

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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MEN OF HIGHER MORALITY

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Thou hast to fight thy way through portals seven, seven strongholds held by cruel crafty Powers — passions incarnate.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

Mahali asks the Master about the object of the holy life:

“Then, Lord, is it for the sake of realizing the practice of contemplation that the brethren live the holy life under the Exalted One?”

“No, indeed, Mahali. It is not for the sake of this that the brethren live the holy life under my guidance. There are other higher and more excellent things, Mahali, for the realization of which the brethren live the holy life under my guidance.”

“And what, Lord, are those higher and more excellent things?”

“Herein, Mahali, in this discipline a brother, by the utter destruction of the Three Fetters (of belief in the reality of bodyhood, doubt in the Master and His Teaching, belief in the value of rites and ceremonies), becomes a Stream-winner, saved from the Downfall, assured of attaining to the perfect wisdom. That, Mahali, is one thing higher and more excellent.”

—*Digha Nikaya, I. 155*

EACH MAN, each woman, beholds the universe with his or her own sight. There are as many universes as there are men and women. The horizon of each differs, not only as to distance but also as to what is perceived and how. Each person is the centre of his own universe. The metaphysical truth that the centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere

casts a shadow in the world of *Maya*, and so every person will be found to be egocentric.

The boundaries of our solar system are unknown to those who are not familiar with astronomy. The mysteries of the layers of the earth below our feet are better known to geologists than to others. The common man enjoys the beauty of flowers though he may not be a botanist, while a learned man, in the name of science, may "botanize upon his mother's grave." Thousands have seen a lark ascending in the blue of heaven, but only a Shelley can sing to a skylark:

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

The Secret Doctrine explains the teaching of consubstantiality. We sense only that which is consubstantial with our sense-organs. Similarly our minds function, knowing and understanding what is consubstantial with them. Our knowledge is circumscribed by our minds and the capacity to know more depends upon what we already know and what use we make of it.

Only a fragment of the Divine Mind is known to us and even that is shadowed by distortions. Finally, each person's morality is rooted in feelings, or emotions which circulate in the blood. Some men are demonic in nature; others good, with the potentiality of becoming divine. Our emotions are related to the Divine Heart and we feel the true of the Cosmos rarely, for personal selfish feelings tarnish our hearts.

The fate of the inert man of hard heart is death of the soul, unless he shakes himself out of his mental laziness, stirs himself to seek knowledge and begins to move; it is very likely that he will move to a deeper inertia if vanity and ambition incite him to action. The man of *tamas* should move to virtue, not to vice. He requires *right* knowledge to move to right *rajas*, which forms the *prana* of aspirations. The lower-tending *prana* will take him back to dullness and evil; the higher-tending *prana* will lift him to a life of harmony and rhythm — *sattva*. How the man of *tamas* rises through *rajas* to *sattva* is well described in that superb allegory, *The Dream of Ravan*.

Theosophy inspires its votary to re-form his morality, *i.e.*, to acquire a new code of ethics founded upon the principles of the Esoteric Phi-

osophy — the first of which is brotherliness, which is related to the very first object of our Movement, corresponding to the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*.

Theosophy has the power to transform the demoniac disposition of the egocentric man. Its knowledge, if applied timely, can transmute the selfishness of the sinner, make him a kindly human and lead him to saintship. It is a hard task, and cycles must run their rounds, but Theosophy has this achievement to its credit; and the present-day sinner can do what his brother sinner of the past achieved. Knowledge to acquire a new mind and application to make the heart new, if will-fully used, will bring success.

The mundane standard of morality is the aspirant's strong foe. Violence, falsehood and hypocrisy are almost universal and, what is worse, are tolerated by most men and women as natural. The Hindustani proverb is gleefully quoted by sharp men of business and ambitious society women — "*ghee khana sakkerse, aur duniya khana makkerse*" (Eat and enjoy *ghee* by using sugar, and live and enjoy the world by cunning).

Theosophy can help the individual to save himself and can enable him to serve others.

