of good they find in themselves and in others. Yet we fail to do this, and instead put undue emphasis on the disagreeable qualities of our fellow workers and students and take their good points for granted. Thus we get enmeshed in and overwhelmed by the evil in the world.

Let us therefore seek for the pulp under the skin, under the roughest exterior of our fellow men. If we search for the pulp in the orange, we can extract life-giving juice. Even the skin of the orange has its uses, for, with the aid of water (the water of compassion) and of sugar (the sweetening properties of the virtues) a healthy drink can be made. So, too, from the rugged surface shown by so many of us in our personalities we can extract the healthy essence of the virtues attained and the knowledge gained.

The Great Law of Karma will bring us the due results of our efforts, and the best efforts are to make our own life and our contributions to the great Cause of Human Brotherhood as perfect as possible. We can do this by becoming a centre of stability among our fellow workers, learning from all, helping all, but remaining unruffled by all; and also by striving not to be a rough and rugged orange peel ourselves!

EMERSON'S CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICAN THOUGHT

I

OUR INTEREST, as Theosophists, in the great American thinker like Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of the four greatly acknowledged personages in the early history of the American Republic, rests on the fact that the birth place of the Theosophical Movement of the Nineteenth century and the formation of the Chief Centre of the Theosophical Society was chosen in North America, New York (1875). This was said to herald a closely related occult fact of the American Continent being chosen, in this cycle, to be the "Cradle of New Race."

H. P. Blavatsky, the Founder of the Theosophical Society (T.S.), had twice visited American shores, in the earlier years since 1851. It was in 1875 that she started the first Centre of the T.S. in New York City, with the help of two of her colleagues. It had from the start three leading Objects. She also published her first monumental work, *Isis Unveiled* (1877) as an introductory survey of the Sciences and Religions of the Christian era, and especially delineating a few of the chief principles on which the present work of the ancient Theosophy or Wisdom Religion of the ages rested.

In line with the higher inspiration and the spirit behind the first American "Declaration of Independence" and from the first Constitution of the American Republic, H.P.B. declared the "Republic of Conscience" as one of the guiding principles in the Constitution of T.S., as an organization.

Founded on the non-political principles and on the strict policy of non-interference of any religious voices, the life and work of the T.S. of America were made fully non-partizen and safe for all "free" thinkers among the seekers who were already under the influence of the inspiring philosophy of Thomas Paine, Thomas Carlyle, Abraham Lincoln and all those American patriots of that era of national awakening.

We shall later consider Emerson's role along with other contemporary leading lights, in shaping American society, however variegated, in the developing years of the newly formed colonies, on their way to the formation of a united American Nation. It will also explain the warm and ready response to Emerson's brilliant writings and philosophical lectures wherever he went. It was as if he was expressing their deepest feelings concerning their hidden aspirations for the social and religious freedom, unfettered spirit of enterprise, and raw courage needed for the productive ventures in the newly occupied lands in the North American continent.

Being aware of the moral responsibility and the civilized ways needed by the citizens in shaping of a "Nation," Emerson never failed to inspire noble but practical ideals and the proper attitude needed in the midst of the confusions of political forces and of social norms, as well in the midst of the vested interests of the powerful owners with which the new generations were learning to adjust. These were the times that could well be called the dawn of the "Age of Reason," that Thomas Paine visualized for the astonishing assimilation by the admixtures or "amalgamation" of emigrants from all over the world who became the *bona fide* builders of prosperous colonies. Emerson proved to be one of the god-sent answers to inspire and guide many of the multi-racial origin, who needed clarity of thought and action in the creation of the new and "united" Nation. The latter was the impossible-looking "dream" nourished in the hearts of the few early pioneers like Jefferson and his Freemason colleagues. And yet, the American union was slowly taking shape within an astonishingly short period of only three centuries in the life of the ever-increasing populations of the multi-racial emigrants. Some thinkers have intuitively felt the "secret hand" that must have guided the destiny of this rapidly progressing infant Nation! The mark of this will be found stamped on the Nation's Seal.

