

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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## MAN IS THE INHERITOR OF COSMOS

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—Eds.]

Humanity is a great Brotherhood by virtue of the sameness of the material from which it is formed physically and morally. Unless, however, it becomes a Brotherhood also intellectually, it is no better than a superior genus of animals.

—H. P. B.

THE human kingdom is the macrocosm; the individual man is the microcosm.

Every human individual has passed, is passing or will pass through every single type of experience. Divine and demoniac, godly and ghostly, noble and ignoble aspects show themselves in each human being. In the blood of every man an Alexander and a Napoleon, a Hitler and a Stalin abide, as in the brain of every man lives a poet, a philosopher, a statesman, an administrator, while in the heart of each there is a Buddha and a Christ. The sin and shame of the world are every man's, but to each also belongs the glory, the excellence and the virtue of all humanity. Ordinary man is unaware of the primary and self-evident truth of an indivisible Nature, whose myriad of organs are knit together by the Law of Interdependence:

Little did the infant dream  
That all the treasures of the world were by:  
And that himself was so the cream  
And crown of all which round about did lie.

We understand this verity a little more clearly when we reflect upon a particular aspect implicit in the truth of impartite Nature and

the interdependence of all its parts: all types of sins and sacraments, all virtues and vices, all thoughts and feelings, all words and tongues are reflections of their archetypes. If the human Spirit did not love its child, the human Soul, did not sacrifice for and serve that Soul, there would be no sacrifice of the mother for her child, no service of the son for his father, no love of the husband for his wife. If there did not exist the archetypal friend, we would not have friends and companions and comforters on earth. Writes H.P.B. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 282 fn.):

Occultism teaches that no form can be given to anything, either by nature or by man, whose ideal type does not already exist on the subjective plane. More than this; that no such form or shape can possibly enter man's consciousness, or evolve in his imagination, which does not exist in prototype, at least as an approximation.

If there were no wars on the field of duty which is within us, there would be no family-feud, no caste-strife, no class-struggle, no world-wars. If the individual's greed did not actuate him to compete against his fellows, there would be no business rivalry, no social jealousy. Therefore Theosophy greatly emphasizes self-purification and self-elevation of the human individual as a means to the abolition of crimes collectively committed by nations and by groups of nations.

Here in India all true Hindus are fighting the curse of untouchability; also, all patriots are fighting the curse of communalism. Efforts on a large scale are being made to remove these curses. If with an equal intensity individuals were to fight the spirit of untouchability and of communalism within themselves, India would make greater progress. Each family would become a school if a single member of each family were to practise what he believes to be true, and to banish untouchability and communalism from his own home. Are there not employers who treat their servants as untouchables? Are there not Hindus who in the bosom of the family gibe and jeer at Muslims? And how many Muslims refrain from thinking of Hindus and others as Kafirs? The most effective field for the overthrowing of untouchability and communalism is the home. Proceeding along the same line of reasoning, we may say that each man should fight on the field within himself, facing the devils who make a stand there.

There is an untouchable Pariah in every man and in every woman in this world. His Soul is Pride. Pride's trinitarian manifestation is

Lust-Wrath-Greed. The man of sin — *Papa-purusha* — in ourselves is the only real untouchable. Because we do not like to, or do not dare to recognize that untouchable, we fall under his power and he it is who makes us see untouchables here, there and everywhere. It is to his advantage if we do not detect him, lest he be dislodged! And until he is killed, *i.e.*, transmuted — for us outer untouchables will exist.

Untouchability and communalism are not two different vices: they are but two types emanating from a single archetype. Just as a man can get drunk on brandy or burgundy, claret or champagne, vodka or absinthe, and there is no fundamental difference in his state, but only a slight qualitative one, because it is the alcohol common to them all which causes his drunkenness, so it is with the root-cause which is one and which manifests now as untouchability, now as communalism. That root-cause is *Ahankara*, Pride, which separates the "I" within from the Universe without.

Sometimes it is asked, "If the vices and the weaknesses have to be gone through and experienced, why should we fight them?" We have to fight a vice and to overcome a weakness the moment we recognize its existence. In the early stages of evolution, as in the case of children, we do not know vice. Awakening to its recognition we reach a stage which is higher. We may not know how to overcome a weakness or how to eradicate a vice, but seeking the necessary knowledge is the next step, and applying it is still another. Recognition of a weakness or a vice in any life and recognition of a particular vice or weakness at any stage of any life is analogous to the Monad's reaching the self-conscious stage of human evolution and coming to possess the power of self-induced effort.

Illiterate aborigines do not know that it is wrong to thief; semi-educated people do not know that it is useless and false to believe that our mean feelings and wrong thoughts harm no one, not even ourselves; most people, including some students of Theosophy, do not know that to go through an experience does not necessarily mean learning its lesson. At each step there are new awakenings on the path of evolution. Awareness of present conditions is accompanied by a desire to improve them; that desire and the concept of improved conditions may not be correct and a long period is spent in acquiring the necessary knowledge, but at long last the mind learns the purpose and the goal of human evolution. When perversely a person indulges in his weakness, he opens himself to an ever-increasing suffering of body, of mind and of heart. Nature,

ever merciful and beneficent, compels man to awaken to his errors and blunders, to his crimes and sins, through suffering; Nature's justice is not only an admonisher but also a perfect instructor. We may not fight, and then Nature awakens us to the wisdom of battling with the devil within; we may fight in ignorance and experience the despair born of failure, but nature leads us to the fount of Knowledge; then we fight with Knowledge, intelligence and method, and inner contentment deepens our insight into the mysteries which surround us.

If there were a correct system of adult education for all, there would be a saving of the time now spent in useless research and experimentation. Humanity goes through avoidable suffering, for, "in sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of our human evolution," writes H.P.B. Theosophy can help men to hasten the rate of progress, can aid them to avoid creating unnecessary suffering, for its philosophy teaches what the archetypal experiences are, those which are necessary to human evolution. If to give way to vice — and each vice is self-created — is wrong, to fancy that man has to pass through every shade of lust, every degree of wrath, every kind of covetousness, is also wrong. He need only pass through archetypal experiences.

The Hindu institutions of the four castes and the four *ashramas* indicate what are the archetypal experiences necessary for every human soul. The Caste of the Soul bespeaks its stage in evolution and, taking full advantage of his position, man grows in harmony. In the concept of caste is implicit the profession which a man should follow, or the method by which he should earn his livelihood. The *ashrama* of the Soul provides the field for the acquisition of knowledge which improves the Soul's status in this life or in subsequent lives. By learning well, the Brahmana Soul ascends to a Yogi state; or the Warrior Soul rises from the status of a common soldier to that of a high administrator or statesman or ruler; the petty shopkeeper advances to be a merchant-prince; and so on. But the castes and the stages are now mixed; no pure *varna*, no pure *ashrama*. Round Souls in square bodies — that is the common phenomenon.

The system of adult education founded on the age-old principles of Theosophy would enable the men and women of the present cycle to determine correctly their own caste — their *varna*, the colour of their own mind-complexion. It would teach men and women to earn their livelihood as a means, not to acquire wealth and to strengthen the

competitive spirit already strong in our civilization, but to acquire soul-sight, heart-contentment and liberal-mindedness. It would help men and women to see themselves as reflections of Divine Ideas or Archetypes, each man, each woman, occupying his or her own place in the grand scheme of a unified cosmos. If man is the progeny of the ape, if the human soul is born of the body and the brain secretes consciousness as the liver secretes bile, if birth is the beginning and death the end of all, then it is reasonable that man should compete against and fight his brother, lust after flesh, gorge himself on food, bloat himself with drink, and die, to be remembered no more!

But man is not that. He has descended from a high spiritual world to help the kingdoms of matter, and he sacrifices himself for the greater glory of Mother Nature. In him there is something which responds to the call of the Good, the True, the Beautiful, and it is that which Theosophical education brings forth. "Deep calleth unto Deep."

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THE SEVENTIES will certainly reveal that caring deeply for others is now as necessary as food, air and water . . . not through duty, but joy. "Duty" has invalidated our best impulses as well as our worst. It is a code word for tactics that turn us into senseless mechanisms. Joy is the missing ingredient in our culture, the healing force. . . . The impulse toward delight can energize every educational, religious and social enterprise. . . . A deeply feeling person, turned to mankind's common wavelength, can't hurt other people, poison the planet, destroy what is beautiful. . . . It's a new decade only 30 years shy of a millennium — a good time to start crossing boundaries. Take a chance.

—GEORGE B. LEONARD in *Look*

# THE PURANAS

(PHILOLOGY *versus* SYMBOLOGY)

## II

[The concluding part of this article is reprinted here from *Lucifer* for May 1891.—EDS.]

