

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

I LET US ENERGIZE OUR HEARTS	241
II THE SCIENCE OF LIFE	244
III REMINISCENCE—THE MEMORY OF THE SOUL	252
IV THE WAY TO FREEDOM	256
V "THE VOICE OF THE WILL"—A STUDY IN "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"	258
VI DON'T LOOK OVER THE FENCE	262
VII GRATITUDE	263
VIII THEOSOPHY—ANCIENT AND MODERN	264
IX THE POWER OF EXAMPLE	266
X STUDIES IN THE "TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE"—VII	268
XI CAN FEMALES BECOME ADEPTS?	271
XII EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS	273
XIII IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	276

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

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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LET US ENERGIZE OUR HEARTS

We are not working merely that people may call themselves *Theosophists*, but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time. Falter not, so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus existing.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

There is a view of Theosophy that is cosmic and dynamic. It includes teachings that can be grasped by the human mind at any stage of growth, and advice and instruction to fit all possible needs and circumstances. It teaches children to grow and mothers to rear them and fathers to provide for them; it teaches labourers to work and merchants to trade, teachers to educate and rulers to reign, and everyone to live out his own life. Mr. Judge has given us the image of the ocean: into it divers plunge deep to find the pearl of great price; fishermen catch fish, big and small; swimmers enjoy, some buffeting the waves and others not venturing far from the shore; and there are those, such as little children, who only paddle in the shallow water. In this sense Theosophy, which is a veritable ocean of knowledge, is for all. Those endeavouring to make it a living power in their lives, few though they be, are recruited from all walks of life, and no single race, creed, sex, condition or colour is entirely unproductive of earnest students of the sacred science.

At the same time it must be remembered that Theosophy is for those who want it and for none else. As Robert Crosbie wrote:—

As long as we are self-centred, as long as we are satisfied with what we know and what we have, this great Message is not for us. It is for the hungry, for the weary, for those who are desirous of knowledge, for those who see the absolute paucity of what has been put before us by those who styled themselves our teachers, for those who

find no explanation anywhere of the mysteries that surround us, who do not know themselves, who do not understand themselves.

Again, we read in the Preface to H.P.B.'s *Key to Theosophy* that the reader can hardly expect Theosophy to be intelligible to himself unless he will make some mental effort; that to the mentally lazy or obtuse Theosophy must remain a riddle. This and the passage from Mr. Crosbie rather limit the circle of people for whom Theosophy is. How many are really desirous of knowledge and willing to make the necessary effort to obtain it? Krishna says in the *Gita*: "Among thousands of mortals a single one perhaps strives for perfection, and among those so striving perhaps a single one knows me as I am." (VII. 3)

It is then a matter for little surprise or discouragement that comparatively few are drawn towards Theosophy, which is aimed at making people strive for perfection. Students have no reason to be down-hearted. Our success does not depend on numbers, and the result of our work is never immediately visible. In fact what we achieve may not find full expression on the physical plane until many, many years have passed. In the words of Mr. Judge, "the greatest work is not done on outer physical planes but on the thought plane." As Gandhiji once wrote:—

If the evolution of form takes æons, why should we expect wonders in the evolution of thought and conduct? And yet the age of miracles is not gone. As with individuals, so with nations. I hold it to be perfectly possible for masses to be suddenly converted and uplifted. Suddenness is only seeming. For no one can say how far the leaven has worked. The most potent forces are unseen, even unfelt for long. But they are working none the less surely.

It may even happen that what we have actually accomplished on the outer plane — little though it be — gets destroyed. But the soul of what has disappeared from sight is immortal and will some time seek and find physical expression again. That which is accumulating on the inner planes as the result of the efforts of a few will triumph in the long run and burst out like the sun after a storm and illumine the earth. We are filling a reservoir which will supply refreshment to many, perhaps when those who helped to fill it are dead and gone.

It is not easy always to realize the truth of all this. We wish for results that can be observed by the physical senses. Yet all down the ages men have proclaimed the power of thought and of the invisible. An expression of this conviction is found in the Bible, in a passage in *Ecclesiastes*:—

There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. (IX. 14-17)

We are sowing seeds in confidence that in the course of time they will produce a bountiful harvest. To encourage those of us who are inclined to feel disheartened and to waver in our faith, one of the Masters once wrote: "Ah! if your eyes were opened, you might see such a vista of potential blessings to yourselves and mankind lying in the germ of the present hour's effort, as would fire with joy and zeal your souls!"

As was stated in our editorial last month, the Theosophical Movement is ahead of the times, and the fact that this "most serious movement of this age" should have succeeded as far as it has in our present *Kali Yuga*, the Dark Age, is itself a notable achievement. Those who take up Theosophy as a mere recreation, a pastime, drop out in course of time. Those again who study it because it is an intellectual stimulant, an exercise in mental expansion, make the wrong approach. Theosophy is a serious, vital force which, once the individual plunges into its current, can change the entire entity — physically, mentally, spiritually. It demands sacrifice, self-forgetfulness and service of one's fellows which seeks no reward. Here the failures begin. Mental laziness is not the only impediment; there is also lack of heart-energization. Without love and compassion in the heart for suffering humanity, one cannot be touched by the power of inspiration which comes from Theosophy.

Seekers of wisdom, and even perhaps donors of wealth, are many compared to the voluntary sacrificers who study that they may serve and who mortify their personalities to rise above all distinctions and differences and to be united in brotherly feeling with other student-servers. What is needed is not only a larger number of students, but more among them of those whose hearts are burning to give warmth and comfort, to radiate light and leading for their fellow men. This is an increasingly pressing present need.

The number of true Theosophists is not legion. The ranks are not crowded. They are not to be known or judged by standards of the world, but by the strength of their convictions. They are one and all *dead in earnest*. They are those who though they may not have outwardly renounced, have inwardly relinquished, and who will be glad when the incidentals are swept away, and only the essentials remain. They are those who move from age to age invincible and eternal.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE SCIENCE OF LIFE

[The following article by H. P. Blavatsky first appeared in *Lucifer*, Vol. I, pp. 203-211, for November 1887, and was reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for February 1946. It deals with a problem of science that remains unsolved now as then, in spite of current attempts to study life in the laboratory and scientists' claim to have found "the key of life." The article has a practical, ethical bearing and embodies truths which all earnest minds will recognize and welcome.

H. P. Blavatsky was ever keen to show that the teachings she presented to the world under the name of Theosophy were but reverberating echoes of Words of Power chanted by the Fathers of the human race, when it was young; and, moreover, that there were other faithful echoes. In this article she translates the ideas of the great Tolstoy and shows "how near his views are to the esoteric and philosophical teachings of higher Theosophy." Elsewhere she calls him "the greatest psychologist of the 19th century," who was, moreover, "an exemplar of Christ-like altruism and self-sacrifice."

It is the duty of every real student of the ancient Wisdom-Religion to look out for and welcome Theosophical echoes in current pronouncements, as H.P.B. did. To the student of science, of religion, of philosophy, her article brings a message. Those who yearn to live the Higher Life will find in it much food for thought and many hints of a practical nature. H.P.B. remarks that the real science of life consists in transmuting baser metals — "the animal mass" — into gold and silver. Alchemy as an Occult Art is but a reflection of that Higher Alchemy. Of this she has written fully and students will do well to refer especially to her *Theosophical Glossary*.—EDS.]

What is Life? Hundreds of the most philosophical minds, scores of learned, well-skilled physicians, have asked themselves the question, but to little purpose. The veil thrown over primordial Kosmos and the mysterious beginnings of life upon it has never been withdrawn to the satisfaction of earnest, honest science. The more the men of official learning try to penetrate through its dark folds, the more intense becomes that darkness, and the less they see, for they are like the treasure-hunter who went across the wide seas to look for that which lay buried in his own garden.

What is then this Science? Is it biology, or the study of life in its general aspect? No. Is it physiology, or the science of organic function? Neither; for the former leaves the problem as much the riddle of the Sphinx as ever; and the latter is the science of death far more than that of life. Physiology is based upon the study of the different organic functions and the organs necessary to the manifestations of life, but that which science calls living matter is, in sober truth, *dead matter*. Every molecule of the living organs contains the germ of death in itself, and

begins dying as soon as born, in order that its successor-molecule should live only to die in its turn. An organ, a natural part of every living being, is but the medium for some special function in life, and is a combination of such molecules. The vital organ, the *whole*, puts the mask of life on, and thus conceals the constant decay and death of its parts. Thus, neither biology nor physiology are the science, nor even branches of the *Science of Life*, but only that of the *appearances* of life. While true philosophy stands Œdipus-like before the Sphinx of life, hardly daring to utter the paradox contained in the answer to the riddle propounded, materialistic science, as arrogant as ever, never doubting its own wisdom for one moment, biologizes itself and many others into the belief that it has solved the awful problem of existence. In truth, however, has it even so much as approached its threshold? It is not, surely, by attempting to deceive itself and the unwary in saying that life is but the result of molecular complexity, that it can ever hope to promote the truth. Is vital force, indeed, only a "phatom," as Du-Bois Reymond calls it? For his taunt that "life," as something independent, is but the *asylum ignorantiae* of those who seek refuge in abstractions, when direct explanation is impossible, applies with far more force and justice to those materialists who would blind people to the reality of facts, by substituting bombast and jaw-breaking words in their place. Have any of the five divisions of the functions of life, so pretentiously named — Archebiosis, Biocrosis, Biodiæresis, Biocænosis and Bioparodosis,¹ ever helped a Huxley or a Haeckel to probe more fully the mystery of the generations of the humblest ant — let alone of man? Most certainly not. For life, and everything pertaining to it, belongs to the lawful domain of the *metaphysician* and psychologist, and physical science has no claim upon it. "That which hath been, is that which shall be; and that which hath been is named already — and it is known that it is MAN" — is the answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. But "man" here does not refer to *physical* man — not in its esoteric meaning, at any rate. Scalpels and microscopes may solve the mystery of the material parts of *the shell of man*: they can never cut a window into his soul to open the smallest vista on any of the wider horizons of being.

It is those thinkers alone, who, following the Delphic injunction, have cognized life in their inner selves, those who have studied it thoroughly in themselves, before attempting to trace and analyse its reflection in their outer shells, who are the only ones rewarded with some measure of success. Like the fire-philosophers of the Middle Ages, they have skipped over the *appearances* of light and fire in the world of effects, and centred their whole attention upon the producing arcane energies. Thence, tracing these to the one abstract cause, they have attempted to fathom the MYSTERY, each as far as his intellectual capacities permitted him. Thus they have ascertained that (1) the *seemingly* living mechanism called physical man is but the fuel, the material, upon which life feeds, in order to manifest itself; and (2) that thereby the inner man receives as his wage and

¹ Or Life-origination, Life-fusion, Life-divisions, Life-renewal and Life-transmission

reward the possibility of accumulating additional experiences of the terrestrial illusions called lives.

One of such philosophers is now undeniably the great Russian novelist and reformer, Count Leo N. Tolstoi. How near his views are to the esoteric and philosophical teachings of higher Theosophy will be found on the perusal of a few fragments from a lecture delivered by him at Moscow before the local Psychological Society.