Each student must make his moral perceptions consubstantial with the *Akashic* Light of divine morality. The rules of conduct of the evil, proud and egocentric person are different from those of the good man in whom unselfishness, kindness, generosity, tolerance and consideration for others are to be seen. Divine Ethics are superior to the morality of even the good. The *paramitas* or virtues have a divine character: mental *viveka* or discrimination and heart *vairagya* or detachment are the necessary starting points. Not the bodily senses and organs but the mind has to be taken in hand first. Mental discernment will enable the heart to become detached, and that which Mr. Judge has called mental devotion will come to birth. The mind must aid the heart and the heart must enlighten the mind.

To make the heart consubstantial with *Akashic* vibrations we need courage, for this exercise reveals to us our past blunders, frailties and foibles; face to face with the perception of our higher duty (*i.e.*, duty dictated by the Higher Self) we become dejected, and one of the early manifestations of this depression is the strong onrush of the very weaknesses the philosophy and our own awakening divine disposition have laid bare.

Arjuna was not an ordinary learner; he was the hero of a hundred fights; his despondency is not the ordinary dejection which every student experiences every day of his life. When the student has studied and applied sufficiently, has developed mental detachment and mental devotion sufficiently, he deliberately says to the Master within and the Gracious Guru outside:

I pray thee, Krishna, cause my chariot to be placed between the two armies, that I may behold who are the men that stand ready, anxious to commence the battle; with whom it is I am to fight in this ready field; and who they are that are here assembled to support the evil-minded son of Dhritarashtra in the battle.

These words breathe courage and determination; they reveal a perception of the ready field of battle and an eagerness to know the enemies rooted in the Evil Mind. It is the survey of the armies — the apprehension of the task ahead — which envelops Arjuna with penetrating despondency. His firm ground looks a slough of despond. The remedy which Krishna offers is, first, in the form of a reminder to Arjuna of the higher nature of the Warrior — not the personal good nature but the divine spiritual nature. And then is given superior knowledge to adhere to the precepts of the Wisdom.

As personalities we are influenced by the earthly Astral Light which is not wholly dark and evil. There are good but personal radiations of that Astral Light. But in the life of chelaship the whole of that Astral Light has to be transcended and an altogether new realm, that of the Divine Astral or *Akashic* Light, has to be touched and assimilated. Consubstantiality with that Divine Light has to be obtained. A new morality based on the Divine Paramitas has to be developed by the courageous and listening Arjuna, the neophyte. The personality has to become impersonal; the person has to evolve into a Personage. Not only the horizon of the mind has to be widened in all directions, but also the horizon of the insight has to be deepened. The hidden Divinity in all forms of Life has to be discerned.

The neophyte has to learn to develop the New Morality — new to the personality but native and eternal to the Inner Ego. When the Light of Self-consciousness came to man there also came to him the Light of Devotion, which is now almost quenched; innately it exists, and by rising above those pairs of opposites which are enumerated in Chapter XII of the *Gita* the Devotee will be born. The true Devotee loves God, the Omnipresent, the Omnipotent, the Omniscient.

Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
And only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.

Those who see are the mystical practitioners of the Higher Morality, who worship the Deity manifesting at every point of space and revealing new power every moment of time. Let us prepare ourselves, take off our polluted shoes representing our lower nature, and perceive Heaven cramming all earth, everywhere.

Let us be men of the Higher Morality.

No one method is to be insisted on. Each man is a potency in himself, and only by working on the lines which suggest themselves to him can he bring to bear the forces that are his. We should deny no man and interfere with none; for our duty is to discover what we ourselves can do without criticizing the actions of another. The laws of karmic action have much to do with this. We interfere for a time with good results to come when we attempt to judge according to our own standards the methods of work which a fellow member proposes for himself. Ramifying in every direction are the levers that move and bring about results, some of those levers—absolutely necessary for the greatest of results—being very small and obscure. They are all of them human beings, and hence we must carefully watch that by no word of ours the levers are obstructed. If we attend strictly to our own duty all will act in harmony, for the duty of another is dangerous for us. Therefore if any member proposes to spread the doctrines of theosophy in a way that seems wise to him, wish him success even if his method be one that would not commend itself to you for your own guidance. . . .