The Great Seal of United States was established by a resolution of the Continental Congress on June 20, 1782. Among those who helped design the Great Seal were Benjamin Franklin, Thomas

Jefferson, William Houston and William Barton, who are known to be Freemasons. The American bald eagle is the most prominent feature of the obverse or front part of the Seal of the United States. Across the breast of the eagle is a shield with 13 alternating red and white stripes or pales, representing the 13 original states. Across the top of the shield is a blue field that unites all the stripes into one. According to Charles Thompson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, the colours of the pales are those used in the flag of the United States of America; *White* signifies purity and innocence, *Red*, hardiness and valour, and *Blue*, signifies vigilance, perseverance and justice. In his beak the eagle holds a flowing ribbon bearing the first motto of the United States: "*E Pluribus Unum*." These Latin words are translated as, "Out of Many, One," meaning that out of many States was born One, new, united Nation. In its right talon the eagle clutches an olive branch containing 13 leaves and 13 olives. The Olive branch symbolizes peace. In its left talon, the eagle holds a bundle of 13 arrows, signifying war. Both these together symbolize that "the United States has a strong desire for peace, but will always be ready for war." Here again, number 13 is taken to represent 13 original States. Above the head of the eagle appears a crest or constellation of thirteen stars against a blue sky, surrounded by rays of light and an encircling cloud.

The reverse side of the Seal carries an unfinished pyramid whose capstone is removed, so that in the zenith we find a blazing eye in a triangle, dazzling the sight. The "Eye" is taken to represent the "Eye of Providence" or even the "Eye of Horus." Above it are the words, "heavens approve," while underneath appears the sentence, "A New Order of the Ages."

In the article, "The Adepts in America in 1776," Mr. Judge explains that the design "of the seal" was not an accident, but was actually intended to symbolize the building of a new order of the ages. It depicted the vision which was presented to the mind of Thomas Paine that a "new order of the ages" was beginning in America. The Theosophical Adepts could see that it was the ripe

time to usher in a "new order," and that there was a new chance for freedom and brotherhood of man. They injected these ideas into the brain-mind of Thomas Paine, who said, "I saw, or at least I thought I saw, a vast scene opening itself to the world in the affairs of America..." The Great Seal of the United States, in a way, carries the mark of the presence of the Adepts who oversaw the drafting of the American Declaration and the drawing of the Constitution, and inspired Washington, Jefferson and other brave Freemasons to found a Government in the West that was free from dogmatism.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) born in Boston, North America, was known in his life time as the sage of Concord (a place near Boston), where he settled and later developed his philosophy of Individualism and American Transcendentalism, the products of his independent thought in addition to being in contact with the western thinkers and the oriental works. He was considered one of the four great American pioneers that made a great difference in the early American history—the other three were Washington, Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln.

Earlier in life, Emerson became an acknowledged leader of the "Boston Club" where his Transcendentalist friends like poet Longfellow, J. R. Russell, novelist N. Hawthorne, Dr. Oliver Holmes and Henry Thoreau, gathered on Saturdays to discuss social and philosophical issues. Among them young Emerson emerged as the chief upholder of the concept of what was later called the "American Transcendentalism," a movement opposed to dogmatism of all kinds. As a mouthpiece for this brand of philosophy he edited a journal "The Dial" wherein besides these principles, he sometimes incorporated the English translation of Asiatic scriptures and literature to prove his point.

Among his literary works, the first essay book (*Nature*, 1836) was published where he outlined his philosophy of "Individualism" and the spirit of living Nature. This happened soon after his return from the Europe tour, where he met his learned contemporaries and poet-friends like Wordsworth and Coleridge, with whom he kept

his contact, and especially with the great Scottish historian and a student of German thinkers, Thomas Carlyle, who became his life-long friend.