Discussing the problem of life, the Count asks his audience to admit, for the sake of argument, *an impossibility*. Says the lecturer:—

Let us grant for a moment that all that which modern science longs to learn of life, it has learnt, and now knows; that the problem has become as clear as day; that it is clear how organic matter has, by simple adaptation, come to be originated from inorganic material; that it is as clear how natural forces may be transformed into feelings, will, thought; and that finally, all this is known, not only to the city student, but to every village schoolboy as well.

I am aware, then, that such-and-such thoughts and feelings originate from such-and-such motions. Well, and what then? Can I, or cannot I, produce and guide such motions, in order to excite within my brain corresponding thoughts? The question — what are the thoughts and feelings I ought to generate in myself and others, remains still, not only unsolved, but even untouched.

Yet it is precisely this question which is the *one* fundamental question of the central idea of life.

Science has chosen as its object a few manifestations that accompany life; and *mistaking*² the part for the whole, called these manifestations the integral total of life. . . .

The question inseparable from the idea of life is not *whence* life, but *how one should live* that life: and it is only by first starting with this question that one can hope to approach some solution in the problem of existence.

The answer to the query "How are we to live?" appears so simple to man that he esteems it hardly worth his while to touch upon it. . . . One must live the best way one can — that's all. This seems at first sight very simple and well known to all, but it is by far neither as simple nor as well known as one may imagine. . . .

The idea of life appears to man in the beginning as a most simple and self-evident business. First of all, it seems to him that life is in himself, in his own body. No sooner, however, does one commence his search after that life, in any one given spot of the said body, than one meets with difficulties. Life is not in the hair, nor in the nails; neither is it in the foot nor the arm, which may both be amputated; it is not in the

² "Mistaking" is an erroneous term to use. The men of science know but too well that what they teach concerning life is a materialistic fiction contradicted at every step by logic and fact. In this particular question science is abused, and made to serve personal hobbies and a determined policy of crushing in humanity every spiritual aspiration and thought. "Pretending to mistake" would be more correct.—H.P.B.

blood, it is not in the heart, and it is not in the brain. It is everywhere and it is nowhere. It comes to this: life cannot be found in any of its dwelling-places. Then man begins to look for life in Time; and that, too, appears at first a very easy matter. . . . Yet again, no sooner has he started on his chase than he perceives that here also the business is more complicated than he had thought. Now, I have *lived* fifty-eight years, so says my baptismal church record. But I know that out of these fifty-eight years I slept over twenty. How then? Have I lived all these years, or have I not? Deduct the months of my gestation, and those I passed in the arms of my nurse, and shall we call this life, also? Again, out of the remaining thirty-eight years, I know that a good half of that time I slept while moving about; and thus, I could no more say in this case whether I lived during that time or not. I may have lived a little, and vegetated a little. Here, again, one finds that in time, as in the body, life is everywhere, yet nowhere. And now the question naturally arises, whence, then, that life which I can trace to nowhere? Now — will I learn. . . . But it so happens that in this direction also what seemed to me so easy at first, now seems impossible. I must have been searching for something else, not for my life, assuredly. Therefore, once we have to go in search of the whereabouts of life — if search we have to — then it should be neither in space nor in time, neither as cause nor effect, but as a something which I cognize within myself as quite independent from Space, time and causality.

That which remains to do now is to study *self*. But how do I cognize life in myself?

This is how I cognize it. I know, to begin with, that I live; and that I live wishing for myself everything that is good, wishing this since I can remember myself, to this day, and from morn till night. All that lives outside of myself is important in my eyes, but only in so far as it co-operates with the creation of that which is productive of *my* welfare. The Universe is important in my sight only because it can give *me* pleasure.

Meanwhile, something else is bound up with this knowledge in me of my existence. Inseparable from the life I feel, is another cognition allied to it; namely, that besides myself, I am surrounded with a whole world of living creatures, possessed, as I am myself, of the same instinctive realization of their exclusive lives; that all these creatures live for their own objects, which objects are foreign to me; that those creatures do not know, nor do they care to know, anything of my pretensions to an exclusive life, and that all these creatures, in order to achieve success in their objects, are ready to annihilate me at any moment. But this is not all. While watching the destruction of creatures similar in all to myself, I also know that for me too, for that precious ME in whom alone life is represented, a very speedy and inevitable destruction is lying in wait.

It is as if there were two "I's" in man; it is as if they could never live in peace together; it is as if they were eternally struggling, and ever trying to excel each other.

One "I" says, "I alone am living as one should live, all the rest only seems to live. Therefore, the whole *raison d'être* for the universe is in

that *I* may be made comfortable.”

The other “I” replies, “The universe is not for thee at all, but for its own aims and purposes, and it cares little to know whether thou art happy or unhappy.”

Life becomes a dread thing after this!

One “I” says, “I only want the gratification of all my wants and desires, and that is why I need the universe.”

The other “I” replies, “All animal life lives only for the gratification of its wants and desires. It is the wants and desires of animals alone that are gratified at the expense and detriment of other animals; hence the ceaseless struggle between the animal species. Thou art an animal, and therefore thou hast to struggle. Yet, however successful in thy struggle, the rest of the struggling creatures must sooner or later crush thee.”

Still worse! life becomes still more dreadful. . . .

But the most terrible of all, that which includes in itself the whole of the foregoing, is that:—

One “I” says, “I want to live, to live for ever.”

And that the other “I” replies, “Thou shalt surely, perhaps in a few minutes, die; as also shall die all those thou lovest, for thou and they are destroying with every motion your lives, and thus approaching ever nearer suffering, death, all that which thou so hatest, and which thou fearest above anything else.”

This is the worst of all. . . .

To change this condition is impossible. . . . One can avoid moving, sleeping, eating, even breathing, but one cannot escape from thinking. One thinks, and that thought, *my* thought, is poisoning every step in my life, as a personality.

No sooner has man commenced a conscious life than that consciousness repeats to him incessantly without respite, over and over the same thing again. “To live such life as you feel and see in your past, the life lived by animals and many men too, lived in *that* way, which made you become what you are now — is no longer possible. Were you to attempt doing so, you could never escape thereby the struggle with all the world of creatures which live as you do — for their personal objects; and then those creatures will inevitably destroy you.”. . .

To change this situation is impossible. There remains but one thing to do, and that is always done by him who, beginning to live, transfers his objects in life outside of himself, and aims to reach them. . . . But, however far he places them outside his personality, as his mind gets clearer, none of these objects will satisfy him.

Bismarck, having united Germany, and now ruling Europe — if his reason has only thrown any light upon the results of his activity — must perceive, as much as his own cook does who prepares a dinner that will be devoured in an hour’s time, the same unsolved contradiction between the vanity and foolishness of all he has done, and the eternity and reasonableness of that which exists for ever. If they only think of it, each will see as clearly as the other; *firstly*, that the preservation of the integrity of Prince Bismarck’s dinner, as well as that of powerful Germany, is

solely due: the preservation of the former — to the police, and the preservation of the latter — to the army; and that, so long only as both keep a good watch. Because there are famished people who would willingly eat the dinner, and nations which would fain be as powerful as Germany. *Secondly*, that neither Prince Bismarck's dinner, nor the might of the German Empire, coincide with the aims and purposes of universal life, but that they are in flagrant contradiction with them. And *thirdly*, that as he who cooked the dinner, so also the might of Germany, will both very soon die, and that so shall perish, and as soon, both the dinner and Germany. That which shall survive alone is the Universe, which will never give one thought to either dinner or Germany, least of all to those who have cooked them.

As the intellectual condition of man increases, he comes to the idea that no happiness connected with his personality is an achievement, but only a necessity. Personality is only that incipient state from which begins life, and the ultimate limit of life.

Where, then, does life begin, and where does it end, I may be asked? Where ends the night, and where does day commence? Where, on the shore, ends the domain of the sea, and where does the domain of land begin?

There is day and there is night; there is land and there is sea; there is life and there is *no* life.

Our life, ever since we became conscious of it, is a pendulum-like motion between two limits.

One limit is an absolute unconcern for the life of the infinite Universe, an energy directed only toward the gratification of one's own personality.

The other limit is a complete renunciation of that personality, the greatest concern with the life of the infinite Universe, in full accord with it, the transfer of all our desires and good will from one's self to that infinite Universe and all the creatures outside of us.³

The nearer to the first limit, the less life and bliss, the closer to the second, the more life and bliss. Therefore, man is ever moving from one end to the other; *i.e.*, he lives. **THUS MOTION IS LIFE ITSELF.**

And when I speak of life, know that the idea of it is indissolubly connected in my conceptions with that of *conscious* life. No other life is known to me except conscious life, nor can it be known to anyone else.

We call life, the life of animals, organic life. But this is no life at all, only a certain state or condition of life manifesting to us.

But what is this consciousness or mind, the exigencies of which exclude personality and transfer the energy of man outside of him and into that state which is conceived by us as the blissful state of love?

What is conscious mind? Whatsoever we may be defining we have to define it with our conscious mind. Therefore, with what shall we define mind?

If we have to define all with our mind, it follows that conscious mind cannot be defined. Yet all of us, we not only know it, but it is the only

³ This is what the Theosophists call "living *the* life"—in a nutshell.—H. P. B.

thing which is given to us to know undeniably. . . .

It is the same law as the law of life, of everything organic, animal or vegetable, with that one difference that we *see* the consummation of an intelligent law in the life of a plant. But the law of conscious mind, to which we are subjected as the tree is subjected to its law, we *see* it not, but fulfil it. . . .

We have settled that life is that which is not our life. It is herein that lies hidden the root of error. Instead of studying that life of which we are conscious within ourselves, absolutely and exclusively — since we can know of nothing else — in order to study it, we observe that which is devoid of the most important factor and faculty of our life, namely, intelligent consciousness. By so doing, we act as a man who attempts to study an object by its shadow or reflection does.

If we know that substantial particles are subjected during their transformations to the activity of the organism, we know it not because we have observed or studied it, but simply because we possess a certain familiar organism united to us, namely the organism of our animal, which is but too well known to us as the material of our life; *i.e.*, that upon which we are called to work and to rule by subjecting it to the law of reason. . . . A man who conceives life such as he finds it in his consciousness, knows neither misery, nor death; for all the good in life for him is in the subjection of his animal to the law of reason, to do which is not only in his power, but takes place unavoidably in him. The death of particles in the animal being, we know. The death of animals and of man, as an animal, we know; but we know nought about the death of conscious mind, *just because that conscious mind is the very life itself. And Life can never be Death. . . .*

The animal lives an existence of bliss, neither seeing nor knowing death, and dies without cognizing it. Why then should man have received the gift of seeing and knowing it, and why should death be so terrible to him that it actually tortures his soul? Because the man who sees death is a sick man, one who has broken the law of his life, and lives no longer a conscious existence. He has become an animal himself, an animal which also has broken the law of life.

The life of man is an aspiration to bliss, and that which he aspires to is given to him. The light lit in the soul of man is bliss and life, and that life can never be darkness, as there exists — verily there exists for man — only this solitary light which burns within his soul.

We have translated this rather lengthy fragment from the Report of Count Tolstoi's superb lecture, because it reads like the echo of the finest teachings of the universal ethics of true theosophy. His definition of life in its abstract sense, and of the life every earnest theosophist ought to follow, each according to, and in the measure of, his *natural* capacities — is the summary and the Alpha and the Omega of practical psychic, if not spiritual life. There are sentences in the lecture which, to the average theosophist, will seem too hazy, and perhaps incomplete. Not one will he find, however, which could be objected to by the most exacting,

practical occultist. It may be called a treatise on the Alchemy of Soul. For that "solitary" light in man, which burns for ever, and can never be darkness in its intrinsic nature, though the "animal" outside us may remain blind to it — is that "Light" upon which the Neo-Platonists of the Alexandrian school, and after them the Rosecroix and especially the Alchemists, have written volumes, though to the present day their true meaning is a dark mystery to most men.