The good law looks out for all things, and all we have to do is our duty as it comes along from day to day. Nothing is gained by worrying about matters and about the way people do not respond. In the first place you do not alter people, and in the second, by being anxious as to things, you put an occult obstacle in the way of what you want done. It is better to acquire a lot of what is called carelessness by the world, but is in reality a calm reliance on the law, and a doing of one's own duty, satisfied that the results must be right, no matter what they may be.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE ACT OF SERVICE

“Seek this wisdom by doing service . . .”

—*Bhagavad-Gita*, IV. 34

SERVICE to be true must have the right intent and the correct method. Both the ends and the means have to be above reproach. Service demands and expects obedience, be it to principles in the abstract or to superiors or to the accepted policies and plans of a group, society or lodge. He who has mental reservations about one or another aspect of the principle or the policy is bound to hold back his ready and instant co-operation during periods when his personal views conflict with those already laid down and which it must now appear were but grudgingly accepted. Unbrotherliness sets in and the whole group suffers. Yet, the worst sufferers must remain those who were to have been the receivers of the bounty. The present generation has seen a vast deterioration in the moral strength of men and nations. The child resents obedience to parent and teacher. The wife claims freedom and is irked at an obedience which demands from her the discharge of duties to home and child. The man refuses to obey the laws of his government and is by turn a smuggler, a cheat, a liar and an evader of his contribution to social growth. Where duties are side-stepped and due obedience flouted, there service is impossible for man.

Obedience which in one sense is the homage that the lesser pays to the higher light does not come readily to men of a materialistic bent. Labour has forgotten obedience even where discipline demands it; and this indiscipline encouraged and even abetted on a mass scale has permeated homes and schools and even charitable institutions. Service of others, of the less favoured and the needy, is no longer an ideal for emulation.

Why service must always take precedence over self has to be meticulously thought out and its rationale accepted past hesitation.

Wherever there is a motivating force acting through the instrumentality of a material form, there the instrument must become subordinate to the force which propels it. Where that instrument has its own likes and dislikes (an ambassador, for instance), there its desires must be subordinated to the will and directive of the superior intelligence (the King). The readiness of the instrument to permit and ensure a faithful reflection of the behests of the superior intelligence constitutes true obedience and an efficient and impersonal act of service. The Spirit in

man is impersonal and altruistic and rejoices in the good of others. The Soul of man is the instrument through which the Spirit may spread its beneficence on earth. But if that Soul is caught in the webs of delusion, if it hankers for the pleasures of life and shies away from the austerities that attend sacrificial actions, then has it become a misshapen, blunted and jammed engine that can no longer jump and respond to the Master's touch. As an instrument, it becomes unfit for any act of service. As an entity, it has all the potency of mischief.

The "service" that Theosophy advocates is that operation where the instrument (maybe an intelligent and reasoning one like the mind, for instance) yields itself in ready compliance to the behests of its Master. This must be so on all planes of life and in all circumstances. The *Bhagavad-Gita* lays down the chain of authority thus: "The senses and organs are esteemed great, but the thinking self is greater than they. The discriminating principle is greater than the thinking self, and that which is greater than the discriminating principle is He." (Chapter III, verse 42)

This would mean that (1) the Lord within (the true Ego), (2) the discriminating principle (Buddhi), (3) the thinking self (the mind) and (4) the senses and organs — are all interconnected. Thus, Buddhi is the servant of the Lord, but must itself act through the mind. The mind in its turn must take its orders from Buddhi and achieve their fulfilment through the senses and organs of action. If the link is unbroken and each instrument is in proper trim and well aligned, then the Lord within will be able to act as an extraneous potency. All actions attendant on such an exercise would portray service in its exaltation with a corresponding benediction in the outer world of effects.

Over successive incarnations the vast majority of men have chosen the pleasanter alternative when in fact they should have selected the one which, though not pleasant, was certainly better from the standpoint of Soul and Spirit. Such a wrong choice is made to avoid unpleasant experiences. The man finds it more agreeable to play the truant from school. Such wrong choices are made through lethargy or indifference or an ignorance of the after-effects of such divagations. But the resultant evil cannot be lightly brushed aside. Memories of forbidden pleasures indulged in and enjoyed swamp the mind which gets intoxicated at the sight of these memory pictures and in that irresponsible state seeks to find its ease in repeated visits to its flagon of wine. Divorced from discrimination, the mind makes the senses its habitat, and like the con-

firmed drunkard finds its solace in long periods of a soul-destroying atrophy. Thus today we see keen minds and high intellectuality obsessed by the gnawing, hungering desire for sense indulgence. Such men, often high in society or political life, unreservedly put the services of their worldly knowledge at the entire disposal of sense life. And the senses have become their masters, have become usurpers who hold the mind a captive slave. It matters not that the slave enjoys its captivity and oftentimes dreads deliverance.