It will be remembered that every *Manvantara* is followed by a *Pralaya*. *Manvantarika pralaya* extends up to the *Svarloka*, *i.e.*, possibly up to the sidereal regions occupied by our solar system. At every *Manvantara* the sun is formed anew, or some other sidereal body takes its place; and a number of corresponding changes occur in all the members of the solar system. Hence the *Puranas* giving a clear list of the *Dhruvas*, *Saptarshis*, *Indras*, *Manus*,<sup>1</sup> for every *Manvantara*, are not dealing with mere imaginings, but with real facts of nature. The duration of a *Manvantara* will thus appear to depend on the life of the sun. If we express in terms of solar years the number of sidereal years necessary for our sun to become only a subordinate planet, or be completely extinguished, the number of years over which a *Manvantara* is said to extend will not appear at all exaggerated. The theory of the plurality of worlds is the pivot of *Pauranika* and *Vedic* astronomy; and if in these days of a thousand and one theories about the origin, nature, and radiation of the Sun's heat, we find the *Puranas* regarding that luminary as the source of life (*Prana*), there is little room for surprise. The planet which, however, is more directly concerned with the life of our planet is the moon. The moon is within the influence of the earth's orbit, and there are reasons to regard the earth as but an emanation from the moon. The facts here given in regard to the sun and moon are very clearly stated in the *Upanishads*. The sun is the abode of the *purest* life, the moon of all that affects the earth. The moon is the abode of *Pitris* or those whose shadows, so to speak, form the humanity of any one *Manvantara*. The sun is the abode of the Gods who may, at times, come to the earth, but who, as a rule, are under no necessity to return to it. They have the choice of passing on to higher sidereal localities, whereas those on the moon have, as a rule, no other alternative but transference to the earth. Hence the *Upanishads* describe the passage to the sun as the *Devayana* (the way of the *Devas*), *Uttarayana* (the

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<sup>1</sup> As before we add a few explanatory notes for those ignorant of Hindu Mythology.—EDS. [LUCIFER]. These have reference to the Pole stars, constellations, heavens and humanities of every cycle.

last passage), *Archimarga* (passage to the spheres of Light), and that to the moon as *Pitriyana*, *Daksinayana*, *Dhumamarga*.<sup>2</sup> Passage to the Sun is *Moksha*; and the sun is therefore the heaven *par excellence* of the *Puranas*, under whatever name it may be described. *Moksha* in the sense of absolute cessation of evolution or reincarnation, at least physically, is an impossibility, according to the *Vishnu Purana*. Beings transferred to the sun are comparatively speaking *mukta*, for they have chances of higher development, and they do not return to the earth in the ordinary course of things, at least for another *Manvantara*, or even more, if they have gone beyond the influence of that planet. These explanations naturally lead to a number of side issues as to the character of the being travelling from planet to planet, the machinery of its vehicle, the laws of *Karma*, and many more of the same kind. But these, though sufficient to indicate the nature of the web and woof of what the *Puranas* always weave into brilliant myths and tales, cannot easily be discussed here.

But these few and scanty remarks help us over many a difficulty. We see what part the sun plays in cosmic evolution, and we also understand what connection he has with the *Manvantarika* Cycle. Hence also we can see why the present Manu is called Vaivasvata, the son of Vivasvat, the planet we know as the sun. We also understand how this Manu and the lunar *Pitris* are connected with the evolution of the humanity to which we belong.

But the chief help we derive from these explanations is in relation to the interpretation of the name and attributes of the second member of the *Trimurti*, viz., Vishnu. The heaven of that god, which in *Rig Veda* (i. 154) is described as full of *bhurishringago*, is indeed none other, on the authority of Yaska, Durgacharya and Sayana, than the sun, the fountain of rays (*go*) protruding (*bhurishringa*) to the worlds around; notwithstanding the dead-letter interpretation of the later *Sampradayas*<sup>3</sup> which makes *Goloka*, the heaven of Vishnu, full of cows with long horns. The way to *Goloka* (the region of rays), the sun, is the *Vaitarani*<sup>4</sup> of the *Garuda-Purana*, which indicates that the being

<sup>2</sup> See *The Secret Doctrine*, I. 86.

<sup>3</sup> Commentators.

<sup>4</sup> *Vaitarani*—"the river that is to be crossed." Supposed to be the river of hell which must be crossed before the infernal regions, or subjective world, can be entered. The river is described as being filled with blood and all sorts of filth, and to run with great impetuosity. This is to be crossed in a solitary rickety boat, the steersman of which is Vishnu (the Higher Ego). Few people can pass, for they have to pay for the passage; those who cannot pay are turned back. According to the popular superstition,

only swims (*vitri*) through space, and passes to the sun with the help of his rays (*go*); in other words, by and through the help of the currents of cosmic *Prana* proceeding from him. This is scientific or intelligible at any rate, and the *Upanishads* amply corroborate it. But the dead-letter explanation makes of *Vaitarani* an objective river which the being crosses with the help of the tail of a cow (*go*). Superficial observers misled by this and similar dead-letter jargon, set down all such things to fancy, priestcraft, exaggeration, or some feat of philological jugglery. That, however, is no untying but rather a cutting of the gordian knot.

But to proceed. Let us see what is the *Garuda*.<sup>5</sup> He is the vehicle of Vishnu, as *Hamsa* is that of Brahma. *Hamsa*, in mystic language, is the inverted form of the secret word — the *Ajapa-soham* — which means the great unity, Brahma, wherein subject and object are one. It is the *Narayana* of the *Puranas*, the sustainer of the lotus and the lotus-born. Hence *Hamsa* is rightly the vehicle of the lotus-born Brahma. It is this mysterious *Hamsa* alone who is able to make the unmanifest manifest as spirit and matter, to, in fact, separate water from milk, as the dead-letter myth has it. The eagle is similarly an emblem of eternity. This bird is sacred even to the Egyptian Horus, the god of time, and the son of Osiris, the manifested Vishnu. In India this bird, having alone the power to soar undazzled up towards the sun, is, with Vishnu upon its back, the emblem of the *Manvantarika* cycle. It is the fabulous phoenix which burns itself to death and comes to life again. If we remember this circumstance, and its bearing upon the meaning of *moksha*, it will not be difficult to understand why the *Purana* treating mainly of ceremonies connected with the dead is sacred to *Garuda*. It is now evident that when *Garuda* is the vehicle of Vishnu, the spiritual Sun, the cripple Aruna, the supposed charioteer of the physical Sun, should be the brother of this *Garuda*. In all these explanations the dead-letter of the myths will yield its real essence to no amount of philological twisting, which will only make confusion worse confounded.

As *Vach* is the female counterpart of Brahma, so Lakshmi is of Vishnu. Vishnu as the Sun, the source of life, is evidently the god that

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persons before death are made to give in charity milch cows, in the belief that after death they may be able to catch hold of their tails and so be carried across the dreadful river *Vaitarani*, safe to the other side. The interpretation is easy for a Theosophist, for it is the cow that gives the milk of wisdom that is meant, the cow that produces the jewels, and the tail of the cow is the ray of that knowledge, the thread of Wisdom, or *Vach*, that unites us to our Higher Self.

<sup>5</sup> *Garuda* is represented with the head, wings, talons, and beak of an eagle, and the body and limbs of a man. His face is white, his wings golden, and his body red.

protects and gives life and prosperity. His *Shakti* is therefore called Lakshmi, the goddess of all good. The golden filaments of the lotus which always blooms under the Sun, serve as an emblem of prosperity, and Lakshmi receives a number of epithets derived from the lotus, such as *Kamala*, *Padma*, etc. The importance of the Sun in the Indian religion and his identity with Vishnu will explain why Vishnu is the sole god of heaven, and why it is he alone who is invoked in those ceremonies for the dead known as *Shraddhas*. We have already alluded to the fact that Vishnu as the Sun is the source of all life, and as the final abode of the righteous has the sole right to incarnate himself on earth. Hence the theory of *Avataras*, which though ten in number, are justly said to be innumerable in the *Bhagavata* and other *Puranas*. But the *Avataras* limited even to ten are not perhaps quite without significance in the order in which they are given, as compared with the stages in the development of man, marked by the evolution-theory. The Sun, with his rays protruding in all directions, and thus propagating the germs of life — *Prana* — everywhere, will explain the allegory of the *Ashvattha*, the tree sacred to Vishnu, and described in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* as having its roots in heaven and its branches protruding downwards to the earth. "He who understands the mystery of this tree, understands the mystery of knowledge," well remarks Krishna, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. And well indeed he adds, "he who knows this tree knows the whole of the *Veda*."

When Vishnu is identified, as in the *Vishnu* and *Brahmavaivarta Puranas*, with Narayana, the Brahma of the *Upanishads*, it is he who undertakes the churning of the great ocean of milk. I have already explained that water is the symbol of all-pervading space. The churning of the ocean to obtain the fourteen *Ratnas*<sup>6</sup> is therefore a cosmic myth describing the process of the Invisible differentiating itself into the Visible. If this ocean is said to consist of milk, it is only an appropriate idea of the first materialization of invisible space into nebulous forms; and the expression "milky way," the *svarganga* of the *Puranas*, well survives to this day as a witness of this mode of symbology. The double evolution of spirit and matter from the womb of eternity is well symbolized by the gods and demons, standing each at either extremity of the great serpent of eternity, used as a cord in the churning. The demons, sons of Diti, finiteness, are symbolic of matter as opposed to spirit, the Devas, the sons of Aditi, infinity, the eternal *Sat*. The

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<sup>6</sup> Jewels.

history of cosmology is the history of spirit falling into matter, and matter re-ascending to spirit. All myths, from the *Vedic* Indra and Vritra to the *Pauranika* Vishnu and Hiranyakashipu and his brood, are symbols expressive of the same idea in its physical, astronomical, and metaphysical or spiritual aspects. The mountain used as the churning-rod is a symbol of the eternal *Vach* or *Shabda*, differentiation, which is the cause of cyclic evolution. And the very name implies this, for *mandara* means that which moves slowly, which works steadily and yet imperceptibly, and at considerable intervals. This *Vach* is often described in the *Vedas* as a cow, and if we remember the Egyptian Isis in this connection, we shall at once be able to perceive that cosmic matter, in the act of differentiation, is almost everywhere symbolized by that prolific animal. This will also explain why the cow is so sacred, even to the present day, in India, for as with the Egyptians, the Jews, and other nations of antiquity, it is customary with the Indians to respect as sacred all symbolic animals and trees. This very animal is the *Kamadugha* of Vishnu, the cow that fulfils all desires. Divested of its dead-letter garb, the meaning is as plain and scientific as reason could have it. Differentiation is, in *Pauranika* language, and *Upanishad* mysticism, only an idea, a mere *Kama*, and the cosmos is nothing more than divine ideation, not in the sense of the will of a personal God, but as the result of intelligent laws of differentiation and action. To convert the ideal into the real is the grand mystery. It is the only key to the meaning of the *Kamadugha* of Vishnu, which be it remembered is also the sole source of the power ascribed to such adepts as Jamadagni, Vasishtha, and others. And this fact reminds me of the possibility of applying this and all other myths to the microcosm as well, but that point is not the subject of this paper. The *Kalpataru* is another gem obtained from the grand churning. It is the tree that fulfils all desires (*Kalpa*), but more properly it is the tree that comes to life at every *Kalpa* as a result of the said process of ideation and differentiation. The other gems are but members or appendages of this tree, and may be similarly understood. Thus we see at once that the myths about Vishnu are no fabrications nor any result of misunderstanding the meaning and office of the *Vedic* deity of that name. The *Pauranika* myths prove themselves, by the help of the light derived from the *Upanishads*, to be mere commentaries of *Vedic* hymns, which, in their turn, when read by the side of this commentary, cease to be the first edition of the childish poetry of primitive man.