True, Count Tolstoi is neither an Alexandrian nor a modern theosophist; still less is he a Rosecroix or an Alchemist. But that which the latter have concealed under the peculiar phraseology of the Fire-philosophers, purposely confusing cosmic transmutations with Spiritual Alchemy, all that is transferred by the great Russian thinker from the realm of the metaphysical unto the field of practical life. That which Schelling would define as a realization of the identity of subject and object in the man's inner Ego, that which unites and blends the latter with the universal Soul — which is but the identity of subject and object on a higher plane, or the unknown Deity — all that Count Tolstoi has blended together without quitting the terrestrial plane. He is one of those few *elect* who begin with intuition and end with *quasi*-omniscience. It is the transmutation of the baser metals — *the animal mass* — into gold and silver, or the philosopher's stone, the development and manifestation of man's higher SELF which the Count has achieved. The *alcahest* of the inferior Alchemist is the *All-geist*, the all-pervading Divine Spirit of the higher Initiate; for Alchemy was, and is, as very few know to this day, as much a spiritual philosophy as it is a physical science. He who knows nought of one, will never know much of the other. Aristotle told it in so many words to his pupil, Alexander: "It is not a stone," he said of the philosopher's stone. "*It is in every man and in every place, and at all seasons, and is called the end of all philosophers,*" as the *Vedanta* is *the end of all philosophies*.

To wind up this essay on "The Science of Life," a few words may be said of the eternal riddle propounded to mortals by the Sphinx. To fail to solve the problem contained in it, was to be doomed to sure death, as the Sphinx of life devoured the unintuitional, who would live only in their "animal." He who lives for Self, and only for *Self*, will surely die, as the higher "I" tells the lower "animal" in the Lecture. The riddle has seven keys to it, and the Count opens the mystery with one of the highest. For, as the author on "Hermetic Philosophy" beautifully expressed it: "The real mystery most familiar and, at the same time, most unfamiliar to every man, *into which he must be initiated or perish as an atheist, is himself*. For him is the elixir of life, to quaff which, before the discovery of the philosopher's stone, is to drink the beverage of death, while it confers on the adept and the *epopt*, the true immortality. He may know truth as it really is — *Aletheia*, the breath of God, or Life, the conscious mind in man."

This is "the Alcahest which dissolves all things," and Count Tolstoi has well understood the riddle.

REMINISCENCE—THE MEMORY OF THE SOUL

Priceless pearls of Wisdom are scattered through the pages of Madame Blavatsky; and those who have truly grasped her teachings and made them easier in some cases for ordinary students like ourselves to comprehend have done us a great service too. Sometimes by bringing together her related teachings on a given subject and the thoughtful explanations of her loyal followers we get a better insight into the implications of her thought than we could otherwise obtain.

One such subject is the memory of the soul or reminiscence, on which we must depend to bridge, at least in part, the gap between the present personality and the harvest of experiences gained by the soul in other personalities in recent or long prior lives.

Without recovering something of that memory of the past our plight is not unlike that of a victim of amnesia who has forgotten not only who he is and whence he came but also much besides that he had known.

It is reminiscence which can give us the assurance that we have lived before and will live again, which, in other words, bestows the certainty of immortality while we are still living in a mortal frame and in the particular surroundings of the present birth.

Three forms of memory are named in *The Key to Theosophy* (pp. 122-23) — remembrance, recollection and reminiscence. The first two are the handmaids of memory and its attributes, but memory as there defined is “a faculty depending entirely on the more or less healthy and normal functioning of our *physical* brain,” whereas reminiscence is “an intuitional perception apart from and outside” that brain. And we are told that it is this memory or reminiscence “which gives the assurance to almost every human being, whether he understands it or not, of his having lived before and having to live again.”

The key importance of memory was recognized in ancient Greece, which made the Muses, who presided over the arts as well as over learning, the daughters of Mnemosyne, the Goddess of Memory.

Scientists in general, Madame Blavatsky wrote, regarded as hallucinations and fancy reminiscences affording visions of the past and glimpses far back into the corridors of time. These were no doubt abnormal as contrasted with normal daily-life experience and physical memory, as she conceded; but she reminded us that “memory is one thing and mind or *thought* is another,” thoughts being eternal and imperishable, and she added: “To get convinced of the fact of reincarnation and past lives, one must put oneself in *rappport* with one’s real permanent Ego, not one’s evanescent memory.”

Such is the aim of every true aspirant, and how important it is to the student of occultism to gain the conviction that he has indeed lived before can be judged by the reference in *Letters That Have Helped Me* to “the mighty effort” of one’s Higher Self to make that student remember his past lives. Mr. Judge continues:—

Then those past lives affect him. They become like clouds throwing shadows on his path. Now they seem tangible and then fade away, only

a cloud. Then they begin to affect his impulse to action in many various ways. Today he has vague calling longings to do something, and, critically regarding himself, he cannot see in this life any cause. It is the bugle note of a past life blown almost in his face. It startles him; it may throw him down. . . . Although dead and past they yet have a power. He gets too a power and a choice. If all his previous past lives were full of good, then irresistible is the force for his benefit. But all alike marshal up in front, and he hastens their coming by his effort.

Again, Mr. Judge declared:—

Getting back the memory of other lives is really the whole of the process, and if some people don't understand certain things it is either because they have not got to that point in their other lives or because no glimmer of memory has yet come.

Mr. Crosbie in turn repeated to a correspondent that the process of development was said to consist in the recovery of the memory of the past, but this, he understood, could not mean "the sordid details of physical existence . . . or what 'part' one played in the various dramas of existence, but a something larger, finer, greater — the memory of the divine Ego, and those functions of our real life which go on during sleep."

"The Universal Memory," H.P.B. tells us, "preserves every motion, the slightest wave and feeling that ripples the waves of differentiated nature, of man or of the Universe," and in the seventh of the Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled* she wrote:—

All things that ever were, that are, or that will be, having their record upon the astral light, or tablet of the unseen universe, the initiated adept, by using the vision of his own spirit, can know all that has been known or can be known.

In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, however, she distinguished between the Astral Light, the "tablet of the memory of the animal man," and the Akasha, that of the spiritual Ego.

That not all memories are worth recovering seems clear from the definition of "Tchitta Riddhi Pada," "the step of memory," in *The Theosophical Glossary*. This is described as "the third condition of the mystic series which leads to the acquirement of adeptship." It is said to be "the renunciation of physical memory, and of all thoughts connected with worldly or personal events in one's life — benefits, personal pleasures or associations. Physical memory has to be sacrificed, and recalled by *will power* only when absolutely needed."

It seems too much to hope that the full recovery of the memory of the past is within the grasp of the aspirant now, for in answer to queries of Mr. A. P. Sinnett one of the Mahatmas, while writing that at the end of each of the seven Rounds there comes a "remembrance . . . of the devachanic experiences taking place between the numerous births at the end of each *personal* life," added that "the *complete* recollection of all the lives (earthly and devachanic) — *omniscience*, in short — comes but at

the great end of the full seven Rounds (unless one had become in the interim a Bodhisattwa, an Arhat)."

There are different ways in which the reminiscent aspect of memory may find expression, one of which is among the classes of dreams enumerated by Madame Blavatsky at the end of the Appendix on Dreams included in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*. These were designated as "Retrospective; dreams of events belonging to past incarnations." Waking visions or "dreams" are also possible for sensitive individuals.

Sometimes a reminiscent dream, in which the dreamer confidently feels himself to be a person in the dream, one of a different background and appearance, even of a different sex from that of the dreamer in his ordinary life, comes to a person who has never even heard of reincarnation, arousing questioning but never shaking his perhaps long unexplained conviction that he had once been the person that in his dream he had known himself to be.

There are other ways also in which the suggestion of previous lives may come. In *The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 239, Mr. Crosbie has said:—

... reminiscence . . . is not at all dependent upon the brain. It is brought into function oftentimes, not by any present object or occurrence arousing attention in that direction, but as it were, springs direct from the soul itself. It is a direct perception of what was. It comes from something behind the brain—the brain serving merely as a sort of filter, or interceptor, or translator of impressions.

Again he has written of memory existing

in other inner departments of our nature. Living on the physical plane, our ideas connected almost entirely with the "three-dimensional" state of matter, we are no more conscious of those inner planes of being than, when in sleep, we are conscious of the physical plane, being absolutely shut off from the outside world, from the happenings to our friends, to the nation, and to the world at large. . . . Yet there is an active life in those inner departments of our nature, and there is a memory of it. . . . Every plane of consciousness has a memory of its own.

Mr. Crosbie further tells us:—

To recover that whole memory, to make that great knowledge of the past usable, here and now in the brain and in the body, is the true work of "salvation." Only when we understand what we really are, shall we be able to take a conscious, active, purposeful part in the evolution of our race. Only when we gain the perception that we are the Eternal Spirit, that Death never touches us at all, that we may have a conscious life in spirit, not in matter—only when we begin to think and act from that basis, can true memory come through to the brain. . . . That true memory is possible for every living being.

Krishna assures Arjuna that "he who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the prog-

ress of time"; and we are told in *The Voice of the Silence* that true devotion may bring back to the toiling pilgrim that knowledge which was his in former births.

Why "may bring" instead of the positive assurance that it *will* bring him this knowledge? What postpones or prevents such a recovery of memory?

We find a thought-stimulating hint in "A Hindu Chela's Diary," published in Mr. Judge's *Path* in 1886 and reprinted in our pages in April and May 1940. The Chela was there told:—

Never forget that your spiritual progress goes on quite often to yourself unknown. Two out of many hindrances to memory are anxiety and selfishness. Anxiety is a barrier constructed out of harsh and bitter materials. Selfishness is a fiery darkness that will burn up the memory's matrix. Bring then to bear upon this other memory of yours the peaceful stillness of contentment and the vivifying rain of benevolence.

Mr. Judge's note on this is also instructive. He wrote:—

... here the master, it appears, tells the fortunate chela, that in the spiritual and mental world, anxiety, harsh and bitter, raises a veil before us and prevents us from using our memory. He refers, it would seem, to the other memory above the ordinary.

And finally we may quote the expression used in the article "What Is Theosophy?" by "A Paramahansa of the Himalayas" (reprinted from *The Theosophist* for August 1882 in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT* for November 1959): "a balmy calmness, which is the heart's eye, to penetrate the mysteries of nature."

Ancient as well as modern wisdom, vaticination and science, agree in corroborating the claims of the kabalists. It is on the indestructible tablets of the astral light that is stamped the impression of every thought we think, and every act we perform; and that future events — effects of long-forgotten causes — are already delineated as a vivid picture for the eye of the seer and prophet to follow. Memory — the despair of the materialist, the enigma of the psychologist, the sphinx of science — is to the student of old philosophies merely a name to express that power which man unconsciously exerts, and shares with many of the inferior animals — to look with inner sight into the astral light, and there behold the images of past sensations and incidents. Instead of searching the cerebral ganglia for "micrographs of the living and the dead, of scenes that we have visited, of incidents in which we have borne a part," they went to the vast repository where the records of every man's life as well as every pulsation of the visible cosmos are stored up for all Eternity!