A mind that is held in bondage by the senses is incapable of service. It has failed to discharge its duty as an ambassador of the discriminating faculty. It has again failed as a superior force to control and guide the instruments which were made available to it for use — namely, the senses. It has become a runaway engine, a derelict that has drifted away from the evolutionary purpose. Like all derelicts it becomes a danger to others in its vicinity, and if not brought back in time to a reasonable state of utility, must be removed from the highways of existence.

To the student of life, his mind presents a fascinating problem. Sometimes it is docile and tractable. At other times, it becomes like a runaway horse that refuses to heed rein or spur and carries its rider away on a wild jaunt which may have dangerous consequences. Till the wildness is drained out of the animal, an unrelenting vigilance and an uninterrupted training that bring instant obedience to orders are the only remedies.

The dominance of cold reason over the senses may produce a Shylock, a tyrant or a fanatic who carries his sword through slaughter to temporal or ecclesiastical power. The mind as a slave of the senses is dangerous. The mind as the initiator of cold, calculating and heartless policies is catastrophic. If the mind is expected to be the instructor and sovereign authority over the senses, it is required in its turn to take its own instructions and guidance from Buddhi, the discriminating self. It has to recognize itself as an intermediary and nothing more — a channel through which the radiance of Buddhi can find its outlet into the outer world of phenomena. This channel has to be clean and clear of all obstructions. Says *The Voice of the Silence*: "Thou hast to reach that fixity of mind in which no breeze, however strong, can waft an earthly thought within. Thus purified, the shrine must of all action, sound, or earthly light be void; e'en as the butterfly, o'ertaken by the frost, falls lifeless at the threshold — so must all earthly thoughts fall dead before the fane."

Buddhi, the discriminating faculty, has that which the mind with all

its powers can never attain by itself. Buddhi has intuition while the mind has to labour with the tardy processes of reason. Buddhi can differentiate with certainty between the mortal and the immortal, the genuine and the false, the learning of the head and the Wisdom of the heart. The awakened Buddhi gives power over life and death, over space and time and all created things. When Buddhi installs itself in the human mind, that mind becomes quasi-omniscient. Yet, the awakening of Buddhi is not the final step in progress. Buddhi itself must become plastic, ready and anxious to receive the afflatus of the Lord. It has to be so oriented as to become ready to receive the divine Presence. When the power of Buddhi is used to attain liberation, that power is wasted at an exalted stage, for it removes a potential instrument for the service of the Lord. Its power has been used to secure the selfish bliss of a unit with no thought of the myriads of less advanced units or of the loss of a valued and efficient instrument which could have helped needy souls upon their upward way.

The Lord, the "He" of the *Gita* who is greater than the discriminating principle, is "the Law of Laws." If this "Law" is to be made to work as a potency in man, the tabernacle has to be erected with such materials as are homogeneous to the universal essence. Says *The Voice of the Silence*: "The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE."

The act of service must therefore enhance in value with each successive awakening of Soul and Spirit. The homage or obedience which the lesser offers to the Higher is no cringing servility of the coward but is the virile and enthusiastic compliance of an awakened consciousness to the behests of truth. It is respect, not fear, that dominates the relationship. Only when the man becomes integrated within himself to an appreciable extent, when he has learnt to serve and obey the higher aspects of himself, can he be said to have qualified for service of his fellow men. Work under compulsions of personal loyalties or even work done without selfish motive but with no great inner soul stamina to back it produces only lukewarm results. *The Voice of the Silence* gives the instruction: "Ere the gold flame can burn with steady light, the lamp must stand well guarded in a spot free from all wind." The earthly desires of the man, his ignorance of the higher values of life, his rushing in to serve without the wherewithals of service — these are some of the causes that generate strong winds. In such cases, "exposed to

shifting breeze, the jet will flicker and the quivering flame cast shades deceptive, dark and ever-changing, on the Soul's white shrine."