An examination of some of the principal myths connected with the

third member of the Indian Trinity, Shiva, will confirm the same conclusion. Shiva is, no doubt, connected with the Vedic Rudra, the god of fire and whirlwind, as described in the *Shatarudriya* and other hymns. But it is important to see how Rudra, the ferocious, becomes Shiva the beneficent. We must turn for help again to the *Upanishads* and *Tantras*. Fire is the great arcanum, the mystery of mysteries, sufficient to accomplish everything. It is this mysterious fire that is the *varenya-bharga* of Savitri in the macrocosm, and the scorching lustre of the third eye of Shiva in the microcosm. Every initiate becomes Shiva, and has his third eye so far opened as to consume to ashes, with its fire, all that belongs to the phenomenal universe. It is the awakening of this fire that serves all purpose, and Shiva is, therefore, appropriately regarded as the god of knowledge of every kind. Thus the double character of this mysterious fire is well symbolized in the Rudra of the *Veda* and the Shiva of the *Purana*. *Kailasa*<sup>7</sup> is, in *tantrika*<sup>8</sup> literature, the name of the seat of knowledge, the brain, and it is quite natural that the *Puranas* should look upon this place as the abode of Shiva. That which the *Vedas* call *Vach*, the *Yoga Kundalini*, the *Nyaya Ichha*, the *Sankhya Prakriti*, the *Tantras* call *Shakti*. *Shakti* is the consort of Shiva. When by proper *Yoga*, *Shakti* unites herself with Shiva in *Kailasa*, the issue of the union is the well-known *Gajanana*.<sup>9</sup> As *Kailasa* is the symbol of the thousand-rayed lotus (*padma* or plexus) in the pineal gland, and as Shiva and *Shakti* of the macro- and micro-cosmic fire, positive as well as negative, so the elephant is an emblem of wisdom or *jnana*, and the issue of the union of Shiva and *Shakti* is appropriately described as having the head of an elephant. It is plain, after this explanation, that the wives of this son of *Shakti* should be none other than *Siddhi*, occult power, and *Buddhi*, divine wisdom. It is easy to understand Shiva and his accompaniments if we follow a similar train of thought, never forgetting that Shiva is only a symbol of that fire which is the very essence of life, or of those forces which generally go under the name of heat, light, electricity, and magnetism. The birth of *Skanda* or *Kartikeya*<sup>10</sup> is a mystic symbol full of meaning, and having more than one cosmic signification. The *Nagas* or serpents of Shiva is another of these transparent symbols. They are emblematic

<sup>7</sup> *Kailasa* is said to be the home of Shiva: the highest peak of Meru, the mountain used for the churning of the Ocean, where Shiva alone resorts, and where he alone can be seen.

<sup>8</sup> Magical.

<sup>9</sup> Elephant-face.

<sup>10</sup> Corresponds to Mars.

of adeptship and high knowledge. The *Puranas* are full of tales of *Nagas*, good, bad, and indifferent, but it requires no great trouble to find out that the serpent is here, as in all ancient religions, the threefold symbol of eternity, wisdom, and wickedness. We have seen it already as a symbol of eternity, and we see it as a symbol of wisdom in the case of Shiva. The third meaning of the symbol is well illustrated in the myths about *Kali* and other *Nagas* given in the *Puranas*. Even the Tempter in the Garden of Eden is a serpent who, though tempting to sin, gives, at the same time, the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

All this, however, is the right-hand or *Dakshina*-worship of Shiva, the eternal mystic fire. It is the left-hand or *Vama*-worship that is most dangerous. Shiva, the benign god of the fire that gives power and wisdom, becomes the terrible Bhairava of the left-hand worshipper. The *Tantras* abound in rites connected with the worship of Bhairava and his consort Kali, both being the original Shiva and Shakti, the mystic divine fire, turned to selfish purposes, and therefore converted into the double-edged sword that cuts both ways. It is this mystic truth that has supplied material to Lord Lytton's imagination for the Dweller of the Threshold in his *Zanoni*. The consort of Shiva is called by various names in the *Veda*, and it is significant that Kali, Karali, and all other names of the kind are there expressive of the tongues of fire. These Shaktis become the terrible consorts of the equally terrible Bhairava, but it is sufficient for our purpose to note that all these symbols pertain to nothing else but the mystic fire which is the source of cosmic as well as individual power and energy. The *Vama*-worship of this set of forces is generally considered very indecent, as the *Linga* and *Yoni* form the principal objects of worship. But it is important to note that *Linga* and *Yoni* are not absolutely *Vama* symbols, for even in the *Dakshina-marga* they receive the chief worship of their devotees. It is therefore not possible to find as much phallicism as many are inclined to see in these symbols. And this for several other reasons also. If the Babylonian Mylitta and the Phoenician Astarte afford reason to regard the *Linga* and *Yoni* worship of India as of foreign origin, the presence of these symbols in all ancient religions of the world strongly militates against such a view. Moreover, the proper explanation of these symbols deprives them of the gross phallic element that many see in them. The all-pervading *Sat* is everywhere represented by a circle whose circumference is everywhere and whose centre is nowhere. A point formed within this circle by the first act of spontaneous differentiation makes it the *Yoni*, the source of the phenomenal universe, the *Prakriti* of

*Sankhya*, and the undifferentiated cosmic matter of modern science. The point becoming a line is *Linga*, the spiritual noumenon which is the substratum of all phenomena. Another line falling upon this makes a figure which represents creation in its double phenomenal aspect; and the figure with the circumference removed is the complete *Virat*, the same as the Egyptian Tau, the Christian Cross, and the Indian *Svastika*. *Linga* and *Yoni* are thus symbols of certain universal processes in nature. And indeed the whole of the worship of India consists of the worship of certain forces of nature. The well-known *Shriyantra* and all similar diagrams formed of a number of triangles representing so many *Yonis* round a central point, which is the *Linga*, are symbols of cosmic forces highly suggestive and powerful.

This phase of Indian religion will at once account for the enormous number of gods found in the *Puranas*, and will readily help a clear explanation of the nature and import of the much ridiculed idol-worship of the heathens. It is evident that when the *Puranas*, echoing the spirit of the *Vedic* text *Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*,<sup>11</sup> declare *sarva-deva-namaskarah Keshavam prati gachchhati*,<sup>12</sup> they plainly allude, in terms as unmistakable as they possibly can be, to the unity of the one indescribable *Sat*, the only god in and of nature — the god whose manifestations are the various deities and idols, which are only symbols of powerful cosmic forces, and no outcome of poetical solar-myths and unconscious disease of language. There can be hardly any idolatry in worshipping as many symbols as there are cosmic forces to understand and propitiate. Anyone who has carefully examined any place of ancient worship in India will agree in saying that under every idol there is always some diagram in the form of *Shri* — or some other *Yantra* as an emblem of some kindly cosmic energy, the real object of worship and the proper source of power. These considerations lead us to the nature of the mystic power attached to these diagrams, and to the various *mantras* proper to each, but this is, at present, foreign to our inquiry. The left-hand side of this *Yantra*-worship is the basis of the grossest *Tantrika* rites known as the *Shrichakra* and *Purnabhisheka*, which, too, cannot be conveniently described in this place.

Although the accounts I have been able to lay before you are few and necessarily very meagre, I hope nevertheless to have established that the *Puranas*, when read by the light of the *Upanishads*, become

<sup>11</sup> That is, the Brahmans in many ways declare one thing as being; or one thing to be *sat*, i.e., "being," and therefore "good" (or reality).

<sup>12</sup> Every god goes towards (approaches) Krishna with reverence.

a clear commentary of the *Vedas*, which, in their turn, cease at once to be the first thoughts of an imaginary primitive humanity. Philology must give way to symbology in order that this result may be appreciated in its true light. It ought, in fact, to be the sole or at least principal instrument of ancient research. Symbology is the language of humanity, nay it is the language of nature. It is pre-eminently the universal language known to antiquity — the language whose alphabets are indelibly fixed on the tablet of the human mind, and whose eternal volume is the ever unalterable book of nature. Nothing but a clear, careful, and patient study of the alphabets of this language can lead us nearer that day in the history of the world, when all the different creeds will melt into one universal basis of belief and love. Remember that *Vach*, the Logos or the Word, is described in the *Vedas* as of four kinds: *Para*, *Pashyanti*, *Madhyama*, and *Vaikhari*. *Para* is the language ever unutterable, being symbolic of the supreme — *Sat*; *Pashyanti* is the second *Logos*, the *Ishvara* of the Advaita, the ever unique essence which finds its expression in sublime intuition. This is the universal language known to all in the same form and manner. The third *Madhyama* belongs to the plane of the *Linga-deha* and is acquired by *Yoga practice* and similar training. The last is *Vaikhari*, our ordinary speech, not universally intelligible. It is the confusion of tongues described in the Bible. This, however, is the only language known to us, and an infinity of philological twisting, after all, does nothing but add to the confusion already prevailing. It is necessary to read ancient records by the real *Devabhasha*, the real *Devanagari* or *Girvana*, which is neither *Sanskrita* nor *Prakrita* but the *Pashyanti* already described as the language of symbology. Even in these days when all ancient institutions are fast dying out, the boys in any indigenous village school in India will be heard to begin their lessons with a prayer to *Vach*, the goddess of speech. The goddess is therein aptly described as the mare of the Eternal, lame in three of her legs, and, though moving about on one foot only, yet able, if rightly managed, to fetch the water of supreme knowledge from the dark depths of *Patala*. The symbol is a transparent one. And, indeed, it is time we supply this noble one-legged animal with three other legs, never mind even if artificial crutches at the beginning; and, riding past the mere blocks of words and myths, penetrate into the *Patala* of Eternal Truth.