—*Isis Unveiled*, I. 178-79

THE WAY TO FREEDOM

Master, why do we want to be free? What prevents us from being free? How can we become free?

Friend, the urge of the spirit within this casket of flesh and blood is to free itself from the *tamas* of the body, the *rajas* of the emotions, and even the *sattva* of the mind. These are the bonds that the spirit within would break asunder. They are also like the clouds that hide *Surya*, the sun, from the earth and which the former is ever striving to pierce and then dispel. The same spirit is to be found, not only in all men, but also in the clod of earth, the lightning and the storm, the volcanic eruption and the peace of spring. Therefore the life within is ever pushing its way through the forms to join with the life freed from other forms, for there is but one life. That is evolution. Just as water runs downhill to join the ocean, so the spirit within our body and in every atom of that body and throughout Nature is constantly struggling to be free of its limiting forms, whether of dense matter, of emotions and desires, or of ideas. This is growth. The plant pushes its way up out of the seed and out of the darkness of the earth to the light, and goes on pushing to the extent of the limits prescribed by its nature in order to reach the sunlight and perform its duty of cyclic sacrifice and growth. The seed sacrifices itself to become a plant, the bud sacrifices itself to become the bloom and the bloom sacrifices itself so that the seed it contains may begin a new cycle of life.

Follow this cycle of activity in your own life and you will see what makes you bound, to what you are bound, and what constitutes freedom.

But, Master, how shall I know what binds me? All I sense is the urge to be free. What freedom means, I do not know!

Friend, are you dissatisfied with your life, with your capacities, your environment, outer and inner? Do the hundred cords of desire keep you bound? Are you longing for "something afar from the sphere of our sorrow" and trying to overcome setbacks and hindrances?

Yes, Master, that is just how I feel.

Then, O Friend, realize now, by dwelling upon the idea and not merely on the words, that your trouble lies in your mind, with your thoughts, both with their misuse and their lack. Begin to think what freedom means and how it can be achieved. Look at your everyday life. It is ruled by certain laws. When we know what to do under any given circumstance we are freed from the hold of that circumstance on us. The power of the mind is greater than the power of the desires, of the emotions and even of ideas; but we relinquish that power because it is hard to use and so become bound by desire-emotion-ideas. Once grasp that the power of the mind is greater than that of its vehicle (*kama*) and you must emerge victorious from the battle. Ideas are the limitations of the mind, and are as limiting to freedom as emotions or desires are. Therefore we should

constantly remember that everything that has form is a limitation that must be overcome if we would be free.

Am I, then, to be a constant destroyer? I do not like wars and destruction, for they destroy the beauty in life.

Friend, do you call the destruction of the seed, the bud, the bloom, the destruction of beauty? Is not the very sacrifice of the bloom for the sake of its "child," the seed, a beautiful thing? The rose has had its prime; its petals still give off their perfume — a return to all nature, in joyous gift, of their essence. And deep within the "child," the seed, lies the replica of the future plant.

So with the destruction of desire. Each desire destroyed should leave as its child a greater, more beautiful, desire, until in the end we realize that the desire of union with all Nature, with the Parent Sun, to become one with it and to help to give life to all, is the only desire which, far from limiting our powers, makes them universal. In other words, we thus learn that only in universal understanding, universal love, is there freedom because life and its purpose are at last understood. Only then the life of the world thrills through us and we unite with the essence of all things.

O Master, this is what I aim at, but what do I do *now* to attain it?

Cease, O Friend, from trying to *attain* anything. To try to attain implies that there is a desire to *get* something. Spiritual life is a *giving up*, not a *getting*! In time we have to give up even our individual will to become one with the corporate Will of Nature — in the sense that we help Nature and work on with her laws. Aspiring after the sun of life which shines for all, we can begin by looking at ourselves and asking, "What do I desire to do *today*? How shall I meet with the obstacles, physical, emotional, mental, that affect my repose *today*?" That is the beginning. It will keep us busy all day long. Have we been able to control our thoughts all the day and to decide mentally how to react to all things? A nightly review of our day's activities will show us which way danger lies.

But the power to do this comes from an aspect of our mind that is higher than that which we usually use, and we must feed that higher aspect at the fount of wisdom. That is why Krishna told us to do all things in His name, for Him; and, as He is the All, we can call on this universal power at every turn.

So, Friend, it is all very simple and yet very difficult. The idea is simple, but in practice there must take place a hard fight against the obstacles that arise. Think of this fight as a freeing of the imprisoned beauty of Life or of the glory and splendour of Krishna, which has been likened to the radiance of a thousand suns rising together in the sky. The living of the daily life must become, and *will* become if we make the effort, a glorifying of the God within. Our life-light will shine forth, so that others, too, shall see the glory of the God within and the way to it.

“THE VOICE OF THE WILL”

A STUDY IN “THE SECRET DOCTRINE”

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The *immutably* Infinite and the *absolutely* Boundless can neither will, think, nor act. To do this it has to become finite, and it does so, by its ray penetrating into the mundane egg — infinite space — and emanating from it as a finite god. All this is left to the ray latent in the one. When the period arrives, the absolute will expands naturally the force within it, according to the Law of which it is the inner and ultimate Essence.—*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 354.

Eros [is] the Divine Will, or *Desire of manifesting itself through visible creation*.—*Ibid.*, II. 65.

The AH-HI (Dhyan Chohans) are the collective hosts of spiritual beings — the Angelic Hosts of Christianity, the Elohim and “Messengers” of the Jews — who are the vehicle for the manifestation of the divine or universal thought and will. They are the Intelligent Forces that give to and enact in Nature her “laws,” while themselves acting according to laws imposed upon them in a similar manner by still higher Powers; but they are not the “personifications” of the powers of Nature, as erroneously thought.—*Ibid.*, I. 38.

It is those who have deserted the Superior Spheres, the Gods of Will, who complete the Manu of illusion.—From “The Catechism”: *Ibid.*, II. 57.

The two higher principles *can have no individuality on Earth*, cannot be *man*, unless there is (a) the Mind, the *Manas-Ego*, to cognize itself, and (b) the terrestrial *false* personality, or the body of egotistical desires and personal Will, to cement the whole, as if round a pivot (which it is, truly), to the physical form of man.—*Ibid.*, II. 241.

We see that every *external* motion, act, gesture, whether voluntary or mechanical, organic or mental, is produced and preceded by *internal* feeling or emotion, will or volition, and thought or mind. As no outward motion or change, when normal, in man’s external body can take place unless provoked by an inward impulse, given through one of the three functions named, so with the external or manifested Universe.—*Ibid.*, I. 274.

The closer the approach to one’s *Prototype*, “in Heaven,” the better for the mortal whose personality was chosen, by his own *personal* deity (the seventh principle), as its terrestrial abode. For, with every effort of will toward purification and unity with

that "Self-god," one of the lower rays breaks and the spiritual entity of man is drawn higher and ever higher to the ray that supersedes the first, until, from ray to ray, the inner man is drawn into the one and highest beam of the Parent-SUN.—*Ibid.*, I. 638-39.

This *thinking of oneself* as this, that, or the other, is the chief factor in the production of every kind of psychic or even physical phenomena. The words "whosoever shall say to this mountain be thou removed and cast into the sea, and *shall not doubt* . . . that thing will come to pass," are no vain words. Only the word "faith" ought to be translated by WILL. Faith without Will is like a wind-mill without *wind* — barren of results. — *Ibid.*, II. 59 fn.

Kriyasakti [is] that mysterious and divine power latent in the will of every man, and which, if not called to life, quickened and developed by Yogi-training, remains dormant in 999,999 men out of a million, and gets atrophied.—*Ibid.*, II. 173.

The source of every power of man, and of his being also, is great Nature. If out of earth-matter his body is built, if from Divine Mind his mind is derived, so, too, the human will is born of the Universal Will which H.P.B. defines as "the one and sole principle of abstract eternal Motion, or its ensouling essence."

Man and the Universe from which he emerges are indissolubly linked. The illusory aspect of this emergence shows man to be a distinct and separate entity; the reality, however, is that he does not emerge *out* of the universe but is *in* it. Like a wave which rises and falls in the ocean, man, the microcosm, emanates from and retires again into the Ocean of Life; but all the time he is intimately connected with the Universe, which is the Macrocosm. Man is the small Universe; the Universe is called the Heavenly Man.

The Will-Power of every human being, like unto the Will in Nature, is septenary in its degrees of manifestation. As an eternal principle Will is neither spirit nor substance, but everlasting ideation. Emanating from the one eternal abstract and purely quiescent Will (Atma in Layam) it becomes Buddhi in its Alaya state, descends lower as Mahat (Manas) and runs down the ladder of degrees until the divine Eros becomes, in its lower, animal manifestation, *erotic* desire.

Because of this sevenfold translation it is difficult for the Theosophical student to put his finger on any aspect of his being and call it — Will. Obstinacy is mistaken for will; hard-headedness is called strong will; egotistical pride masquerades as will; and there are other errors.

When the student, following his aspirations, endeavours to practise esoteric doctrines, he fancies that a will-resolve is a simple expression of his good desires. Four short words, parenthetically inserted by H.P.B. in writing the Third Fundamental Proposition — "(checked by its Karma)" — have a far-reaching significance. All our self-induced and self-devised efforts are checked by the Karma of the long past. Free Will and binding Fate function together like Spirit and Matter, two aspects of the One Reality.

During this month the following words of H.P.B. will be recalled, read, pondered over and acted upon by ardent aspirants:—

The astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter. Those who form their wishes now will have added strength to fulfil them consistently.

A question is sometimes asked: Why should this period between two Western Christian festivals be so important? Certainly not because it is a period between two church festivals. The period from December 21st (the Winter Solstice) to March 21st (the Spring Equinox) is a seasonal one which, copying the pagan custom, the church authorities utilized. Christmas, as the birthday of Jesus, was decided upon after much discussion at as late a date as the fourth century A.D.

The eternal enemy of man is his *ahankara*-egotism and it influences him adversely in pursuing his noble desire. Self-knowledge is necessary in formulating a resolve and remaining faithful to it. Application of Theosophical teaching in daily life means self-knowledge. Practice of Theosophy leads us astray when it is attempted without self-knowledge. This is a very important idea whose real implications need to be grasped.

In the quotations which open our study, the story of will is epitomized: The first three deal with the cosmic and metaphysical aspect of will; the next four with the human and psychological; the remaining two with the occult and practical. The student's task is to perceive the implications of this epitome and to make the necessary applications to himself.

A spiritual resolve cannot be carried out without Spiritual Will. But what is Spiritual Will? If "Will is consciousness in action" then Spiritual Will is Spirit in action. The beating of the heart, the processes of digestion and the phenomenon of blushing are examples of physical will; another group of actions, which follow ordinary wants and desires, results from psychic or personal will. Any intelligent person knows that there is a fundamental difference in kind between the two types of actions. Similarly, actions born of Spiritual Will are as different from those born of psychic or personal will, as the latter are from the beating of the heart, or digestion, or blushing. But as these bodily processes are intimately connected with desires and wants, so, too, there is a relation between the psychic-personal will and the higher Spiritual Will. The link is the Voice of Conscience. Actions born of desires and wants are not directly connected with Conscience. In ordinary men and women Conscience functions as an after-thought, bringing repentance on the heels of the evil or foolish results of wicked and selfish desires. When not acting as an admonisher, Conscience functions as a warner — for the most part a negative warner, telling the person what not to do. Thus a conflict between the voice of desire and the Voice of Conscience takes place.