While service of others in the real benedictory sense must await the raising of oneself to spiritual heights, there are still avenues of work which the beginner may explore to advantage. He can quote from Holy Writ, can urge its reading and study, can, if he has the ability, explain and interpret simple tenets, taking care, however, that his personal views do not intrude. Here, again, *The Voice of the Silence* gives valuable advice:

Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and — let him hear the Law.

Not a single aspirant, not even he who has the minimum ounce of intellect, can say that he is not able to serve. Once the desire arises to merit much, the very force of that awakened desire will open doors which were erstwhile closed. Humility is content with little, is not mindful of wrongs, is not disturbed by being relegated to lowly positions. Where Suns shed their light, the humble soul may be able to emit a mere pinpoint of lumination. Against the Sun, his glow is that of a distant star-dot in the sky. It is here that humility helps, for the man does not wait for the time when the full effulgent glory of himself may burst forth. His waiting would be an act of disservice. He sheds his tiny ray for anyone who needs it — maybe for someone who, being in profound gloom, sees that wisp of light and seeing thus, takes heart again. Thus is the Lord served, if there is indeed the desire to serve. Says *The Voice of the Silence*: "Point out the 'Way' — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness."

CREDULITY breeds credulity and ends in hypocrisy.

—TIBETAN PROVERB

PAGAN SYMBOLISM INDESTRUCTIBLE — WHY?

[This article by H. P. Blavatsky was printed in *The Theosophist* for June 1956 from a manuscript in the Theosophical Society's Archives at Adyar.—EDS.]

It is some years already that Professor Max Müller gained a decided victory over the two extreme parties which denied the possibility of a scientific treatment of religions, over those, he says, with whom "religion seems too sacred a subject for scientific treatment," and those others with whom "it stands on a level with alchemy and astrology... far beneath the notice of the man of science."

We have not the impertinent presumption of going over grounds already so well explored by this great pioneer of free enquiry. But since he has obtained for all the rare privilege of treating the Christian religion with at least as much impartiality as is shown by the Europeans in the treatment of other people's religions, we do no more than avail ourselves of our right. And, it will be no fault of ours if we are unable to avoid conflict with deep-rooted prejudices and convictions of partisan sectarianism, for — we seek it not. Ours is but the duty of analysing and examining all creeds alike impartially. Neither is it our intention to handle roughly that which Professor W. Wordsworth so opulently styles "the golden kernel of the Galilean teaching." In our unceasing search for truth we simply gather in every available information capable of throwing light upon the dark nooks and corners of the various faiths of humanity, and store in as much material for comparison as we can. Out of the gigantic heap of pagan symbols, we mean to choose for this publication none but those which are liable to throw the light we are so much in need of. Desiring to fathom all things, and above all, that which seems most inherent to the heart of man, and with which he parts the most reluctantly — Religion — we necessarily have to turn to the symbols which have been found to be — at least partially — the keys to every faith. Many of them we find alive now, as in the days of old, and notwithstanding the fanatical persecution of the youngest of the world's religions, having passed part and parcel in the Christian creeds.

But of them we will discuss later on. Our object now is to analyse that feeling which, surviving common sense and reason, makes people cling to the so-called "superstitions" of long vanished generations of their forefathers. In relation to this symbolism of ancient pagan thought, a curious psychophysiological phenomenon may partially account for

it. We have often thought that the degree of genius exhibited in works of fiction by the most renowned novelists largely depended upon and was proportionate to the intensity and interest felt by them in their days of childhood for nursery tales, and it has been also remarked that the older a man becomes, the stronger he clings to and the clearer he seems to see the events of his early childhood. Often to our dying day, we carry in our hearts lingering remembrances of heroes and heroines, the recital of whose deeds had struck our youthful imagination. We may forget acquaintances, and even the images of our dear friends, when separated for long years, may fade away and gradually disappear; the memory of the unfortunate Princess, to whom we vowed all our young sympathy, and her wicked persecutor, the hunchbacked old Fairy, whose malicious frown has often haunted our dreams — can never be obliterated.