Divine Providence and the time's cycle had brought on the scene such great minds in the west at the crucial stage in the history of the newly born American soul. This could have led to Emerson's choice of his career as an inspired writer. Soon after his return from England, he settled in the natural environment of Concord, where he quietly produced much of his ideology in his insightful works, comprising, essays, poems and lecture notes. Providentially, it must be the reason why some of his philosophical but practical ideas were readily received not only by the intelligentsia, but quickly got woven into the receptive and developing minds and culture of the early American settlers who badly needed inspiring guidance. A new line of thought, both moral and political, had already started in social life, owing to the earlier efforts of Thoreau, Longfellow, etc.

Emerson's role and mission in "American Transcendentalism" and especially the philosophy of Individualism (Self-Reliance) took birth as a result of his own experiences during his developing years. It happened after he was chosen on graduation to become a Church Minister, as the Pastor of the "First Church of Boston." Being a son of Unitarian Church Minister, Emerson had been trained at the Seminary (Theology College) and completed his education at Harvard. But he had to resign from the Church Ministry, in 1832, on account of his free and liberal views which were totally unacceptable to the orthodox church and its congregation! It seems here was his first trial as truly "independent thinker" of liberal views which he later expounded throughout his career. The "trial" of the seeker, and his chosen disconnection with the Church was the turning point in his choice as a crusader of the liberty of conscience in life and religious matters. It became his life's mission and not just a means of livelihood as a writer and speaker.

(To be continued)

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: What can we learn from Nature?

Answer: In order to learn from nature we should live in company of nature, long enough to observe and appreciate nature. It requires a certain amount of sensitivity. Emerson explains that nature helps to free us from daily worries. In the chapter about Beauty, he says: "The tradesman, the attorney comes out of the din and craft of the street, and sees the sky and the woods, and is a man again. In their eternal calm, he finds himself." But, in cities today, everybody is not able to "see far enough," to be in contact with nature: trees are sparse, forests even more and sometimes, even the sky is not accessible because of pollution. Nature is a great teacher, and in fact, a treasure trove of wisdom, for those who can fathom its depths.

In his essay *Walden*, Thoreau emphasizes the importance of solitude, contemplation, and closeness to nature in transcending the humdrum existence, which is the lot of most people. Thoreau pays great attention to nature, observing the passing seasons and the animals with which he shares the woods. He recounts the habits of a panoply of animals, from woodchucks to partridges. Some he endows with larger meaning, often spiritual or psychological. For instance, the hooting loon that plays hide and seek with Thoreau, is interpreted to be a symbol of playfulness of nature, and its divine laughter at human endeavours. The ant war witnessed by Thoreau prompted him to meditate on human warfare. He does not observe and describe nature neutrally and scientifically, but gives everything a moral and philosophical significance, as if each has a distinctive lesson to teach him.

The first thing that we can learn from nature is selfless giving.

Sun shines on both the just and unjust people, and does not ask anything in return. So also, the Mother Earth gives food without asking for return. A tree provides home and shelter for birds, animals and insects, and also offers shade and fruits to human beings. There is the beautiful story of a “giving tree,” which teaches us the kind of life we should live. It is about an apple tree and a boy—who represents human beings—who are able to communicate with each other. The story goes that in his childhood the boy enjoyed playing with the tree, climbing her trunk, swinging from her branches and eating her apples. As he grew up and wanted money, he approached the tree for help, and the tree suggested that he should pluck the apples and sell. After reaching adulthood, the boy wanted a house and the tree suggested that he should cut her branches. After reaching middle age, the boy wanted a boat, and the tree allowed him to cut her trunk to make a boat, till finally only the stump of the tree remained, and yet as an old man when the boy meets the tree, he is offered “a quiet place to sit and rest,” which the stump can provide. Each such stage of giving by the tree ends with the sentence “And the tree was happy.” Each one of us has to learn to give, material, intellectual and moral help, to the best of our capacity and feel happy! If we cannot shed light like the sun, then we can be like a star or a planet and “Point out the ‘Way’ ... as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.”