Spiritual Will can be developed by a direct appeal to Conscience, but the appeal must be made with forethought, *i.e.* before the force of our wants and desires is allowed to impel us to action. Such a Promethean appeal to the inner Conscience soon reveals the necessity to aid its function by spiritual knowledge. The deeper and purer aspect of

Conscience is the direct Voice of the Divinity within us. Therefore Mr. Judge states that "the desire to be guided, ruled and assisted by the Higher Self" is a prime requisite for the cultivation of Spiritual Will. The outcome of such a development is not to be judged by what are called good and virtuous deeds in the religious world. Spirit is free from good as well as from evil, and because it is free from both it is universal and impersonal. One expression of the Spiritual Will is to do that which, and to suffer and enjoy whatever, the Higher Self has in store for one by way of discipline and experience.

What resolve shall we make, and how shall we carry it out? Translate the question thus: What desire shall we arouse within us and by what mental faculty shall we realize it?

Let the student answer the question for himself with the help of the principles put forward above.

Will is the exclusive possession of man on this our plane of consciousness. It divides him from the brute in whom instinctive desire only is active.

DESIRE, in its widest application, is the one creative force in the Universe. In this sense it is indistinguishable from Will; but we men never know desire under this form while we remain only men. Therefore Will and Desire are here considered as opposed.

Thus Will is the offspring of the Divine, the God in man; Desire the motive power of the animal life.

Most men live in and by desire, mistaking it for will. But he who would achieve must separate will from desire, and make his will the ruler; for desire is unstable, and ever changing, while will is steady and constant.

Both will and desire are absolute *creators*, forming the man himself and his surroundings. But will creates intelligently — desire blindly and unconsciously. The man, therefore, makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in a likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light.

His task is twofold: to awaken the will, to strengthen it by use and conquest, to make it absolute ruler within his body; and, parallel with this, to purify desire.

Knowledge and will are the tools for the accomplishment of this purification.

—U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7

DON'T LOOK OVER THE FENCE

“Thou art the Way and the Wayfarer!” “Thou must become the Path!” These are the injunctions given to the travellers on the Path of Self-realization. Students of Theosophy especially would do well to remember them because they have to be wary of the pitfalls on the way — the inner way. These come in many forms and many ways. The lower nature is insidious and subtle in its expression, and can assume many forms. When the traveller becomes completely enmeshed in the net of illusions and has felt for a while the sensation of pleasure, he suddenly experiences a fall, and the fall is all the more hurtful because he cannot see the reason for it; and he is, therefore, confused and shattered. He usually blames a neighbour or a friend or an associate for his downfall. It is at this time that self-examination becomes necessary. Sincere self-examination reveals that none is to be blamed except one's own personality.

The most common obstacle that the student of Theosophy encounters is self-importance, the feeling of “Behold, I know!” He has mastered the tenets of Theosophy. He has come to know intellectually the esoteric truths. He has a knowledge of the right and the wrong of actions. He has striven to live the life, to the best of his ability, and knows that he has traversed some distance. It is now that the danger arises. He pauses for a while on the difficult path and looks around. He sees co-travellers struggling. The pathways are many and he is tempted to look over the fence and view the terrain of his neighbour. What he sees shocks him: ill-kept gardens, wrong ways of work, stupidity, lethargy and other shortcomings that are accepted as a part of human nature. Revolt grips him and he hastens to condemn and to attempt to correct the failings of other men. He finds fault with them and feels that, as he knows the Truth, he has a right to be their guardian. He strives to correct other men, not with the compassionate understanding that comes only with the full realization of the heart doctrine, but with the rod of a policeman who keeps guard. He hastens to sit in judgment over others and thinks he can reform them in the light of the knowledge that he has acquired and by virtue of the distance that he has traversed on the path, paying scant attention to the Theosophical injunction and advice: “Judge not, speak little, love much, and work.”

He judges his neighbours, and speech becomes necessary for the incessant pointing out of other people's faults, in an effort to reform them; love diminishes at the magnitude of their vices that go unbridled; and work becomes that of condemning and correcting others and trying to do their duties better than they, in order to show them the right path. And in all this, the student loses sight of his own goal and his own path; his progress is retarded, and he gets enmeshed in his own feelings of wrath and anger.

It is important for us, therefore, to understand that we have no right to look over other people's fences and do other people's duties while we have our own path to travel and our own duties to perform. If we fix our

eyes upon our own next step and tread the way without looking around, we may travel in peace and comfort. Everyone struggling to go forward has a way of his own, and it is not right for a fellow traveller to try to weed out another's garden *unless he is called upon to do so*.

Compassionate understanding comes when one has looked into the hearts of men wisely and fully. Until then no one has a right to reform other men, because such reform will not bear fruit unless accompanied by the tolerance and love which spring from self-knowledge.

GRATITUDE

We are often told that gratitude is a necessary adjunct to spiritual living, for to be grateful is to recognize that we do not live alone but are linked with other living beings. At its root lies also the recognition of the fact that unless we make a return in some way for benefits received we miss the value of the gift.

But do we pause to think to whom or what we owe our character, our opportunities, our environment? We often feel a sense of injustice when we lack opportunities or capacities, or find ourselves in a bad environment, and we blame "past Karma." And as we in our present personality did not create that Karma we feel the effects to be unjust. H.P.B. says that it is because of this feeling in the personality that *Devachan* is necessary.

But have we paused to ask where our good character, our good opportunities and our capacities come from? To whom do we owe them? Did they come to us by chance? Are they, too, unmerited? Ought we not to feel a sense of gratitude for these things, not only to the LAW, but to the personalities our Ego had clothed itself in in prior lives, and whose sufferings and struggles are bearing fruit in the form of the good character that we have today, the opportunities and good environment that we now enjoy? Our body is weak—we blame past Karma! Our body is strong and healthy—we take this for granted! Good opportunities come our way—we take them for granted! But when faced with lack of opportunities we feel life is hard! A good environment in the present has been earned, not by our present personality, but through the efforts of other personalities the real "I" in us has lived in in the past. Let us pause and send a thought of gratitude to those dead and gone personalities, whose efforts and endeavours are not dead and gone and are responsible for placing us where we find ourselves today.

Will the new personalities our Ego will have in the future feel grateful to the "us" of today for what we are suffering and struggling to achieve in this life? It is good to think that perhaps our new personalities will spare a thought of gratitude for what we are giving them as a gift, won by "blood and sweat," struggle and strife!

THEOSOPHY—ANCIENT AND MODERN

H.P.B. tells us on the title-page of *The Key to Theosophy* that it is “a clear exposition . . . of the Ethics, Science and Philosophy for the study of which the Theosophical Society has been founded.” She says elsewhere that it explains “clearly and in plain language what our Esoteric Theosophy believes in and what it disbelieves and *positively rejects*.” Therefore we can easily see why the book was dedicated by “H.P.B.” “to all her pupils that they may learn and teach in their turn.” Her use of the initials “H.P.B.” instead of the full name is significant.

With these ideas in mind, we can approach the book in quite a different way from that in which we approach other books on Theosophy. We are being “taught” as pupils are taught, by a teacher. We have to learn before we can ourselves teach. What we learn are “facts” as to what the philosophy teaches. But there is more to the study than the learning of facts: we must understand the facts and their interrelationship with one another. This we can understand when we look at the educative value of the book in the true spirit, that of developing the mind so that it can see a whole picture, not just isolated subjects.

Right at the beginning we find this being brought out, for the plan of the book is interesting. H.P.B. has said that it is in the continuity of the doctrines that lies their strength, and in many places she has reiterated that the Theosophical Movement has existed for ages and many witnesses to it have appeared from time to time in the world’s history. Here, in one of her last works, she calls her Society the modern successor of the ancient Eclectic Theosophical School. That the present Movement exists is known to us, but we are told that it is not to be viewed as something that just happened to come into being in 1875. And, she tells us, in the last pages of the book, that this, our Movement, is to receive new energy, new vitality, at the close of the hundred-year cycle when the new Messenger is expected — if the Movement is still alive and has not failed as so many other attempts have in the past.

The Theosophical Movement is, she tells us, a resuscitation of the work of Ammonius Saccas (c. 175-242 A.D.), who started, in Alexandria, a system whose objects were similar to those of the Society she founded in 1875. The first object of his system was “to inculcate certain great moral truths upon its disciples, and all those who were ‘lovers of the truth.’” And she links this up with the motto adopted by her Society: “There is no religion higher than Truth.” She also tells us that Ammonius Saccas had, as his chief aim, the reconciliation of all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities; and this, too, was one of the three objects of her Society. It should not be thought, however, that the teachings H.P.B. gave out are entirely copied from the Neo-Platonic Theosophy.

Lest we stop our backward glance too soon, she reminds us that the system of Ammonius Saccas was itself but a resuscitation of the work of Pot-Amun, who lived in the early days of the Ptolemaic dynasty (c. 300 B.C.). Even before that time a similar endeavour had existed, for

it has been said that Ammonius Saccas propounded his instruction "according to the ancient pillars of Hermes, which Plato and Pythagoras knew before, and from them constituted their philosophy." Who was Hermes? Whether as the Egyptian Thoth or the Greek Hermes, he was the God of Wisdom with the Ancients, and, according to Plato, "discovered numbers, geometry, astronomy and letters."

H.P.B. does not draw our attention to any other society or system, similar to the Eclectic Theosophical system of Ammonius Saccas, that might have existed between that time and our own, though she tells us of the Philadelphian Society and of the "Theosophical Transactions" published by it in 1697. She refers elsewhere to Apollonius as "an enthusiastic founder of a new spiritual school" (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 341), and to such characters as Fludd, Thomas Vaughan, Paracelsus, Pico della Mirandola and Count St. Germain, "whose temperamental affinity to this celestial science more or less forced the distant Adepts to come into personal relations with them, and enabled them to get such small (or large) proportion of the whole truth as was possible under their social surroundings." (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, pp. 1-2)

We are also given a warning. H.P.B. tells us of the three heads under which Eclectic Theosophy was divided, and the third of these was Theurgy. What is Theurgy? It is a mystic belief that by returning to one's pristine purity of nature man can communicate with the "gods" and move them to impart to him Divine mysteries. To arrive at such an exalted goal the aspirant must be absolutely worthy and unselfish. Otherwise Theurgy degenerates into mediumship or black magic. This has a message for us today, for the third object of H.P.B.'s Society was to investigate the powers latent in man, and much of her work was to separate the psychic from the divine powers. The development of the latter requires purity and holiness of life. Psychic capacities running riot, controlling instead of being controlled, H.P.B. warned, "lead the student into the most dangerous delusions and the certainty of moral destruction." But this warning was not heeded, and is not disregarded of it one of the factors that disrupted the original Theosophical Society?