—M. N. DVIVEDI, F.T.S.

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## GOOD AND EVIL

THERE ARE two interesting statements in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 480-81) on the subject of good and evil:

In human nature, evil denotes the antagonism of matter to the spiritual.

In the cosmos, the equilibrium must be preserved; the operation of the two contraries produces harmony, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces, and each is necessary to the other.

The question that strikes one is, Why is there “antagonism” between the two opposites in human nature, whereas in the cosmos the operation of the contraries produces harmony? In the cosmos, the opposing forces are necessary to each other. If these contrary — a different word from “antagonistic,” which implies purpose or feeling behind it — forces did not work on each other, the whole universe would cease to be, for equilibrium would no longer be preserved. Equilibrium is the balance point at which the cosmos works harmoniously and perfectly until such time as it begins its descending path towards dissolution. If one of the forces is arrested, the action of the other will immediately become destructive. In man, likewise, both the material and the spiritual forces are purified by the “antagonism” between them.

What is the balance point between the two?

The *balance* is there, ever sensitive at the intersection point. It regulates the action of the two combatants, and the combined effort of both causes planets and “living souls” to pursue a double diagonal line in their revolution through Zodiac and Life; and thus preserving strict harmony, in visible and invisible heaven and earth, the forced unity of the two reconciles spirit and matter.

(*Isis Unveiled*, II. 463)

If this unity were disturbed “final cosmic destruction and individual annihilation” would result; but, if it is undisturbed, “the spiritual realm of salvation and eternal life” prevails.

How can this balance regulate the forces? The balance at the intersection point is in the control of the great cosmic forces, or Universal Mind and its agents. In human evolution it is man himself who is at the intersection point and has the choice whether he will maintain harmony or go his own way. This is why evil comes with man’s appearance upon the scene. There is no evil in Nature because there are no personal desires and wishes interfering with Nature’s established laws. In fact, the goal of man’s evolution is the perfect balancing of the two

forces, so that he can control Nature through his will.

How are we to learn how to do this? Perhaps the key lies in the understanding of the law of necessity. The recognition of this law brings with it acceptance of all that happens, that acceptance which uses the difficulties that come our way to create harmony and thus preserve the balance. If this is done, then both forces, matter and spirit, are harmonized and do not encroach on each other. Spirit without matter has no vehicle to work through; when the matter aspect predominates, one becomes a destructive force that is dissolved in time by Nature; whereas he in whom the forces are balanced becomes one of Nature's servants and thereby reaches immortality.

We must not forget that all Nature is guided and controlled by the great Dhyān-Chohanīc Forces and Intelligences and that we, human beings, are on the way to becoming such impersonal servants of the Law.

As to the purification of the two opposing forces, we have this portrayed admirably in *Through the Gates of Gold*:

The animal in man, elevated, is a thing unimaginable in its great powers of service and of strength. . . . The god, given his right place, will so inspire and guide this extraordinary creature, so educate and develop it, so force it into action and recognition of its kind, that it will make you tremble when you recognize the power that has awakened within you. . . .

The animal as servant adds a thousandfold to the powers of the god. And it is upon the union, the right relation of these two forces in himself, that man stands as a strong king, and is enabled to raise his hand and lift the bar of the Golden Gate.

The first step to be taken would seem to be to recognize that no force is evil *per se*; it becomes so when overbalanced or underbalanced, and there is need of a constant watch that the balance is maintained. The mere fact that these forces are necessary to each other and that each is purified by contact with the other, should help us to perceive dimly the law of necessity as the only law of life. With this would come adaptability to circumstances, which implies the attitude of working through them, extracting the juice from them for our benefit in the spiritual sense, and ultimately becoming free from them. This can only be when we have fully realized the truth of Karma.

Not a misshapen day, says *The Secret Doctrine*, but is caused by our previous actions. Therefore no man can hurt us. Whatever conditions we find ourselves in, have been created by ourselves. It is Law

that brings us those conditions. The one who “wrongs” us just brings to us our own, and gratitude and sympathy should be given to him, for he has shown us our defect and given us the opportunity to practise the opposite virtue. Let us also remember that had we not created the causes the occasion would not have arisen for him to be the agent who brings us suffering. It is our own past action that makes others bring us good or ill.

The centripetal and centrifugal forces, as symbols of Good and Evil, Spirit and Matter, Life and Death, are also those of the Creator and the Destroyer — Adam and Eve, or God and the Devil, as they say in common parlance. In the subjective, as well as in the objective worlds, they are the two powers, which through their eternal conflict keep the universe of spirit and matter in harmony. They force the planets to pursue their paths, and keep them in their elliptical orbits. . . . In their conflict the centripetal force, were it to prevail, would drive the planets and living souls into the sun, type of the invisible Spiritual Sun, the Paraâtma or great universal Soul, their parent; while the centrifugal force would chase both planets and *souls* into the dreary space, far from the luminary of the objective universe, away from the spiritual realm of salvation and eternal life, and into the chaos of final cosmic destruction, and individual annihilation. But the *balance* is there, ever sensitive at the intersection point. (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 463)

The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who — whether we give to them one name or another, and call them Dhyan-Chohans or Angels — are “messengers” in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. . . . each of these Beings either *was*, or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara). (*S.D.*, I. 274-75)

Of these we are. Every moment is the balancing point; adaptability to and use of the Law brings progress; the opposite brings destruction. At one with Nature’s laws we are invincible, says *The Voice of the Silence*.

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# MAN AND NATURE

## A STUDY IN CORRESPONDENCE AND ANALOGY

CORRESPONDENCE and analogy were used by the ancient Teachers in educating the people. Myth, drama, allegory, were all so many devices to impart to the groping human intelligence facts and truths of Nature and of Nature's Laws.

Thus, in the nature of every man grow weeds and poison-plants, also beautiful flowers and shady trees. Many a poet and writer, ancient and modern, has compared man's virtues and vices, his good and bad habits, to jungle growths and flowering garden plants.

Seers and singers have seen in the Lotus, for example, the symbol of the Universal Man. In Egypt as in India, the Lotus, *Padma*, was called the sacred flower because in its life-process was seen the unfolding of the human soul to its perfection — the individual becoming the Universal; man, the microcosm, developing into the Macrocosm, the Heavenly Man.

Similarly, some Western mystics and esotericists saw in the Rose a symbol of the secret knowledge by which the burgeoning of the Soul-bud into the full-blown Rose took place. One aspect of this symbol is worked even today by the Freemasons in what is known to them as their eighteenth degree. This is not divulging any secret, for it is to be found in publicly printed books.

The philosophical principle underlying this ancient mode of learning through symbols and emblems is this: As everything in Nature emanates from the one homogeneous substance which is Life, popularly called God, every object, every being and every kingdom carries within itself and reflects some particular aspect of the Universal Whole. Therefore, every stone and metal, every flower and fruit, every bird and beast, reflects some aspect of Nature, of her Light side or of her Dark side, generally of both. The human kingdom, however, being the highest in manifested Nature, is the reflected shadow and the miniature copy of the Universal Whole. Only one form of Life, namely, the human form, is perfect: in that form all the powers of vast Nature are hidden in latency, that is, in an undeveloped condition. Man's form is a miniature but perfect copy of the whole of the Living Universe, just as the newly born baby is a miniature copy of the full-grown human body.

Using this Law of Correspondence and Analogy, we find that the jungle, dark, dangerous, pathless, trackless, reflects its qualities and

characteristics in human nature. Also, the garden with its well-trimmed hedges and borders, its patterns and paths, its colourful fragrance, its shady nooks and corners, is reflected in human nature. These two may be compared to the evil and the good nature in each person; but we must not overlook that the forest has its own value, and that in the garden also cobras and chameleons are found! Not in a precise scientific way are we here pursuing the study of this comparison. Only in a general way can we treat this metaphorical comparison between the dark, seemingly purposeless jungle, and the gloomy, vicious, unmethodical nature of man; between the well-kept garden and the well-shaped human character.

A garden is not possible in wild nature; without the aid of man, Nature by itself does not produce a garden. Soon the jungle arises in a neglected garden, but never does a garden emerge out of a neglected jungle. Even a virtuous character is overgrown by weaknesses if attention is not paid to it; if we do not systematically water our flowerbeds of virtue they will in no time grow weeds of vice.

For the purposes of our study we may confine ourselves to these aspects of the jungle: (1) its might and strength — the law of the jungle is that might is right; (2) its ferocious beasts, who are afraid of man because, though puny, he is intelligent; (3) its poisonous creepers which kill not only sturdy shrubs, but even giant trees. These three are man's foes, for they have their corresponding reflection in human nature.

(1) In our lower nature, Egotism-*ahamkara* is the predominant force — the "I-making" tendency. All the power and the force of our lower nature proceeds from this "I" — the root of the notion that each one of us is separate from, and therefore superior to, all others. Crass selfishness is its product. All ambitions and competitions arise from this force of Egotism, the very foundation of our lower nature. That lower nature derives all its might and strength from Egotism, and when it succeeds, the worldly man succeeds. He says, in the words of the *Gita* (XVI. 13-16):

This today hath been acquired by me, and that object of my heart I shall obtain; this wealth I have, and that also shall be mine. This foe have I already slain, and others will I forthwith vanquish; I am the lord, I am powerful, and I am happy. I am rich and with precedence among men; where is there another like unto me? I shall make sacrifices, give alms, and enjoy.

(2) In this jungly nature ruled by the "I," the "I," the "I," prowl

ferocious beasts destructive of our noble aspirations. Three of them, which are the main vices of man, his worst enemies and the dangerous wombs of a whole brood of vices, are called "Gates of Hell" in the same chapter of the *Gita*. They are *Kama*, *Krodha* and *Lobha* — Lust, Anger and Greed. The death of Egotism results from the destruction of Greed, the foul soul of competition; of Anger which arises from unfulfilled ambitions; and of Lust which results from uncontrolled desires. Sri Krishna calls them "destroyers of the Soul." These three beasts are afraid of the spiritual Soul in man, and therefore attack that Soul. And foolish people, remaining unaware of the strength of the very Soul within them, fall prey to the gnawing fangs of lust and anger and greed.