Another important lesson we learn from nature is that of interdependence and harmony. When we look at nature we see symbiosis. We also see unity in diversity. In order to have a piece of bread for the breakfast, we need wheat, and that in turn needs earth, water, sun and air to grow, as also, farmer to harvest it and then a baker to process it. In fact, all parts of nature work in harmony in order to serve man. Emerson puts it thus: “All the parts incessantly work into each other’s hands for the profit of man. The wind sows the seed; the sun evaporates the sea; the wind blows the vapour to the field; the ice, on the other side of the planet, condenses rain on this; the rain feeds the plant; the plant feeds the animal; and thus the

endless circulations of the divine charity nourish man.”

Each one of us sees a thing from his/her own perspective, which is, mostly, materialistic, superficial, and utilitarian. We are aware that trees provide food, shelter, flowers, medicines, wood, etc. But are we ever aware of any deeper significance? Now and then, some poets intuitively grasp and convey the symbolic aspect of the trees. In the poem, “No More!”, Alfred Tennyson, a great lover of nature, writes of a wild weed flower, growing all alone by the banks of a brook: “Oh, sad no more! Oh, sweet *No more!* Oh, strange, *No more!*... Surely all pleasant things had gone before, Low buried fathom deep beneath with thee, NO MORE!” Like this flower, the present state of any of us is only a *part* of the total existence. There is an immortal aspect or Ego clothed in the present form, but the present form has arisen from, has behind it and is backed by, past experiences—good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant—of which we have little or no memory. A large and essential nature of each one of us remains hidden. Both man and universe have their roots in eternity. There is immanence of God in the infinitesimal atom and the vast system. This is well brought out by Tennyson in his little poem: “Flower in the crannied wall, I pluck you out of the crannies, I hold you here, root and all, in my hand, Little flower—but if I could understand, What you are, root and all, and all in all, I should know what God and man is.”

We observe that the life cycle of a tree begins with a seed that gives rise to a tree, a flower and a fruit, which in turn gives back the seed. A universe comes into existence and goes out of existence, periodically. A seed gives rise to a new tree and has within it the entire tree, potentially. The entire process of evolution is unfolding from within, without. The life cycle of the tree symbolizes the Law of Karma: “As you sow, so shall you reap.” But the causes of our actions, like the seeds of a tree, remain hidden, always making us wonder, “What did we do to deserve such a fate”? Again for everything there is a season and the right timing. Sometimes we get very impatient and we want to see the results of our efforts

immediately. A seed will sprout into a plant when the time is right. A tree grows by allowing divine energy and timing to run its course.

Grass teaches us humility and resilience. Though many feet tread over soft green grass, it does not complain or wither away, but springs back, unharmed each time. In a storm or flood tall trees fall down but grass only bends down without breaking. A spiritual seeker must also cultivate humility and resilience to triumph over trials and difficulties of life. For those who regard nature as collection of trees, rivers, rocks, oceans, there are simple but invaluable lessons. The sun, moon, stars, clouds, trees, birds and butterflies, rivers and oceans, are all our silent teachers.

Question: Why is the spiritual seeker asked to guard against “vanity”? How can “dark forces” use it to bring about the downfall?

Answer: Vanity means excessive pride in oneself or one’s possessions. It appears that Vanity or pride stems from the sense of separateness. Mr. Judge writes that Lust is the gross symbol of love and desire to create, and it may be looked upon as perversion of true love and true desire to create. Vanity, in one sense, represents illusive power of Nature or *Maya*. Shankaracharya calls *Maya* an illusion-producing ignorance, which makes us mistake evanescent as real. Mr. Judge says that Anger and Lust have some of the *Rajasika* quality in them, but Vanity is wholly *Tamogunam*. (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 29-30)

The two most difficult foes to overcome are sexual desire and *Ahankara* or egotism. Mr. Judge mentions in *Letters That Have Helped Me*: “The question of sex is not the most difficult. The personal one is still harder. I mean the purely personal, that relating to ‘me.’ The sexual really relates only to a low plane gratification. If Nature can beat you there, then she need not try the other, and *vice versa*; if she fails on the personal she may attempt the other, but then with small chance of success.”