In the early pages of *The Key to Theosophy*, one other point stands out clearly with its message to us today. Theosophy, in spite of being "as old as the world," has remained unknown for long centuries, especially in the West, and the reason for its having been kept secret is that the average human nature is not only selfish, but is also unreliable when it comes to keeping the sacred and divine knowledge from desecration. "It is this that led to the perversion of the most sublime truths and symbols, and to the gradual transformation of things spiritual into anthropomorphic, concrete and gross imagery — in other words, to the dwarfing of the god-idea and to idolatry." Does this not contain a warning for us all? In any case we are warned to learn exactly what we are taught, without letting it be coloured by our preconceived ideas to turn the consciousness inward, and, with purity of life, to liberate that consciousness from the limitations of the senses and of personal life.

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE

We must live with reality, and when it does not fit our "rathers" we can, by the power of example, become instruments of change.

Keeping an ear turned inward will help us realize that the conscience always opts for self-improvement rather than criticism of others. This temptation toward mutual criticism is probably stronger among ourselves as we, through close association, fancy ourselves seers of one another's faults. The personality will ever urge us to "call a spade a spade," for it judges by appearances and presents no real alternative other than words, while the soul "criticizes" by becoming an *outstanding* example.

The authoritarians will disagree with us on this, being advocates of personal achievement, ostentation and power by position and assumption, by external coercion rather than the excellent example of a life of sacrifice. Yet their answers have turned to poison in this age of ours. The blindness caused by habitual error makes change for the better difficult unless we who know a better way become exemplars of it, willing to let ourselves be made scapegoats — not in anger, but simply as a recognized duty to the human family.

Not malice, but ignorance, has built nation-states with their reliance on violence. Some national leaders, having become certain that power can be obtained and retained through the ability to inhibit rather than transform, need the light of voluntary sacrifice to take them beyond the "policeman" concept of law and order. People may give lectures on why we should not be martyrs, or why we should be "effective," or how such-and-such could be done better. Yet these very same people will turn round and make themselves lifetime martyrs to materialism and all the short-sightedness that comes from believing in one life only. Mistaking appearances for reality, they opt for "separatism" and consider life to be lived for their own benefit. This failure to benefit others first and themselves second ignores the unity of all life. By such devious personalism we deny our responsibility for the condition of life and ignore our duty to be agents for improvement.

We are responsible for the "little lives" that make up our bodies, the thoughts that inhabit our minds and all the duties connected with being alive, whether or not we like the fact or even recognize it. We disregard this responsibility at our own peril, just as the disease cells in a human body endanger their existence by pursuing separatism at the expense of the very body to which they themselves belong, thus making the mistake of personal ambition.

People who consider the idealistic life a useless martyrdom neglect to consider the relative effect of men like Socrates and Cræsus, or Buddha and Genghis Khan. In the light of history, Socrates would appear to have made a much more pragmatic series of choices than Cræsus. In the "Apology" we read that he had the materialistic choice offered him by a wealthy man who was able to buy his way out of prison and had a safe refuge prepared where he could pass the remainder of his days in safety and comfort. Socrates' answer, in refusing this offer, showed that he had

some fundamental ideas regarding why life was worth living, ideas which made an excellent example more dear to his heart than another day unreeled inside the body.

There is a contentment in trying to do one's natural duty (*dharma*) to other beings that cannot be found in the pursuit of lust or possessions. We may not be the best of human cells in this great body, "Humanity," but we can be as good as it is within our power to be. It might be that the true pragmatist will turn out to have been that man who lived by serving his fellow men, having only ambition and desire for a better world.

Count Lyof Tolstoi says in his book, "My Religion," that when we ask a believer of whatever sect, a philosopher of whatever school, or even the "average" man, why he continues to lead a life in disaccord with his religious or philosophical ideas, a life, in short, which his theory condemns, he makes no reply, but begins at once to talk about things in general, about the State, commerce or civilization. They are one and all disgusted and humiliated at not possessing any doctrine with regard to life, for no one can live in peace without understanding what life really means. Count Tolstoi says further: "I seek in vain in civilized society as it exists today for any clearly formulated moral bases of life. There are none. No perception of their necessity exists. On the contrary, we find the extraordinary conviction that they are superfluous; that religion is nothing more than a few words about God and a future life, and a few ceremonies very useful for the salvation of the soul according to some, and good for nothing according to others; but that life happens of itself and has no need of any fundamental rule, and that we have only to do what we are told to do. Or rather, we have only to do as others do, or to please ourselves so long as we hurt no one else." But may we not ask: Is it not just this state of mind, prevalent among the majority, as described by Count Tolstoi, which is the cause of a certain number of pious and even reasoning people holding on to religion as expressed by the Churches, because these stand at least as witnesses to the spiritual life? However unsatisfactory that expression, however feeble the arguments of preachers, the meaning *behind* these doctrines, these ceremonies, these vestments and altar-lights, is that there *is* a Light towards which we strive, that there *is* a rule by which we must live, whether we grasp its full meaning or not. It seems to me that it will need many years of theosophic teaching, and above all of theosophic *living*, to show the world that the Light is independent of the candlestick, and that the Sacrifice needs no material altar. In the ideas of a certain class of minds at present, no-church leads to libertinism, and religion without ritual means life without morality. It may be wise, therefore, to second the efforts of those who would introduce the leaven of Theosophy into theological teaching; all cannot be philosophers; *aut homines, aut mentes*. "Milk for babes," and the rest in due order.

—*Lucifer*, September 1890

STUDIES IN THE "TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE"

VII

FOHAT

There is an absolute Reality which antecedes manifested conditioned Being; but, once we pass in thought from this, to us, Absolute Negation, duality supervenes in the contrast of Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object. These are to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets of the Absolute which constitute the basis of conditioned Being, whether subjective or objective. Spirit, or pre-Cosmic Ideation, is the root of all individual consciousness; while Matter, or rather pre-Cosmic Substance, underlies all the objective planes of Nature.

It is the contrast of these two aspects which is essential to the existence of the "Manifested Universe"; but, just as these two are synthesized in the Unity, so they are linked in manifestation by a third, Fohat, which is defined as a "bridge" between them.

Described in this way, the subject of Fohat seems relatively straightforward, and we have thought fit to begin this study with a recapitulation of some of the principles of the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*. As often happens, once we pursue a subject, what seemed simple becomes complex and confusing. It challenges us gently and patiently to break up the first moulds of our thought, to widen and deepen our understanding, until the complex becomes simple once again. The concept of Fohat is no exception.

On p. 38 of the *Transactions*, Madame Blavatsky says, answering a question:—

Fohat is a generic term and used in many senses. He is the *light* (Daiviprakriti) of all the three *logoi*—the personified symbols of the three *spiritual stages* of Evolution. Fohat is the aggregate of all the spiritual creative ideations *above*, and of all the electro-dynamic and creative forces *below*, in Heaven and on Earth.

On p. 140, she speaks of "the breath of the precosmic Fohat" under which immaculate matter differentiates to become the "immaculate mother" of the "Son" or the manifested Universe.

Considerable help in the understanding of the different aspects of Fohat mentioned in the *Transactions* will be found on p. 109 of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. Three aspects are described there, corresponding, we suggest, to the three *logoi*: the first or unmanifested, the second or semi-manifested, and the third or manifested *logos*. "Apology" we read of the unmanifested, Kosmos is not yet born and "the wealthy man who in the bosom of 'Father-Mother.'" Remember that refuge prepared with the dual potentiality of Spirit-Matter out of which and comfort. Socrates or primordial *substance* in which all the differentia-

tions of matter occur, but which in essence remains undifferentiated. It is the Noumenon of all phenomenal manifestations. Remember, also, the answer on p. 38 of the *Transactions*, quoted in an earlier study, that "individual objects (*i.e.*, the *differentiated* Kosmos) may be in Laya, but the Universe cannot be so when Father-Mother appears." In this stage prior to manifestation, Fohat cannot be what is described at the end of the First Fundamental Proposition. In the words of *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 109):—

He is an abstract philosophical idea. He produces nothing yet by himself; he is simply that potential creative power in virtue of whose action the NOUMENON of all future phenomena divides, so to speak, but to reunite in a mystic supersensuous act, and emit the creative ray.

In other words, the stage of the pre-cosmic is that of Father-Mother, or Spirit-Matter, a united potentiality, not that of Spirit contrasting with Matter. In order that the manifested universe may be born within this One, this all-pervading infinitude, the two must contrast or separate but to reunite immediately.

When the "Divine Son" breaks forth, then Fohat becomes the propelling force, the active Power which causes the ONE to become Two and THREE — on the Cosmic plane of manifestation. The triple One differentiates into the many, and then Fohat is transformed into that force which brings together the elemental atoms and makes them aggregate and combine.

Note that it is only after the stage of the pre-cosmic that the trinity of Spirit, Matter and Fohat can be spoken of. It is this trinity which undergoes differentiation, a process sometimes symbolized in its initial stage as the three falling into four.

From the beginning of manifestation, Fohat can be seen from two vantage points: from one as the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation, the "Thought Divine" transmitted and made manifest through the Dhyan Chohans, the Architects of the visible World; from the other as the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation which electrifies every atom into life. A somewhat similar distinction is made on p. 95 of the *Transactions*:—

When the hour strikes for the Third Logos to appear, then from the latent potentiality there radiates a lower field of differentiated consciousness, which is Mahat, or the entire collectivity of those Dhyan Chohans of *sentient life* of which Fohat is the representative on the objective plane and the Manasaputras on the subjective.

And on p. 38 it is stated: "Fohat is the aggregate of all the spiritual creative ideations *above*, and of all the electro-dynamic and creative forces *below*, in Heaven and on Earth."

Alongside this last quotation consider the passage on pp. 116-17 of the *Transactions* describing the sun, from which we extract the following:—

The Sun, as on our plane, is not even "Solar" fire. The Sun we see, gives nothing of itself, because it is a reflection; a bundle of electro-magnetic forces, one of the countless millions of "Knots of Fohat."

For a long time now our scientists have ceased to regard the sun as a globe in combustion. It is a centre or focus in space in which matter in an elemental condition is spontaneously converting itself into energy which reaches every part of the solar system in the form of radiation, visible and invisible, there to undergo further transformations. This radiation is of the nature of electro-magnetic waves. The last term is used by analogy with water waves in which there is a rhythmic up-and-down movement of the water as the waves travel outwards from their centre.

In electro-magnetic waves there is no movement of any known material medium, but as they pass through any point in space there are rhythmic changes in both electric and magnetic forces acting at that point. A magnet will attract a piece of iron. The former exerts a magnetic force on the latter. Rub a dry fountain pen with a cloth and it will attract tiny pieces of paper. It exerts an electric force of attraction upon them. These forces are exactly similar to those which are simultaneously in action in visible light and in all other forms of electro-magnetic radiation such as wireless waves, ultra-violet light, X-rays, gamma rays and so on. The latter cannot manifest in the same way, partly because in a single ray the forces are minute, and partly because they are oscillating so rapidly — often millions of times per second — that the magnet or the pieces of paper would be quite unable to respond even to larger forces. This does not reduce the nature of light to the commonplace. Magnetic and electric attraction is a commonplace occurrence. The essential nature of the forces remains mysterious.

The corner-stone of MAGIC is an intimate practical knowledge of magnetism and electricity, their qualities, correlations, and potencies. Especially necessary is a familiarity with their effects in and upon the animal kingdom and man. (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 589)

He who is single-minded, fixed on the word divine, his steadfast fulfilment of duty will make the knowing Soul within him pure; to him whose knowing Soul is pure a knowledge of the Self supreme shall come; and through this knowledge of the Self supreme he shall destroy this circle of birth and death and its root together.