(3) But what are the poisonous creepers of our human nature? Not those growling beasts whose existence and presence are easily detected, but those sly, weak-looking, cringing, curling, parasite tendencies which silently destroy our manhood, our nobility and the possibility of growth itself. Our humanity in the mass is not suffering so much from crass wickedness as from petty folly. No doubt there are many lustful, angry and greedy people in the world, but there are many, many more foolish people whose lives are choked by effete habits, by meaningless customs, by a purposeless going round and round, like the creeper which winds itself around the trunk of the tree that presently it is going to destroy.

These three make jungles of human lives. A garden has to be fashioned in their stead. How shall we do it?

The answer also comes from the *Gita*: by the sword of knowledge we can cut the nefarious influence of the poisonous creepers; we can also destroy the beasts of Lust, Anger and Greed; in fighting egotism by knowledge we come upon the "Real," the Real Ego, the human Soul or Thinker, and it teaches us how to make a garden where before the jungle was.

We can create a garden out of this jungle of human nature only when we have found the gardener. The Soul in us is that gardener. If modern education from the very start taught boys and girls to seek their own Souls, within their own minds and hearts, the jungle of character and of the lower nature would not so easily arise. It is harder for the adult to transform his jungle into a garden; but, though difficult, it is not impossible; and, moreover, it is imperative that each man, each woman, undertake the task. Why? Because their very Souls, when they are overpowered by Egotism, by Lust and Anger and Greed, by

habits, customs and blind beliefs, will encounter death. Alas! the Living-Dead are many.

How to build a garden out of our human nature? The first requisite is that we act as *human* beings. In us the animal nature predominates. To become human we must invest our daily living with the dignity of purpose. A gardener lays out his plans: what the shape of the beds, and where they are to be; the location of the lawn; how to get water from the shortest distance possible; the buying of good seeds, and then their planting; and finally looking after the process to growth complete.

We need knowledge — knowledge of the ways our mind functions and the recognition of the Soul which is higher than the mind and controls its movements. The Soul is the gardener and his mind is the chief weapon with which he clears the ground, turns the sod, waters the soil and plants the chosen seeds. Hence the need of knowledge of our own make-up, of the Soul with its capacity to control the mind, of the mind with its weakness to be impressed by feelings, emotions and desires aroused by the senses and objects of sense. And thirdly, the knowledge that *every* human being can and should grow a garden out of his own nature. No one else can do the work; Great Teachers, Poets and Prophets can but point the way — each one has to walk it by himself; this is Karma. Karma is not fatalism; there is no fixed and unalterable destiny. Karma is action — the doing and the becoming. Whatever we may have done in the past, however overgrown with weeds our character may be, however dark the jungle of our feelings and thoughts, the Soul like the Sun in heaven shines on us and the showers of his blessing fall on us. If we but despair not, and with moral pluck take ourselves in hand, we shall learn the truth about happiness and progress and then it will be possible for us to acquire that inner attitude which Tennyson has so well described:

And I must work thro' months of toil,  
 And years of cultivation,  
 Upon my proper patch of soil  
 To grow my own plantation.  
 I'll take the showers as they fall,  
 I will not vex my bosom;  
 Enough if at the end of all  
 A little garden blossom.

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## HEALTH—THE GREATEST ACQUISITION

IN the *Dhammapada*, in the chapter on Happiness, Lord Buddha refers to health as “the greatest acquisition.” An Indian proverb states: “Good health is equal to a thousand boons.” It is a priceless boon, indeed, for both the poor and the rich, the young and the old. In our artificial civilization it is common to find even the young having health problems. Our hospitals are overcrowded with people suffering from all kinds of diseases, and it is pathetic to see them in terrible anguish and agony.

The very first idea that occurs on reflecting upon Lord Buddha’s wonderful statement is that health is not a gift from “providence” or parents, but is an acquisition, which means something earned through right efforts in the right direction. It is under the law of Karma that one enjoys good health and has his instruments of body, mind and heart in order. “A sound mind in a sound body” is an ancient adage, and very few can claim that privilege today. Mind and body are very closely related and affect each other for weal or woe. Each one, as an old soul in a new body, brings with him at birth, under the law of Karma, traits and tendencies pertaining to his physical, mental and moral nature, acquired in previous incarnations, and therefore is responsible for whatever is his or her due on all planes. Each one is free to act rightly or wrongly in the present incarnation, that is, to work in harmony with Nature and Nature’s laws, or go against them, depending on his choices. In order to preserve good health, or to restore it if one doesn’t have it, one has to understand the principles of life, and live accordingly. A sunny temperament and a cheerful disposition are the outcome of good health.

The words “heal” and “health” are closely related, and disease or lack of ease is the reverse. The dictionary defines “disease” as “bodily disorder or derangement of health.” The human body is a living organism with vital centres which should function harmoniously together as a unit. Disorder at once sets in whenever that harmony is disturbed. Prevention is better than cure, and so it is the duty of every single individual to keep his body free from any kind of ailment.

Theosophically, the physical body is the visible aspect and only one-seventh of the whole man; the remaining six constituents are invisible, but working in and through the physical, visible body. It is only the outer encasement of the inner six principles. As they are all interdependent and interrelated, the derangement or disorder of any one of the principles will affect the whole man, and thus diseases spring up in

the physical body. It is important to observe rules of health, physical, mental and moral, so that the inner man, and particularly the self-conscious thinker, the reincarnating ego, can carry on its activities without obstruction. Physicians generally prescribe medicines according to the visible symptoms, without taking into account the inner principles and the causal aspect of the disease. The creative, preservative and destructive-regenerative forces and energies are within man, but physicians and patients alike generally attach greater importance to the taking of medicines than to giving Mother Nature a chance to restore the disturbed equilibrium. The result is only a temporary relief from the pain and, in many cases, undesirable after-effects and fresh diseases crop up. Where is the medical practitioner with an all-round knowledge of man in his relationship with the whole universe? In the words of Paracelsus:

Man is himself a cosmos. A physician who knows nothing about Cosmology will know little about disease. He should know what exists in heaven and upon the earth, what lives in the four elements and how they act upon man; in short, he should know what man is, his origin and his constitution; he should know the whole man, and not merely his external body. If man were in possession of a perfect knowledge of self he would not need to be sick at all.

In the sixth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Sri Krishna instructs Arjuna: "This divine discipline, Arjuna, is not to be attained by the man who eateth more than enough or too little, nor by him who hath a habit of sleeping much, nor by him who is given to overwatching. The meditation which destroyeth pain is produced in him who is moderate in eating and in recreation, of moderate exertion in his actions, and regulated in sleeping and waking." Thus, moderation in all the activities of daily life is an important rule of health. Fresh air and exercise, pure, wholesome food, and regular hours of sleep will always help to build a good constitution. *Sattvic* food is described by Sri Krishna in the 17th chapter of the *Gita*: "The food which increases the length of days, vigour and strength, which keeps one free from sickness, of tranquil mind, and contented, and which is savoury, nourishing, of permanent benefit and congenial to the body, is that which is attractive to those in whom the *sattva* quality prevaieth." These right principles of diet each one can observe for himself. "Vigour and strength" are mentioned, but they are not of the type needed by an athlete, or a fighter, or a mountaineer, for the work of the spiritual aspirant is along quite another line. He has to become a proper channel with receptivity of mind and

brain and a clean healthy body, for the carrying on of the work of the great Masters of Theosophy.

As given in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism* (p. 2), the first of the seven qualifications for Chelaship is: "Perfect physical health." It is modified to some extent for the candidates of our present era. The chief aim and object of the aspirant being the service of others, his one duty is to live to the best of his ability according to the teachings of Theosophy and spread the Message by example and precept. If the body is not in a healthy condition, he becomes unfit for the great work and his aim is frustrated. If through past mistakes his physical and mental stamina is not what it should be, he must endeavour to regain it in the present through steadfast efforts.

There are so many different systems of cure — Allopathy, Homeopathy, Nature Cure, Water Cure, Ayurveda, Unani, Mental Science, Christian Science, etc. Theosophy stresses the importance of throwing out the disease of the body, not pushing it in, as the latter would have its own repercussions in the future. It also discourages the mental attitude of denying a disease when it does crop up. It is always best to live according to Nature's laws, observing punctuality in time and unity and harmony with all its departments, thus deriving the utmost benefit from all. The starry firmament above and the earth beneath our feet have to be looked upon with gratitude and respect. The light of the sun, the colours of the rainbow, the sweet melodies of the birds, the fragrance of the flowers and the trees, the high mountains and the deep valleys, all need our grateful admiration. We obtain so much from Nature, and only through our love and adoration can it be enriched. Some of the healing cults use the power of sound or music for effecting cures; others use colours for the same purpose. They may bring about partial results, and different temperaments are affected differently. Both sounds and colours are produced by different rates of vibration, and each individual has his own rate in terms of which he responds. All these are not permanent remedies; they but help in producing soothing effects.

A lasting cure can only result with the knowledge of the real inner man, the man of mind and emotions, the currents of which circulate in the foundational astral body, more subtle in substance, but more elastic, impressionable, magnetic, with inner organs of action and sensation which are constantly affected by our thoughts and feelings. As Madame Blavatsky has stated:

Half, if not two-thirds of our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears. Destroy the latter and give another bent to the former, and nature will do the rest.

So, control of the mind and the desire nature is essential to keep the body in good condition. We are further told:

*Physician, heal thyself:* Diet, fasting, purgation, repose, exercise. The virtues are medicines, self-sacrifice is a purgation, calmness a prescription, patience a sovereign remedy, altruism the Great Physician. The mind and moral nature thus fed and exercised, *natural* physical means will restore the body. (*The Laws of Healing*, p. 30)

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#### ARE BACILLI ANYTHING NEW?