Vanity or pride or Egotism is what the Hindus call “astringent power of self” or the sense of separateness, and therefore it is called the “knot of the heart.” Heart is the centre of spiritual consciousness

but we are unable to unfold the wisdom and potentiality because the sense of separateness acts as a bar or a knot. Like a string tied around lotus bud does not allow it to bloom, so also, the knot of the heart. Egotism has many strongholds. When it is conquered in its gross form, it reappears in subtle form. A spiritual aspirant may not be proud of his worldly possessions, but he might be proud of his psychic powers, his inner experiences or his knowledge. Vanity can take the form of “holier than thou” attitude, when the seeker begins to look down upon ordinary people who eat meat, are pleasure-seeking, and not ready to question or think for themselves. Such a seeker is in the state of spiritual darkness. A person proud of worldly achievements and possessions may be helped by spiritual knowledge, but how does one help a person who is proud of his spiritual achievements? “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour [saltiness], wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.” (*Matthew*, 5:13)

In the article, “Culture of Concentration,” Mr. Judge mentions that Vanity brings up before the soul all sorts of erroneous or evil pictures, which tend to confound one’s discrimination and as a result there is anger or envy. As a result the person attracts to his aura evil elemental spirits, which can bring about a sort of fracture of the ethereal form, and that by repercussion can affect the nature of the person and lead him to insanity and death, of which Mr. Judge knew an actual case. He suggests that Vanity can be overcome by consciously and studiously cultivating selflessness.

Vanity seems to destroy discrimination, and many people left the Theosophical Society out of wounded vanity. Dark forces can work on this weakness of a person and make him feel with exaggeration that he was wronged or not given enough importance. Dark forces would use these as weapon to create strife among members. They would attempt to silently arouse irritation where it does not exist, and increase where it already exists.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Will a future Christ or Buddha, Mahavira or Nanak, emerge from a laboratory? Britain's Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has allowed a London stem cell scientist, Kathy Niakan of Francis Crick Institute, to use an experimental "gene editing" procedure on human embryo. Though the Institute has made it clear that the modified embryos will not be implanted in women, and that whole work will be purely for research purposes, there is an outcry against "Genetically Modified babies," and "consumer eugenics." Initially the research is expected to help improve infertility treatment and reduce the chance of miscarriage, by using a technique called CRISPR-Cas9, which enables to identify and then modify or replace a defective gene during the period of seven days, when a fertilized egg develops from a single cell to over 250 cells. However, it carries the danger of creating "made-to-order" babies through genetic manipulation. After decoding of the human genome it is quite possible to identify and then alter or replace genes connected with a specific disease and which in future, it is hoped, can lead to eradication of that disease.

There is a fear that such techniques might be used to create "designer" babies, genetically programmed to be intellectually and physically superior to normal human beings. Many legal, ethical and philosophical questions arise: Should not science put restraint on itself so that what can be done is controlled by what ought to be done? Can, and should, future genetic science, give the world laboratory-created geniuses like Einstein or J. C. Bose, or poets and painters like Tagore and Picasso? The metaphysical question is: what determines the mental acumen of a genius and the sensitivity of a poet or painter, tangible genetic matter or intangible consciousness? If our thoughts are the result of chemical reactions, as Neuroscience claims, could we raise our level of consciousness to a state of prolonged meditation by controlling the chemistries? Can *moksha* or enlightenment be attained by the click of a genetic mouse? If so,

will it not devalue spiritual enlightenment and make it a market commodity? asks Jug Suraiya. (*The Speaking Tree, Sunday Times of India*, February 21, 2016)

Steven Rose, director of the brain and behaviour research group at the Open University, observed that in a hundred years from now—or sooner—today's attempts to locate causes in terms of genes will seem misguided. He wrote:

I am still not sure whether you would want to argue that, once you have catalogued all your genes of small effect, you would say you have "explained" the "causes" of schizophrenia. The phenotypic effect of any one of your genes will be probabilistic....It may be that your techniques *will* point to new drug prospects, but I fear that "explanation" will still elude simple reductionism. (*Prospect*, October 2005)

Theosophy teaches that the physical evolves from the spiritual, the mental and the psychic. Heredity is but a mode of the evolutionary process by which the conscious Force within matter strives for fuller self-expression and self-realization. Heredity is determined by the arrangement of genes within the bodies of the germ cell that are called chromosomes, but that arrangement is not mechanical. It is instrumental rather than causal. Human heredity is enormously more complicated as compared to heredity in lower kingdoms, because human evolution is not by natural impulse but by self-conscious choices. The human germ plasm is dominated by the spiritual plasm, which is a spiritual potency in the Ego itself. In case of human beings, heredity is subservient to individual and racial Karma. Really speaking, inborn mental and moral characteristics are not inherited from parents and ancestors, but are brought over by the individual from his own past lives.

Heredity and Atavism are handmaidens of Karma and Reincarnation. The form in which we take birth is not determined by our ancestors, but by our *rupa skandhas* pertaining to form, which determine the stature, colour, shape of the body, with all the diseases

inherent in it. Likewise other *skandhas* or attributes determine a person's emotional and intellectual nature with all his likes and dislikes. The Ego gets attracted to a particular family stream which can provide the Ego with the necessary tenement.

Spiritual salesmanship may seem like the ultimate oxymoron, but unlike traditional marketing this approach is respectful, non-aggressive and long-term oriented. Bhaavin Shah was inspired with the new perspective on salesmanship after his tour to Sri Lanka where he ended up buying many of the products and realized much later that he had had a bad deal and that the courteous guide was actually an undercover salesman. He writes that the entire purpose of traditional marketing is to achieve a sale instead of an earnest customer. Later, the author was introduced to a sublime form of marketing, called Inbound marketing, based on spiritual principles.

One of the key tenets of Inbound marketing is empathy. It is good to remember that the purpose of one's business is to make a difference in one's customer's life, and that no customer is comfortable being pursued and persuaded. The philosophy is, not doing unto others what you do not like done unto you. Another important principle is non-intrusion. Traditional marketing is not just aggressive, but interruptive. There is constant bombarding of advertisements through Billboards, televisions, newspapers, magazines, and even phone calls to sell a personal or business loan.

Inbound marketing is pull-driven and not push-driven. The central tenet is that not every person is your potential customer and hence he should not be disturbed. For instance, getting website visitor to leave his mail id with your website because he wants to receive updates and information from you is a pull-driven approach. "Another sin of traditional marketing is its short-term focus. Huge advertisement campaigns use neuroscientific techniques and manipulate people's unconscious brains and their emotional instincts. Such marketing gets people to take influenced decisions rather than

studied decisions," writes Shah. The Inbound methodology lets the customer take his own time to study the content and product, ask questions, evaluate answers and then decide at his own pace. Rather than hyping up the product, Inbound believes in emanating the merit of the product as naturally as a flower emanates fragrance. "This entire journey of a buyer from a stranger to a visitor to a lead to a customer to a promoter is undertaken at the pace and willingness of the buyer....Spiritual marketing is not about converting non-customers into customers....It is less like fishing and more like farming," writes Bhaavin Shah, a Mumbai-based life and business coach. (*Life Positive*, January 2016)

If we analyze the business world, we find that it is often looked down upon by the philosopher and the teacher, but it is an avenue through which certain qualities and faculties can be brought to birth. If we find ourselves in the business world, we must know that it can be, and should be, the means of practising honesty and justice, two qualities which are fundamental to the harmonious running of the world. A business man must not only be sure that he himself is working honestly, and with justice, but also he must watch that he is not aiding and abetting, even *unconsciously*, any dishonourable or unjust actions of others. The ideal of selling at a fixed price, a smaller margin of profits, or of selling the best quality goods, together with the ideals of truth, honesty, sincerity, straightforwardness and regularity, may mean some loss to the business man, but in the long run people will realize the value of these ideals and then the business will be flooded with orders and customers, who have no fear of being cheated by such a business house.