—SHANKARACHARYA

CAN FEMALES BECOME ADEPTS?

[We reprint below, from *The Theosophist*, Vol. V, p. 23, for October 1883, the reply given by Damodar K. Mavalankar to an inquirer's question: "Will you kindly let me know whether females can attain to adeptship, and whether female adepts exist at all?" "Woman," H.P.B. wrote in *Lucifer* for June 1889, "has as good a chance as any man has to reach high Adeptship. Why she does not succeed in this direction . . . is simply due to her early education and the social prejudice which causes her to be regarded as inferior to man."—Eds.]

It is difficult to see any good reason why females should not become Adepts. None of us, Chelas, are aware of any physical or other defect which might entirely incapacitate them from undertaking the dreary ordeal. It may be more difficult, more dangerous for them than it is for men, still not impossible. The Hindu sacred books and traditions mention such cases, and since the laws of Nature are immutable, what was possible some thousand years ago must be possible now. If our correspondent had referred to the Editorial Notes, page 148, Vol. III (Article, "Reincarnations in Tibet"),¹ he would have found the existence of a female Adept hinted at — the pious Chinese Princess who, after living for ten years a married life, renounced it with her husband's consent and became a *Gelung-ma*, or Ani, *i.e.*, a nun. She is believed to be still reincarnating herself "*in a succession of female Lamas.*" The late Tde-shoo Lama's sister is said to be one of such reincarnations. From this lady-Adept, the Superior of the Nunnery on the Palte-Lake, a Tibetan pedlar of Darjeeling acknowledged to some Bengal Theosophists, who visited that place last year, to have received a talisman. That pedlar is now supposed to be dead; but those Theosophists who heard repeatedly his statement can testify to the fact. In Nepal, we all know, there is a high female Adept. And in Southern India flourished at a recent date another great female Initiate named Ouvaiyar. . . . In Benares too lives a certain lady, unsuspected and unknown but to the very few, to whom reference has been made in *The Theosophist* in the article "Swami Dayanand's Views about Yoga" (page 47, Vol. II).² Further information about these few already mentioned or any other female Adepts we may know of, we do not feel at liberty to give. If our numerous cor-

¹ See THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. VIII, p. 140, footnotes.—Eds.

² This article is the report of a series of questions put to Swami Dayanand by Colonel Olcott, during several interviews at which notes were taken. The passage in question reads :

"Q. Can a Yogi thus pass from his own body into that of a woman ?

"A. With as much ease as a man can, if he chooses, put on himself the dress of a woman, so he can put over his own *atma* her physical form. Externally, he would then be in every physical aspect and relation a woman ; internally, himself.

"Q. I have met two such ; that is to say, two persons who appeared women, but who were entirely masculine in everything but the body. One of them, you remember, we visited together at Benares, in a temple on the back of the Ganges.

"A. Yes, 'Majji.'"

respondents would carefully go over the back numbers of this journal, they would find many of their questions already anticipated and answered; and thus they would save us an unnecessary travelling over the same line.

—D. K. M.

Q. — What proof is there of the existence and powers of the exalted *race* of beings styled Adepts or Mahatmas?

A. — We know of no "*race* of beings" styled the Adepts or Mahatmas. We know only of mortal men, as we are ourselves, who, though born in the same way as we are born and subject to death in the end, in common with all humanity of our fifth race, have nevertheless by self-restraint, purity of life, and steadiness of purpose become Adepts. These we know, and no others. For us, They are the *most* "exalted beings" we know of, on this earth, as the most wise, and kind, and pure of men. The proofs of Their existence for those of us who know Them, who have lived near Them, and learned from Them, are furnished by our physical as much as our spiritual senses.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

Our correspondent need not trouble himself as to what *might* be the consequences if all the world should turn ascetics and *chelas* and train for adeptship. There are enough realities in this life for us to look into, without concocting such wild contingencies to vex ourselves withal. There was never a time yet, nor ever will be, while this human race lasts, when anything more than a small minority would devote themselves to the mighty task of self-conquest and spiritual evolution. The adept is as rare as the flower of the Vogay tree, which, the Tamil proverb says, is most difficult to see. So what our friend read referred to the ideal man, living — and most necessary — type of human perfectibility. The mere certainty that such rare powers — psychical and intellectual — and such moral grandeur, as he exemplifies, are within human reach, gives dignity to our common nature and a worthy model to look up to, and, in some degree, pattern after. The organs of our body were not "given" to us at all — if we may credit modern science; they developed themselves as occasion required; and, when disused, they gradually diminish and disappear: which they would not if "given." "What man's mission upon earth would be if all were good," is more than we can say. To merely imagine such a state of things is beyond the limited range of our mental powers. But if they were not *too* good they might, perhaps, try to become better. There is no "Theosophical religion," and every member professes the one he prefers.

—*The Theosophist*, August 1882

EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

Of course unlearning is difficult; our likes are countered; our dislikes have to be encountered. People would be clear-sighted if intellectual integrity were to develop. But it seems to me that the starting point is *Vairagya*. My own experience is that not many people like to be told the truth about themselves. They will agree if you say to them that falsehood is bad; but tell them that falsehood is in them and we are up against it. Love's labour of one's very heart is not only lost but it arouses resentment and violence. And yet how can we say nought, face to face with clear-cut wrong-doing? Impersonal preaching is the best for all such; but will they apply what is said from the platform, or what appears in *The Theosophical Movement*? Of course one's own example also tells, and sometimes that is more effective than talk. Therefore one *has* to aim high, very high, and though our ideals are not realized, if we steadily work towards realization then good will come not only to us but to some others also. It is well that we desire to see the next step only, but after having seen the step do we keep on looking at it or do we take the step and look for the next one? Marking time will never do. Masters and Their Work seem to me the very best ideal, for there is constant opportunity for a partial realization — something attempted, something achieved. It is a strengthening feeling.

A retaliatory attitude is a sure sign of violence in the mind. People may suppress verbal violence and repress violence in action; but, as long as they harbour it in the mind, come out it will in speech and deed. Though in more than a dozen places the truth is reiterated, especially by Judge, we do not try with might and main to uproot the power of violence from the mind. This power is *Ahriman* and is of the "I"-making faculty of *Ahankara*. When we fight other personalities we overlook curbing our own. *Ahimsa's* kinship with Karma needs to be stressed, and the fact that the fight is in one's own *mind* needs to be realized.

To recognize that one is violent in mind is a vital perception. Most people do not register it and are blissfully ignorant of the fact. Knowing it as you do, you are bound to check the violence, but herein comes memory, which gives us the slip. The great part played by this memory is another thing not usually noticed. Without remembering, the control of violence is not possible. After memory follow attentiveness, patience and "try, try, try again." The factor of study in remedying violence is to be recalled: the mirror of the mind requires "the gentle breezes of soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions." This verse also points to the coming of "dust" from the Astral Light, and we have to be vigilant and not allow that "dust" to settle on and in our minds.

About violence and retaliation: Oppose evil we must, even attack it, but without venom and anger and pride in our own consciousness. Gandhiji ordered marauding monkeys to be killed with a purpose, a

motive and a method. He said that in defence of wife or daughter one must fight, even physically, but in proportion as there is the spirit of violence in the fighter he will be the loser in the battle. Destruction does involve "violence," but it is the power which works at death and at Pralaya. The power of decay and disintegration of the body is a good example. Do we destroy our own body? Do people hate their own body? Most would like to live on and on. What causes decay in the body? What disintegrates the corpse? We must distinguish between human violence, which involves hatred in some form, and that other destructive-regenerative power of and in Nature symbolized by Shiva-Rudra. Are we violent when we eliminate waste matter from our body? Between natural death and suicide the difference is of this pranic character. Technically speaking, what is the nature of my magnetism when I am "violent"? The flow of astral fluid charged by one's thought, will and feeling is *the* factor. The Buddhi Yoga of the second chapter of the *Gita* teaches: "Do not count on or care for the fruits of deeds." This is a thought-will-feeling process on the side of consciousness and a magnetism and astral fluid process on that of substance. In Master's letter (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 29*) this is explained.

As to the *Critic*, — is doing very good work, and what if he attacks the U.L.T.? The thing for us to note is — do we deserve these attacks? If we do, then we have to change ourselves; if we do not, then we must thank — for publicity, even though it comes through an unjust channel. It does not show tolerance on the part of people who do not want to read the *Critic* because it contains attacks on the U.L.T.

As for our attitude when we are thanked and praised for whatever we have done: well, there is a thought in the *Ramayana*, I believe. It is said that it was Rama's rule to remember the smallest deed of good rendered to him and to forget the critical and the evil. That is one thing. Then we have to turn round and make an offering of the praise bestowed on us to Them whose service we are performing. This cannot be done loudly and openly always, but whenever it is discreet and possible one should say, "Give the credit where it belongs, to the Great Ones." We accept in silence and learn when people criticize or condemn. We rejoice that our Lord's work, done by Him through us, has helped or pleased others. But *the* sweetest feeling is our doing works in quiet, unknown and unnoticed by others; this expands our hearts and minds because the constant Watchers bless it. Often we do not feel this blessing, but sometimes we do. There is no greater recompense, believe me. Thus we do not remain unaffected by praise — that is the necessary early step — but we use that very praise for some further beneficence. Is that not so?

Gratitude is rare. It is said that the sun feels grateful that it can warm the earth and the trees and the creatures, including human beings. It is a very superior quality and has aspects and phases not easily under-

stood. The third chapter of the *Gita* offers basic ideas; the proper understanding of the World of Light and Lights is another factor; and there are others. The development of gratitude does not emanate from ordinary study; it is a feeling related to the Buddhi, which is passive. In proportion as Buddhi is activated the power of gratitude comes forth. Think along this line. Compassion and Wisdom are two powers which coalesce in man. Gratitude and other moral aspects pertain to compassion.

H.P.B.'s article, "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work," is full of real Occultism. You should read it *de novo*. It is true that good done to others, in certain cases, evokes, not gratitude, but the reverse. There is a strange aspect of the Law of Justice when its real mercy comes to the man in pain and suffering. Pride of a peculiar nature suffuses a personality, and to be kind to such an one proves unhelpful, to say the least. The beggar problem also has its awkward side: sometimes a test is revealing; a man wants money and he says he is hungry. Offer him food to eat and he resents it; he wants money. Personal and collective Karma is very intricate. I personally prefer to err on the side of mercy than to emphasize the aspect of justice.

To be like his Guru in all things, and as much as is possible, is the expression of real gratitude, or, shall we say, *the* real expression. Here is still another aspect of silence and secrecy used for right development.