TRULY may one query in the words of Solomon: "Is there anything whereof it may be said: See, this is new!" Thus, it is to the modern discoverer and the proud patentee that the wise words in *Ecclesiastes* apply: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." Koch and Kochists, and all ye modern Attilas of that interesting creature called Microbe and Bacillus, and what not, down with your diminished heads, you are not its discoverers! Like as the heliocentric system was known thousands of years before the Christian era to be *rediscovered* by Galileo, so the invisible foreigners, on which you are now making a raid, were known in dark antiquity. The infinitesimal insect you are insectating is spoken of by a Latin poet in the first century B.C. Just turn to the pages of P. Terentius Varro (39 B.C.; *Rerum Rusticarum* I, iii) and see what the famous Atacinus says of your tubercular and other bacilli:

Small creatures, invisible to the eye, fill the atmosphere in marshy localities, and penetrating with the air breathed through the nose and mouth, into the human organism, cause thereby dangerous diseases

Just so: *the thing that hath been, it is that which is.*

—*Lucifer*, April 1891

## “WHEREIN IS LOVE, THEREIN IS GOD”

[This story by Count Leo Tolstoy is reprinted from *Lucifer* for December 1889. It has appeared before in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT.—EDS.]

ONCE there dwelt in a city a bootmaker, Martin Avdeyitch. He lived in a small basement room with one window. The window looked on the street. Through the window one could see the people passing; though their legs alone could be seen, yet Martin Avdeyitch used to recognize the owners by their boots. Martin Avdeyitch had lived in his room for a long while and had many acquaintances. Rare was that pair of boots in the neighbourhood that missed his hands. Some he soled, others he patched, some again he trimmed afresh, putting on occasionally a new heel or two. And often he used to see his work through the window. Of orders he had plenty, for Avdeyitch's work was solid; he always furnished good material, putting on it no higher price than he should, and stuck punctually to his promises. Whenever sure of being ready at the time fixed, he would accept an order; if otherwise, he would never deceive a customer, but would warn him beforehand. So Avdeyitch became known and had no end of work. Avdeyitch had always been a good man, but toward old age he took to thinking more of his soul and approaching nearer his God. In the now old days, when Martin yet lived as a journeyman, he had lost his wife. A boy about three years old had been all that remained of her. Their elder children had all died. At first Martin thought of sending his boy to the village, to live with his sister, but pitying the child, he changed his mind — “too hard for my Kapitoshka to grow up in a strange family,” he said to himself, “I'll keep him with me.” Asking his master to discharge him, Avdeyitch went to live together with his little boy in a lodging. But God had not given him luck with children. Hardly had the child grown up sufficiently to be of help to his father, than he fell sick, burnt with fever for a week, and died. Martin buried his son and fell into despair. So much did he despair that he murmured against God. Such weariness got hold of Martin that more than once he implored God for death, and reproved Him for not taking him, an old man, instead of his beloved and only son. Avdeyitch even ceased to go to Church. Once an old village neighbour visited Avdeyitch, on his way from Troitza Monastery — a pilgrim in the eighth year of his travels. After conversing awhile Avdeyitch complained to him about his sorrows. “No desire, man of God, do I

feel for life," he said. "Death alone do I covet, and pray God for. Here am I, a hopeless man in all!"

And the Pilgrim answered: "Thou speakest not well, Martin, for it behoves us not to judge the acts of God. If God so willed that thy son should die and thou shouldst live, therefore must it have been for the best. As to thy despairing, this is only because thou seekest to live for thine own comfort alone."

"And for what else should one live?" asked Martin.

Quoth the old man — "For God, Martin, thou shouldst live for God. He giveth life, for Him then we should live. Once thou livest for God, thou shalt cease fretting, and life shall seem to thee but a light burden."

After a short silence, Martin asked: "How should one live for God?"

Saith the old one: "As for this, Christ Himself showeth us the way. Canst thou not read? Well, buy the Evangels and read them, and thou shalt learn therein how one can live for God. It is all there."

And these words found their way into Martin's heart. And he went and bought a New Testament, in large print, and set himself to study it.

Avdeyitch had intended to read only on holidays, but no sooner had he begun, than he felt his soul so overjoyed that he read daily. At times he would go on reading so late at night that the oil in his lamp would be all burned out, and he still unable to tear himself away from the book. And the more he read, the more it became clear to him how one should live *for God*; and he felt the burden on his heart becoming lighter and lighter. Hitherto, when retiring to rest, he used to begin groaning and moaning for his Kapitoshka, but now his last thoughts became, "Glory to Thee, glory, O Lord! Thy will be done." And now all the life of Avdeyitch was changed; it had become quiet and full of contentment. From morn till eve at work; and when the task was done, taking his little lamp from the hook on the wall, placing it on his table, and then getting his book from the shelf, opening it, and sitting down to read. And the more he read, the better he understood it and the lighter and happier he felt in his heart.

Once it so happened that Martin sat up later than usual. He was reading the Gospel according to St. Luke. He had read the sixth chapter, and had come upon the verses: "And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy shirt<sup>1</sup> also. Give to every man that asketh of

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<sup>1</sup> In the Slavonian text the word is "shirt," not "coat," as in the English texts.

thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Then he read those verses wherein the Lord saith:

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the sand; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

Read Avdeyitch these words and his soul felt overjoyed. Taking off his spectacles, he laid them on the book before him, and leaning on the table fell into deep thought. He tried to fit his life to the precepts. And then he asked himself:

"Is my house built on rock or on sand? If on rock, well and good. Aye, it is easy enough, sitting here alone, to fancy that one has done everything as God commands; but forget this for a moment and there's sin again. Nevertheless, I'll try — and may God help me!"

Thus ran his thoughts; he half rose to go to bed, but felt unwilling yet to part with the Book. So he went on reading the seventh chapter. He read about the centurion, read all about the son of the widow, read the reply to John's disciples and came to that place, where a Pharisee asked Jesus to eat with him; and finally read how the woman "which was a sinner" anointed His feet and washed them with her tears and how He forgave her sins. At last he came to verse 44 and began to read: "And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head; and since the time I came in, she hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed my feet with ointment." And having read these verses he repeated to himself: "*Gave no water for the feet, gave no kiss, nor did he anoint His head with oil. . . .*"

He took off his spectacles once more, placed them on the Book, and fell into deep thought again.

"That Pharisee, there, must have been one of my sort. I too never used to remember anyone but myself: how to indulge in tea, to sit in

warmth and comfort, and no thought of others. Thought of himself only; as to his guest, no care did he feel for him. And who, that guest? Why, the Lord Himself. Would He but come to me now, could I ever act as he did?" Placing both arms on the table, Avdeyitch fell unconsciously into a half slumber.

"Martin!" he suddenly heard, as if something had breathed near his ear. Startled in his sleep, "Who's here?" he cried.

Turning round, he looked at the door — and saw no one. He fell asleep again. Suddenly he heard distinctly a voice saying: "Martin, I say, Martin! look out on the street tomorrow for me. I will come."

Then Martin awoke, arose from his chair and began to rub his eyes, not sure whether he had really heard these words, or only dreamed them. Then he turned off his lamp, and took to his bed.

On the morrow Avdeyitch arose before twilight, said his prayers, kindled his fire, put his *stshy*<sup>2</sup> and *kasha*<sup>3</sup> into the oven, made his *samo-var*<sup>4</sup> boil, donned his apron, and taking his seat under the window commenced his work. There sat Avdeyitch, working, but thinking all the while of what had happened. And his conclusions were twofold: one moment he thought that it was all fancy, at another that he had heard a voice, truly. Well, he argued, such things have happened before.

Thus sat Martin at his window, working less than looking out of it, and no sooner would a pair of boots of foreign make pass by than, straining his body, he would try to catch a glimpse through the window, not of the legs alone but of the face too. There goes the *dvornik* (porter) in new felt boots;<sup>5</sup> there comes the water-carrier; and finally an old invalid soldier of the Nicholas period, in worn-out and mended felt boots and leggings, armed with a snow-shovel, stood before the window. Avdeyitch recognized him by those leggings. Stepanitch was the old man's name, and he lived with a neighbouring merchant, on charity. His duty was to help the porter. Stepanitch commenced to shovel away the snow from before the window; Avdeyitch looked at him and then returned to his work.

"I must have lost my senses in my old age!" laughed Avdeyitch to himself. "Stepanitch is cleaning away the snow and I am here fancying Christ is coming to visit me. I must be a dotting old fool, that's

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<sup>2</sup> Cabbage broth.

<sup>3</sup> Thick porridge of buckwheat.

<sup>4</sup> Brass tea-urn to boil water in.

<sup>5</sup> *Valenki*, thick felt boots without soles.

what I am." Nevertheless, having drawn his needle through about a dozen times, Avdeyitch was again attracted to look through the window. And, having looked, he saw Stepanitch who, placing his spade against a wall, was trying to warm himself or perhaps get a rest.

"The man is old, broken down, perchance too weak even to clean off the snow," said to himself Avdeyitch; "warm tea might be welcome to him, and, as luck has it, there's the *samovar* ready to boil over." So he stuck in his awl, rose, placed the *samovar* on the table, poured boiling water over the tea, and tapped with his finger on the window-pane. Stepanitch turned round and approached the window; Avdeyitch beckoned to him and went to open the door.

"Walk in and warm thyself," he said. "Feel cold, hey?"

"Christ save us, I do, and all my bones aching!" In walked Stepanitch, shook off some snow, and, so as not to soil the floor, made a feeble attempt to wipe his feet, himself nearly falling.

"Don't trouble to wipe; I'll scrub it off myself; that's our business. Come and sit down," said Avdeyitch. "There, have some tea." Filling two glasses, he placed one before his guest, and pouring tea out of his own glass into his saucer, proceeded to blow on it.

Stepanitch emptied his glass, turned it upside down on its saucer, and placing on it the bit of sugar he had not used,<sup>6</sup> he rendered thanks for the tea. But he evidently longed for another glass.

"Have some more," said Avdeyitch, filling the two glasses again, for himself and guest. Thus he talked and drank, yet never losing sight of the window.

"Art thou expecting anyone?" enquired the guest.