It is to be observed that in this direction the masses of the uneducated people are no better than children. With their mind but half awake, it often remains unconscious in later years of the emptiness of the fiction. Everything illogical in the tale disappears, perverted images and ideas associated with such arbitrary images alone remain, and even to the majority of more civilized people Eginhard's¹ Charlemagne will never present the same attraction as *Carlos Magnus* and his twelve legendary peers, as found in the Carlovingian Cycle,² and the stern image of the hero will have to make room for the phantastic form of the other, as described by the popular bards and the chivalric romances. While poetical fiction in her gorgeous robes of borrowed plumes finds always an eager audience, sober reality is left a beggar, to take care of itself the best it can.

The same with nations and their early faiths. Much as ancient mythology was vilified, perverted, corrupted by the intolerance of early Christianity; however much every trace of it might have been thought obliterated, yet, once that it got hold of the popular imagination it will never die out. The nearest generations of converts may have shunned the faith of their forefathers; those following immediately after will gradually and unconsciously return, if not to it, then at least to many of its most striking symbols and conceptions. Poets will return to them and thus help to revive the popular feeling. And whole nations, like men in their old age, will be often influenced by that lingering, undying feel-

¹ Einhard (A.D. 770-840), the friend and biographer of Charlemagne.

² Legends and romances centred round Charlemagne, extending over many countries and centuries.

ing of love — awe, veneration sometimes — for that which they had worshipped and believed in during their early days — albeit made to laugh at and often curse it in after life. The once mighty gods of the Western nations have departed, but the impression is still there, infused into the very blood of the descendants of those who for long generations had gradually evolved them out of their own imagination, then developed into living and thinking entities, to finally end by worshipping the children of their own fictions.

So true is it, that we can trace this hereditary law with hardly a single exception in the modern divisions of the Roman Catholic, Greek and Protestant nations.

The Greeks of the days of Perikles — they who euhemerized³ a whole pantheon of gods and goddesses, and from whom Phidias had immortalized the Olympian Jupiter and Athaena Promachos⁴ — could have no other descendants but those they actually have — the Virgin and Saint worshipping Hellenes. Nor is it less natural to find the Anglo-Saxons and the greatest portion of Germany splitting violently from the image-worshipping Roman Catholics, if we have to believe that which Tacitus said of their forefathers 18 centuries ago, *viz.*, that “they believe it unworthy of the greatness of the gods to confine them within walls, or to represent celestial beings under a human likeness; they consecrate woods and groves as temples; and they apply names of the gods to that Secret Power which alone they look upon with reverence” (*De Sit. Mor. and Pop. Germania*, c. ix).⁵ Thus we may believe that the form of worship depends more on the respective idiosyncrasies of races than on their powers of reasoning; and that the natural sympathies or antipathies of the forefathers will always be reflected more or less in the future generations. The Romans parted with their Jupiter under the condition to worship him under the mask of St. Peter. If they renounced Jove, the father of gods, it was but to help him emigrate from Olympus to Eden, with his name elongated with the help of the Masoretic vowel points, though not transformed beyond *all* recognition. True, we find him giving birth to Pallas-Athaena in full armour no more, but it is because another mode of procreation has been chosen for him. We can meet him still

³ From Euhemerus, a Sicilian philosopher who lived 300 B.C., who said that the gods of mythology were but deified mortals, *i.e.*, historical personages.

⁴ A colossal statue which stood on the Acropolis near the Parthenon, said to have been formed from the spoils taken at Marathon.

⁵ Abbreviated Latin title, of which the literal translation is: *Concerning the Geography the Manners and Customs, and the Tribes of Germany.*

on sundry windows of French mediaeval cathedrals — proceeding under the garb of a Pope in full canonicals to create Eve out of the rib of sleeping Adam, as shown by *Didron*. The same for the Greek Zeus. Having renounced to preside at the banquets of the merry old gods, he now rests on clouds surrounded by a choir of philharmonic young cherubs. By some inscrutable means, managing to get out of the boundless and limitless Space, the Eternal has gathered into a ball representing the Universe, and now we see Him, on numerous *icons* of the Eastern and Western churches, sitting outside of this Space, but holding it in one of His holy hands under the shape of a globe.