People sometimes charge others with intolerance. Perhaps this accusation arises, not on account of the statements actually made, but because of the tone and feeling within and behind them. One can usually state his belief and understanding, giving his reasons therefor, without arousing antagonism. This is a good thing to strive for. Tolerance is good, if understood rightly; but there are many strange ideas in regard to it. Some think it to be intolerance to point out to others holding different views any errors of statement or fact. But Truth never yet agreed with error, nor does error agree with error; Truth agrees only with Truth. So if we firmly believe, and are convinced by fact and reason, that we are in possession of Truth, it would be a false tolerance which would withhold it in the face of error. Truth exists in the world for the purpose of destroying error. Error is dogmatic and does not court close investigation. Truth courts all and every possible investigation and, calm in its certitude, examines everything upon its merits, tests it by the standard of Truth.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Those who hold, with Alfred North Whitehead, that "Moral education is impossible without the habitual vision of greatness," will welcome President Radhakrishnan's reiterated appeal to educationists to imbue young children's minds, at their impressionable age, with the teachings of great sages and seers and with stories of men who exemplified nobility of character and spiritual saintliness. (*The Hindu*, April 1st)

Dr. Radhakrishnan, who was inaugurating a three-day seminar on spiritual values in education at the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya at Perianaickenpalayam, eleven miles from Coimbatore, stressed the need for spiritual indoctrination. He explained how such a step would help to evolve a society free from fear, attachment and hatred.

Speaking of the ideal of education, he said:—

Every great civilization has had its own idea of the purpose of education. The Greeks thought of intellectual power and æsthetic perfection. The Romans opined civic patriotism and loyalty to the State. In this country, however, we looked upon education as a means for initiation into the higher life to make people once born, twice born. Whatever may be our caste, all of our caste, community and religion are born into the world of nature and the purpose of education and life on earth is to make us reborn into the world of spirit and freedom. That has been the ideal which motivated our country from the early centuries. Man, as he is, has to be surpassed. He is incomplete and he has to be completed. Nature has a scheme of planned development. Just as intellectual man is quite different from the animal, so the spiritual man is quite different from the intellectual man. What is necessary is to enable the human being endowed as he is with intellect, will and emotion, to act from a higher plane, not from the narrow egotistic plane.

He emphasized the importance of strengthening the individual will and conforming it to the divine Will. Whatever work we do, we should do it with a sense of dedication. Intellect, emotion and will have all to be transformed if the human being is to become a complete spiritual man. The spiritual man is as different from the human man as the latter is from the animal. "Transmutation of your personality," the President said, "is a call laid on every human being." To achieve this, he recommended the cultivation of the habit of self-scrutiny or solitary meditation. Mere intellectual learning will not lead to the development of spiritual values, nor will it make one learn the truth.

A recent congress of the Bavarian Catholic Academy, convened in Munich, was intended as an opportunity for scientists and theologians to discuss a topic of great mutual interest — "the scientific understanding of the world and of life." Discussion centred on the problem of the

origin of life as understood scientifically and theologically. As it is important for students of Theosophy to know the trend of recent scientific thinking on this subject, we give below the gist of the proceedings, which are reported in *Universitas* (Vol. 5, No. 3).

The first speaker, the Giessen biochemist Professor Hansjürgen Staudinger, based his arguments on the fact that life can only be supported at a certain temperature, say anywhere between 0° and 100° centigrade, and claimed that there can only have been life on our planet for about the last 2,000 million years. Evolution, which he understood as the "fanning-out of life," must, according to him, have begun about 1,000 million years later. Using accepted concepts, he demonstrated how, in the third quarter of the earth's history, complicated molecules such as protein and nucleic acids could have evolved out of an atmosphere at that time still in a state of reduction and therefore containing only simple molecules (ammoniac, hydrogen sulphide, nitrogen, etc.) and no oxygen. An accepted idea today, Professor Staudinger pointed out, is the development of living matter from inorganic materials. How the first cell evolved from some already highly complicated structure is still a subject of scientific speculation, and Professor Staudinger left this question unanswered.

Professor Wolfgang Grassmann, Director of the Max Planck Institute in Munich, drew attention to the fact that the decisive step towards a scientific explanation of the origin of life, namely the question of how organic substance managed to achieve autocatalytic self-propagation, was still shrouded in mystery.

The Bonn astronomer Professor Joseph Meurers and physicist Wolfgang Büchel expressed themselves on the question of how the world came into existence. The result of 400 years of astronomical research, Professor Meurers said, is that "we no longer understand this universe." The more deeply we penetrate into the secrets of nature, "the stranger and more unfamiliar it becomes to us"; man remains shut off from any understanding of the whole. Professor Büchel remarked that it is only in eastern ideology that we find the concept of the eternity of the Universe.

Professor Hermann Lais, a representative of Catholic theology, defined the relative spheres of competence of science and theology. Referring to the difficulty many Christians experience in reconciling the biblical account of creation in six days with the scientific explanation of the origin of life and the world, he said that the six-day creation is to be understood, not literally, but symbolically.

The Theosophical view, which is the view of Occult Science, is that "there never was a time when the Earth was without life upon it. Wherever there is an atom of matter, a particle or a molecule, even in its most gaseous condition, there is life in it, however latent and unconscious" (*S.D.*, I. 258). Occultism thus disposes of the so-called Azoic age of science, the age in which there is supposed to have been no trace of life. Life always was, is and ever shall be; it did not originate, but is the origin of all. It is, therefore, life which caused the earth to come into existence.

As *The Secret Doctrine* maintains, life could not produce an inorganic atom, whether simple or complex, nor could life arise from inorganic molecules. Every physical point or atom is but the phenomenal expression of the noumenal, metaphysical point. According to Occult Science, there are

three distinct Hosts, which, counted from the highest planes, are, firstly, "gods," or conscious, spiritual *Egos*; the intelligent architects, who work after the plan in the *Divine Mind*. Then come the Elementals, or *Monads*, who form collectively and unconsciously the grand Universal Mirrors of everything connected with their respective realms. Lastly, the atoms, or material molecules, which are informed in their turn by their *apperceptive* monads, just as every cell in a human body is so informed. (I. 632)

Thus the evolution of the earth is the result not merely of physical laws and processes, but of the work of "gods" and Monads.

The old controversy about whether life must come from living matter or whether it can come from non-living matter has been revived lately and attempts are being made to create living matter from chemicals. "If spontaneous generation has changed its methods now," wrote H.P.B., "owing perhaps to accumulated material on hand, so as to almost escape detection, it was in full swing in the genesis of terrestrial life." (*S.D.*, II. 151)

The noise nuisance is undoubtedly an outstanding evil of our civilization, and the degree of damage caused by it to physical and mental health has been increasing with alarming momentum.

As reported in *Bhavan's Journal* for March 31st, one of the leading specialists in this field, Dr. Gunther Lehmann, the Director of the Max Planck Institute for Industrial Physiology in Dortmund, has stated that the continual impact of strong noise upon the nervous system of man will lead to permanent changes which not rarely take the character of clinical symptoms. The exposure of the nervous system to noise will influence the organs of the body. Disorders of the circulatory system will be caused by continual street noises penetrating into most city dwellings. Even during sleep noise that is not even consciously registered will be detrimental and may cause disturbances and disorders in the functioning of various organs.

In children, particularly those living in noisy city areas, indications of growth retardation have been found. Also heavy psychic damage has been caused to people living near airports, boiler-making shops or railway stations. Even more dangerous is the effect of high-level noise upon ill and convalescent people. The lives of people suffering from heart disorders, etc., are likely to be endangered by the impact of intense noise.

An explanation of the disruptive influence of certain sounds may be gleaned from some statements of J. W. Keely, discoverer of the "etheric

force":—

I assume that sound, like odour, is a real substance of unknown and wonderful tenuity, emanating from a body where it has been induced by percussion and throwing out absolute corpuscles of matter, inter-atomic particles, with velocity of 1,120 feet per second; in vacuo 20,000. The substance which is thus disseminated is a part and parcel of the mass agitated, and, if kept under this agitation continuously, would, in the course of a certain cycle of time, become thoroughly absorbed by the atmosphere. . . .

The sounds from vibratory forks, set so as to produce etheric chords, while disseminating their tones (compound), permeate most thoroughly all substances that come under the range of their atomic bombardment. . . . In my estimation, sound truly defined is the disturbance of atomic equilibrium, rupturing actual atomic corpuscles; and the substance thus liberated must certainly be a certain order of etheric flow. Under these conditions, is it unreasonable to suppose that, if this flow were kept up, and the body thus robbed of its element, it would in time disappear entirely? . . . (S.D., I. 564-65)

The dissemination of findings regarding the dangers of noise may well not only furnish the impetus to seek means for abating the noise nuisance but also lead to the investigation of the beneficent potencies of sound — for instance in healing diseases, particularly of the nervous system, which H.P.B. repeatedly stressed.

Instances of precocious children, who exhibit skills of various kinds at a very early age, or whose mental development is far above the level of the average as we know it today, have often been cited in this magazine. Their number is on the increase.

Not quite as well known is the fact that from time to time are born children whose premature physical growth and development baffles those around them. From the Soviet Union comes the news of Vitya Pogrebnyuk, who lives in the Ukraine's Odessa region. At the age of eight he weighs 11 stones and can easily pull a 10 hundredweight load. (*Deccan Herald*, March 25th)

H.P.B., in her *Theosophist* for December-January 1883-84 (Vol. V, p. 60) printed an article on "Premature and Phenomenal Growths" (reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, September 1936) in which were given many instances of phenomenally developed children, and the occult explanation offered:—

What the Occultists say, is this: humanity is on the descending pathway of its cycle. The rear-guard of the 5th race is crossing slowly the apex of its evolution and will soon find itself having passed the turning point. And, as the descent is always more rapid than the ascent, men of the new coming (the 6th) race are beginning to drop in occa-

sionally. Such children regarded in our days by official science as exceptional monstrosities, are simply the pioneers of that race. . . . The characteristics of the race that will follow ours are — a darker skin, shortened period of infancy and old age, or in other words, a growth and development that in the present age (to the profane) appear quite miraculous. . . . Therefore, to us, Occultists, believers in the knowledge of old, such isolated instances of premature development are but so many more proofs of the end of one cycle and — the beginning of another.

And in *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. said of the coming new Race that

it will silently come into existence; so silently, indeed, that for long millenniums shall its pioneers — the peculiar children who grow into peculiar men and women — be regarded as anomalous *lusus naturæ*, abnormal oddities physically and mentally. Then, as they increase, and their numbers become with every age greater, one day they will awake to find themselves in a majority. It is the present men who will then begin to be regarded as exceptional mongrels, until these die out in their turn. . . . (II. 445)

The discovery by Soviet archæologists of Buddhist temples and structures in Uzbekistan, while carrying on excavation work there, goes to show the wide-spread influence of Buddhist thought in days of old. Professor A. M. Diakov, a well-known Soviet writer on India, who is at present in this country on a cultural exchange programme, told a Press conference that a book on this discovery would be published by the Oriental Literature Publishing House of the Soviet Union on the eve of the Congress of Orientalists to be held in Delhi next year. (*Free Press Journal*, March 22nd)

During what period Buddhism entered Uzbekistan is not known; but the foreign missions of Asoka were undoubtedly the most important agency in the spread of Indian thought to distant lands. These missions were wholly unsectarian in character and intent, the missionaries having been deputed to preach not the narrow doctrines of any particular sect or creed but the principles of the moral life which are common to all sects and creeds. H.P.B.'s *Isis Unveiled* contains numerous references to the spread of Buddhism in far-away countries, among them Egypt, Babylon, Syria, Palestine, Persia, Greece and even Ireland. (*Cf.* Vol. II, pp. 42, 290-91, 321-22, 491-92.)

BOOKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge as set forth in its "Declaration,"

I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part other than that which I, myself, determine.

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

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