"Do I expect anyone? Seems queer to say — whom I keep expecting. Not that I really expect anyone, only a certain word stuck in my heart. A vision, or whatever it was, I cannot say. Hearken thou to me, brother mine. Last night I was reading the Gospel about Father Christ, all about how he suffered and how he walked on earth. Thou hast heard of it, hast thou not?"

"Aye, heard of it, we have heard," answered Stepanitch. "But we are dark people<sup>7</sup> and have not been taught to read."

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<sup>6</sup> Though they drink tea immoderately, the lower classes of Russia do not sugar it but bite a piece off from a lump which serves them for several glasses, the guest leaving his remaining piece in the manner described.

<sup>7</sup> The Russian peasant and the lower classes call themselves "dark" or ignorant

"Well, then, I was reading just about this very same thing, how he walked the earth, and I read, you know, how he visited the Pharisee and the Pharisee failed to give him a reception. And I was reading this last night, thou brother mine, and, while reading, fell a-thinking. How is it that he could receive Christ, our Father, without any honours? Had this happened as an example to myself or anyone else, methinks nothing would have been too good with which to receive him. And that other one, offering no reception! Well, that's what I kept thinking about, until I fell a-napping like. And while napping, brother mine, I heard my name called, lifted my head and heard a voice, just as if someone whispered, 'Expect me, I'll come tomorrow,' and that twice. Well, believe me or not, but that voice remained fixed in my head from that moment — and here I am, chiding myself for it, and still expecting Him, our Father."

Stepanitch shook his head wonderingly and said nothing, but emptying his glass, placed it this time on its side,<sup>8</sup> but Avdeyitch lifted it up again and poured out more tea.

"Drink more and may it give thee health. So then I think to myself, when He, the Father, walked the earth, He scorned no man, but associated more with the common people, visiting rather the simple folk and selecting his disciples out of the ranks of the poorer brethren, the same as we sinners are ourselves, journeymen and the like. 'Whosoever shall exalt himself,' says He, 'shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. You call Me Lord,' says He, 'and I,' He says, 'will wash your feet for you. If any man desire to be first, the same shall be servant of all. Because,' says He, 'blessed are the poor, the meek and the merciful.'"

Being an old, and soft-hearted fellow, Stepanitch forgot his tea. And there he sat listening, big tears running down his cheeks.

"Come, have some more tea," said Avdeyitch. But Stepanitch, crossing himself,<sup>9</sup> rendered thanks, pushed away his glass and arose to depart.

"Thanks to thee, Martin Avdeyitch," he said; "thou hast entertained me well and fed both soul and body."

"Pray thee come again; a guest is ever welcome," replied Avdeyitch. Stepanitch departed, and Martin, pouring out the last drop of tea,

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people. They also often use the plural pronoun "we" instead of the pronoun "I" when speaking of themselves.

<sup>8</sup> An act of politeness, denoting that he had enough tea.

<sup>9</sup> Making the sign of the cross, which people in Russia do before and after every meal.

cleared away the tea things and sat down once more to his table under the window, to backstitch a seam. There he sat backstitching, but still looking out through the window, awaiting the Christ, thinking of Him and His doings, his head full of Christ's various discourses.

Two soldiers passed by, one in regimentals, the other in his own boots; passed the proprietor of a neighbouring house, in brightly polished overshoes, and finally the baker with his basket. All passed and vanished, and now a woman in woollen stockings and village shoes walks past the window and stops at the partition wall. Looks up at her from under the window panes Avdeyitch, and sees an unknown female poorly clad, with a baby in her arms, placing herself with her back against the wind and trying to wrap up the baby but having nothing to wrap it in. Her garments are thin and worn. And Avdeyitch, through his window, hears the child crying, and she trying, but unable, to hush him. Arose Avdeyitch, opened the door, passed up the staircase and called: "Goody; hey, my goody!" The woman heard him and turned round.

"Wherefore standest thou with that little child in the cold? Come into the warm room, where thou canst wrap him at thine ease. Here, come down here!" The woman looked surprised. She sees an old man in his working apron and with spectacles on his nose inviting her into his shop. She followed him. Reaching the bottom of the landing, they entered the room, and the old man led the woman to his bed. "Sit down here, my goody, nearer to the oven — just to warm thyself and feed the baby."

"No milk left; had nothing myself to eat since morning," sadly muttered the woman, preparing nevertheless to feed the babe.

Shook his old head Avdeyitch, upon hearing this, went to the table, got some bread and a bowl, opened the oven-door, poured into the cup some *stshy*, got out from the oven a pot with *kasha*, but found it had not steamed up to the proper point yet, returned with the *stshy* alone, and placed it on the table with the bread.

"Sit down," says he, "and eat, my goody, and I'll take meanwhile care of thy infant. I had babes myself — so I know how to deal with 'em."

The woman, crossing herself, went to the table and commenced eating, and Avdeyitch took her place on the bedstead near the baby, and began smacking his lips at it, but smack as he would he smacked them badly, for he had no teeth. The little child kept on crying. Then it occurred to Avdeyitch to startle it with his finger: to raise high his

hand with finger uplifted, and bringing it rapidly down, right near the baby's mouth, and as hastily withdrawing it. The finger was all black, stained with cobbler's wax, so he would not allow the baby to take it into its mouth. The little one at last got interested in the black finger, and, while looking at it, ceased crying and soon began to smile and coo. Avdeyitch felt overjoyed. And the woman went on eating, at the same time narrating who she was and whence she came.

She was a soldier's wife, she said, whose husband had been marched off somewhere eight months before and since then had never been heard from. She was living as a cook when her baby was born, but since then, they would not keep her with it.

"And now it's the third month that I am out of a situation," she went on. "All I possessed is pawned for food. I offered myself as wet-nurse, but didn't suit — was too lean, they said. Tried with the merchant's wife, yonder, where a countrywoman is in service, and she promised to have me. I had understood it was from today, and so went, but was told to come next week. She lives far. I got tired out and wore him out too, the poor little soul. Thanks to our landlady, she pities the poor and keeps us for the sake of Christ under her roof. Otherwise I know not how I would have pulled through."

Heaving a sigh, Avdeyitch asked: "And hast thou no warmer clothing?"

"Just the time, my own one, to keep warm clothing! But yesterday I pawned my last shawl for twenty copecks."

Approaching the bed the woman took her child, and Avdeyitch, repairing to a corner in the wall, rummaged among some clothing and brought forth an old sleeveless coat. "There," he said, "though it be a worn-out garment, still it may serve thee to wrap him up with."

The woman looked at the coat, looked at the old man and began weeping. And she said: "Christ save thee, old father, it is He, perchance, who sent me under thy window. I would have had my child frozen. When I left the house it was warm, and now, behold the frost is beginning. It's He, the Father, who made thee look out of the window and take pity on hapless me."

Smiled Avdeyitch, and said: "Aye, it's He who made me. It's not to lose time, my goody, that I keep on the lookout." And then Martin told the soldier's wife also his dream, how he had heard a voice promising him that the Lord would visit him that day.

"All things are possible," remarked the woman, and arising put on

the coat, wrapped up in its folds her little one, and bowing, commenced again to thank Avdeyitch.

“Accept this for the sake of Christ,” answered Avdeyitch, giving her a twenty copeck piece, to get back her shawl from the pawnshop. Once more the woman crossed her brow, and Avdeyitch crossed his, and went out to see her off.

The woman was gone. Avdeyitch ate some broth, cleaned the table, and sat down to his work again. His hands are busy, but he keeps the window in mind and no sooner a shadow falls on it than he looks up to see who goes by. Some acquaintances passed along, and some strangers likewise, but he saw nothing and no one out of the ordinary.

But suddenly, Avdeyitch sees stopping opposite his window an old woman, a fruit-seller. She is carrying a wicker basket with apples. Few remain, she must have sold them all, for, hanging across her back is a bag full of chips, got by her, no doubt, at some building in construction, and which she now carries home. But the heavy bag hurts her, it seems; trying to shift it from one shoulder to the other, she drops it down on the kerb, places her wicker basket on a street post, and proceeds to pack the chips tighter in the bag. As she is shaking the bag, there suddenly appears from behind the street corner a small boy, in a ragged cap, who seizes an apple and is in the act of disappearing unperceived, when the old woman, abruptly turning round, grasps him with both hands by the coat sleeve. The boy struggles, trying to get away, but the old woman seizing him in her arms knocks off his cap and catches him by the hair. The boy cries at the top of his voice, the old woman swears. Losing no time to put away his awl, Avdeyitch throws it on the floor, makes for the door, runs up the steps, stumbles and loses his spectacles, and reaches the street. On runs Avdeyitch, on goes the old woman, shaking the small boy by his hair, cursing and threatening to drag him to the policeman; the small boy kicking and denying: “I did not take thine apple; why shouldst thou beat me, let go!” Then Avdeyitch endeavoured to separate them, and taking the boy by the hand, said: “Let him go, *babooshka* (grandmother), forgive him for the sake of Christ.”

“I’ll forgive him so that he won’t forget it till the next switches! I’ll take the rascal to the police.” And Avdeyitch began to entreat the old woman. “Let him go, *babooshka*,” he said. “He won’t do it again. Let go, for Christ’s sake!”

The old woman let the boy go, who prepared to run away, but now

Avdeyitch would not let him. "Beg granny's pardon," he said, "and don't do it again. I saw thee take the apple." The boy burst into tears and begged the old woman to forgive him.

"Now, that's right. And there, have the apple now." And Avdeyitch, taking an apple out of the basket, gave it to the small boy. "I'll pay thee for it, grandmother," said he to the old woman.

"Thou wilt spoil the dirty urchin," said the woman. "His best reward should be of such a nature that he could not lie on his back for a week."

"Nay, nay, mother," said Avdeyitch, "not so. This may be according to our law, but it is not according to the law of God. If he deserves flogging for a stolen apple, then what should be the punishment for our sins?"

The old woman was silent. And Avdeyitch told the old woman the parable about the Lord who loosed his servant and forgave him his debt, the servant going forthwith and laying his hands on his debtor, throttling him and casting him into prison. The old woman stood and listened, and the boy stood and listened. "God commands that we should forgive our brothers their trespasses," said Avdeyitch, "that the same should be done unto us. Forgive all, let alone an unreasoning child."