Today, advertisements have become tools of mass hypnotism. They seem to brain-wash people into buying things they have no need of. Even when experience shows that no brand of soap or cream makes the skin glowing and fair in seven days (unless mixed with bleaching ingredients), we are induced to buy every new brand of soap or cream because a beautiful girl recommends it! Aldous Huxley observes that while watching such advertisements, children

should be taught that there is no earthly connection between the merits of the toothpaste and the beautiful girl in the silk gown advertising it. A business should be noble, fair and honest affair with the inclusion of a high moral standard.

In a world full of minute-to-minute provocations and nerve-wrecking anxieties, how does one choose grace and keep calm? Paul Wilson, Guru of Calm, who has written several books under the title “calm” says, “There is a bigger need for learning about the science of being calm today than ever before. There is a restlessness around us...such as we have never seen before. It is happening to everyone, but more to younger people.” Some people find social media too chaotic to handle, what gives peace of mind is listening to some good music. It is a mammoth task to keep calm, so that calmness today is a cultural phenomenon. “There are calm cafes, calm menus, calm meditations. In fact, tranquillity is big business these days—from motivational speaking, to how-to-books, to seminars that help you bring calmness.” Orthopaedic surgeon Dr. Dilip Nadkarni, who coined the phrase “calmsutra” writes, “The trick is to take a calm pause or a mini break during the course of the working day—calmsutra is a simple formula which helps us be in a particular moment and enjoy it.”

Calm guru and acupuncturist, Gerad Kite, writes in his new book, *Everything You Need You Have—How to be at Home in Yourself*, that by looking at what is going on from the objective point of view, he is able to keep calm. By becoming a calm observer he is less likely to take an impulsive decision. Entrepreneur Rajshree Pathy deals with stressful and difficult situations by creating boxes in her mind in which she puts away problems. Instead of getting overwhelmed by the totality of many problems, she decides which problem should get the priority, and solves them one by one, and is thus able to keep calm, writes Nona Walia. (*Times Life, Sunday Times of India*, February 7, 2016)

The value of calmness or tranquillity can never be over-emphasized, especially for a spiritual seeker. “Calmness is the one thing necessary for the spirit to be heard,” and one cannot have patience without cultivating calmness, writes Mr. Judge. “Desire peace fervently....The peace you shall desire is that sacred peace which nothing can disturb, and in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoon,” says *Light on the Path*. But how shall we gain such calmness? Where shall we turn to maintain tranquillity when outer circumstances and the actions or the attitude of those around us seem almost past enduring patiently? Marcus Aurelius asked himself: “Where can man find a calmer, more restful haven than in his own soul?” It means “retiring now and then to the quiet place,” which Mr. Judge counsels for bringing up good currents and keeping back evil ones. Krishna assures us in the *Gita* that He is the goal, the comforter, the resting-place, the asylum and the Friend for those who are willing to turn within.

Anxiety shows our lack of faith in the law of Karma. We are required to do the best that the circumstances demand and leave the results to the law. Can we change the course of the law by being anxious? Neither our entreaties nor our anxieties can move the Karmic balance by even a hair’s breadth. Mr. Judge observes that our anxiety works as an occult obstacle, hindering the course of action under Karma. His advice is to trust the law and accept the results—favourable or unfavourable.

A *sine qua non* for maintaining tranquillity is detachment from pleasure and pain. We must cultivate “detached attachment.” True detachment helps us develop *concern*. Peace Pilgrim suggests that relinquishment of negative feelings is essential for acquiring peace. She mentions that instead of agonizing over the past or being apprehensive over the future, we must learn to live in the present.

Mr. Judge has written of “the calmness which comes from trying to exemplify Brotherhood,” assuring us that, if we are trying to alleviate the sorrows or sufferings of others, we shall find strength coming to us when we need it most.

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