The old woman shook her head and sighed. "That's so, that's so," she said, "but children have become too unruly nowadays."

"Just why we old people should teach them better!" said Avdeyitch.

"I say so, too," replied the old woman. "I had seven of them, myself, but only one daughter is left to me out of them all." And the old woman began telling where and how she lived with her daughter, and the number of grandchildren she had. "See," she went on, "my strength is almost gone, and still I work, pitying the chicks, for my grandchildren are very good and none love me better than they. As to Aksyutka, she won't leave my arms for anyone. 'Granny, dear granny, my heart,' says she." And the old woman softened entirely. "Of course, that's a child's doings. God be with him," she added, looking at the boy.

As she prepares to hoist the bag of chips on her back, the little boy, making up, says, "Let me carry it, granny, for you: I am going your way." Shook her head reflectively the old one, nodded, and placed the load on the boy's back.

And both went along the street, the old woman actually forgetting to ask Avdeyitch for the price of her apple. Avdeyitch stood looking at them and kept listening to their dying voices, as they went on holding converse together.

Having seen them off, Avdeyitch returned to his room, found his spectacles on the steps unbroken, picked up his awl and sat at his work once more. After working for a little time he could no longer thread the bristles through the holes, and saw the lamp-lighter passing on his way to light the street lanterns.

"Time to light my lamp," he thought; so he trimmed it, hooked it on to the wall and continued his work. One boot was now ready; he turned it on all sides and examined it; it was all right. He gathered his tools, brushed off the parings, put away the bristles, stray bits and strings, took down his lamp, placed it on the table and got from the shelf his Gospels. He tried to open the book on the page which he had marked the night before with a bit of morocco leather, but it opened at another place. And no sooner had Avdeyitch opened it than he remembered his last night's dream. And no sooner did it come back to him than it seemed to him as if someone moved about behind him, softly shuffling his feet. Turns round our Avdeyitch, and sees something like people standing in the dark corner—men of whom he is yet unable to say who they are. And the voice whispers into his ear:

"Martin! Hey, Martin. Knowest thou me not?"

"Know whom?" cried Avdeyitch.

"Me," said the voice; "it is I." And out from the dark corner emerged Stepanitch, smiled, vanished cloud-like, and was no more.

"And that is I," said the same voice, the woman with the little child coming out of the dark corner; and the woman smiled and the little child cooed, and they too were gone. "And that is I," said the voice, followed by the old woman and the little boy with the apple, and both smiled and forthwith vanished too.

And great joy crept into Martin's heart, and making the sign of the cross he put on his spectacles and began reading there where the Book had opened. And on the top of the page he read:

"For I was hungered and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger and ye took me in." And further down the page he read: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." (*Matt. xxv*)

And Avdeyitch knew that his dream had not deceived him, but that on that day the Saviour had indeed come to visit him, and that he had indeed received Him.

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In our time when men are discarding the traditional concept of God, it is inevitable that they should also discard the traditional idea of prayer. As brought out in Ardis Whitman's article, "We Need New Ways to Pray" (*Reader's Digest*, Indian ed., February 1971), prayer is on the decline even among religious people. Questions about it arouse such comments as "I pray, but I don't think it does much good." "There seems to be a vacuum where God was." "I don't know whether I pray or not — what does prayer mean?" The article examines why prayer seems meaningless today, and suggests alternatives:

Contemporary man is almost by necessity a pragmatist. If he needs help, he turns not to God but to other men like himself since it is they, he believes, who will bring him the comforts, the challenges, the objects he wants, the know-how he craves.

Moreover, faith itself is passing through a very bewildering period. The certainties of the past have been openly challenged. Where is God? For many, He seems to have fled the crowded urban streets, where His works are less obvious than in field and forest. Contemplation today is foreign; the flash of insight seems to be psychologically explained. . . .

Like all worship, prayer must start from the condition of the man who prays, and be relevant to what he is. . . . What kind of prayer, then, makes sense today? Can this century create its own ways of prayer, as have all the other centuries?

First, say contemporary theologians, if prayer is to have meaning, it must be lived as well as spoken. How easy it is to pray for hungry people, troubled people, sad people — and then do nothing about it! But as a ghetto priest said to me, "God gives the gift of power to him who lives what his tongue speaks." One's belief, one's action, one's prayer, one's work, must be all of a piece. Doing unto others, one acts one's way into prayer; praying, one believes one's way into action. . . .

Second, in contemporary thinking, prayer must also be honest to God. If prayer often doesn't sound honest, it's because often it isn't. Does what we really believe about ourselves conform to what we are telling God? Many of us pray for the sins of other people but steer clear of our own. Or we confess venial sins and forget those that matter. . . .

Prayer ought to be an outpouring and cleansing of the heart.

From prayer of such profound candour comes growing self-knowledge. It can be deep therapy as well as prayer.

Prayer must also be relevant in content and language to the life we live today. . . . If God is in all things, say contemporary theologians, then He must be in the rush-hour traffic, in the business office and in the loneliness of the city. . . . Why do we think God can hear us only when we talk in pious and archaic language? . . . The new forms of prayer, not bounded in content or language, are also not bounded by time or place or traditional ritual. . . .

Prayer is not easy, and never was. The ancient dilemma — man's need to talk to God and his difficulty in doing so — continues. But there is hope in the very gropings of this generation. For, above all, contemporary prayer at its best is a thanksgiving for life and love, a way of saying, with the poet Blake, that "everything that is, is holy"; a hallelujah that creation is still going on and we are part of it.

Much can be said Theosophically on the subject of prayer. Nearly all prayers are for personal ends, either for oneself or the personal needs of other people. These prayers have come into being from the belief in that bugbear, a Personal God, who holds within his hands the power to give or withhold his mercies — at his own caprice. What reliance could be placed on such a being? Study of the Law of Karma, and its twin doctrine, Reincarnation, helps a man to prove to himself that there is no injustice in his present circumstances, that he alone is the author of the entanglement in which he finds himself, and that therefore he alone is the person to resolve these tangled strands into order again. He will see that this cannot be done by prayer, in the accepted sense of getting somebody else to do the work for him. Such prayer kills self-reliance. It can only be done by readjusting his life and cultivating necessary virtues such as patience and dispassion, which will enable him to bear the present ills calmly.

The only God we can contact is the "Father in secret" to whom Jesus prayed, the Immortal Spirit within us, and necessarily It is not concerned with the wants of our *personality*. To contact this Spirit, our Higher Self, we have to rise above petty personal troubles and meditate on universal truths. The subject of prayer from the Theosophical point of view is dealt with in *The Key to Theosophy* (Section V), by H. P. Blavatsky.

These extracts from an article by Donalde Seidel of Philadelphia, written for January 4, Perihelion Day, "when the earth makes its closest approach to the Sun and man's body and spirit receive the annual cosmic spark to animate them," are reproduced here from *Sarvodaya* for April 1971:

The seed of Peace is found in the struggle for Inner Harmony and the process of beginning to think of oneself as a member of the Family of Man and the Brotherhood of Life, both of this planet and the Universe beyond with its probable life-forms infinitely superior to *homo sapiens* both in intelligence, sensitivity, ethics and general evolutionary level. The seed of Peace is found in the search for one's Cosmic Identity, or rather Man's *collective* search for his Cosmic Identity. The seed of Peace is found in Non-violence and the sacrifice of one's own life before taking another life. The seed of Peace is *internal and invisible* and while it is recorded in acts, its existence is independent of and antecedent to these acts — for Peace is not created in the World-Plane. (The Adept of Peace radiates Peace *without desire* and, by the Laws of Correspondence, awakens the seed of Peace in the hearts of his students and followers — without words, teachings, preachments or laws. For Peace is a state of being, an Idea in its highest Platonic sense, Intelligence in its highest form, that is preserved and dissociated from the corruption of words and acts and self-animated with life.)...

*Peace is the New Age* in which Man shall be finally unchained from his primitive self, from its irrational conceptualizations, such as territory, ownership, empire, conquest, repression of human freedoms, holy wars, etc., and from his irrational and fratricidal compulsions to destroy Life. Peace is the New Age, in which man, loosened from the yoke of disease, poverty, ignorance and all expressions of exploitation, will explore and experience the Laws and Phenomena of his Infinite Being and realize the Inner Harmony which shall allow him (finally) to actualize his aspirations and ideals. Peace is the New Age — and each living man is a cell of it.

In short, *Peace is inner Harmony* and its outward manifestations: *Inner Harmony with the body* expressing as health; *Inner Harmony with the Mind* expressing as creativity and sanity; *Inner Harmony with one's fellow Human Beings*, expressing as World Brotherhood and Universal Social Justice; *Inner Harmony with the Earth* expressing as ecological responsibility and reverence for life; and *Inner Harmony with the Cosmos*, with all the

mysteries and miracles of the Cosmos, known and unknown, expressing as Enlightenment.

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A University of Wisconsin climatologist who has charted major environmental and cultural changes in the Northern hemisphere over the past 10,000 years believes that shifts in the weather are correlated with culture shifts. Two examples given by Wayne M. Wendland to the Association of American Geographers recently are these: Around 800 years ago, when the weather grew colder, the Viking expansion halted, Greenland Eskimos migrated southward and British vineyards disappeared. Another shift towards cooler, more moist weather, this one around 2,700 to 2,800 years ago, heralded the rise of the Greeks and Romans. (*Science Digest*, January 1971)

There are numerous indications of the close relationship of human affairs with changes in climate. Such changes are associated with cycles of race evolution (see *S.D.*, I. 183-84, II. 262), but that cultural developments and declines are merely a result of weather alterations is far from a necessary conclusion. Researches like those of the University of Wisconsin climatologist are of interest from the Theosophical viewpoint inasmuch as they show a recognition of the law of periodicity in the tide of cultural evolution. They help to make men think in terms of cycles and thus prepare their minds for consideration of the occult teachings.

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