So has Athaena of Parthenon, the Virgin Goddess, vanished under the iconoclastic hands of Lachares, who despoiled her of her golden dress weighing 50 talents. But there remained Isis with her Son Horus, slumbering on her virginal bosom, and Mylitta the Babylonian, identical with the Cyprian Venus — the “mother of Grace and Mercy,” the *Mediatrix* — hence called “Aphrodite,” the subduer of Jove’s wrath, she whom the old Athenians honoured as “Amarusia” or the “Mother of gracious acceptance and help,” who as Mylitta sits with her Divine Infant Son Tammuz in her arms. In her turn she made room for the *Immaculate* Virgin, the last of the Dynasty. This one is also with her Son, one of whose names was *Adonai* or Lord, as Tammuz was called Adon or Adonis, and who, the same as Mithras, is worshipped as Mediator. With her actual wardrobe of gold, and silver, and of precious jewels, the modern Queen of Heaven may well look in scorn and pity upon the later ancient Athaena.

Thus we find again the old truism that it is but names and forms that change — ideas remain the same; and the older a faith, the stronger it clings to the relics of its youth. If it be true of all religions what is said by Professor Max Müller, who remarks that “if there [is] one thing which a comparative study of religions places in the clearest light, it is the inevitable decay to which every religion is exposed,” then on the other hand, nothing of the kind can ever be said of symbolisms. The primitive purity of a creed can become soiled; its apostles can degrade and soil it by the inevitable admixture of human element. But its symbolism as the concrete expression of some now lost idea of the founder, will survive for ever. It may have its meaning changed, nay, even its outward form altered. Like the phoenix of old, it will continue periodically to revive from its ashes.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THOUGHTS ON KARMA IN POETRY AND DRAMA

LET US CONSIDER some of the wider aspects of Karmic Law, national and racial. Reincarnation is the method by which the Law works; as individuals come and go, so do nations, cultures, whole civilizations. We are the heirs of the ages, dark and bright. We are inspired by the poets who interpret us to ourselves. How often have we found our own thought put into a poet's words! That is because Thought is on the plane of Universal Mind; its expression only is individual. Those of us who have, or are trying to acquire, the historical sense, find it most fascinating to study Karma in its broadest sweep — what H.P.B. calls "the wider track of the Karmic law." If only we knew more! Still it is the finding out that enthalls our minds. If we look back over History, we see how the great ideals came from the East of Time — ideals that sung the Vedas, that built the pyramids, that charted the heavens, that dared navigation, that passed on and on in a cyclic round of nations, that gave rise to the "glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome," that gave great painters, musicians, sculptors, writers to Europe, that developed political systems which outlawed slavery and swept West, crossing continents and oceans till the cycle of a race should come full circle and start again from a higher spiral. All this thrills in the soul of a thinker of today who must know in his heart that since all this has been, even more shall be. As *Ecclesiastes* says, "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."

"There is a balance in the universe and an intelligence that governs it. No man can escape the consequences of his own act, though it take him many lives to redress the balance." "There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will," wrote Shakespeare. "The key to evolution is in character" (Talbot). We who live in this Kali Yuga, who see the world progressing downwards, while it believes, in its blindness and ignorance, that it is proceeding upwards through the invention of new means of exploiting selfishness, we who acquiesce in the saying that freedom is only preserved by eternal vigilance, we whose very fear of where the world is tending today is probably rooted in a similar experience of the past — oh, let us be mindful! Let us be alert and watchful, lest we lose, through our indifference and our negligence, all that the preceding generations have gained for us. A startling thought came from an earlier Theosophist who wrote, in partial explanation of all the cruelty and callousness that cumbers the world: "The savage

tribes of the earth are being so rapidly exterminated that it is hard for the primitive reincarnating egos to find suitable savage conditions. They therefore take birth in the lowest available bodies, and in the slums of their conquerors." Is this not a startling but convincing thought? How can we account for the savagery in the so-called civilized nations today? We should have outgrown long ago some of the hideous wrongs we see inflicted daily, such as flogging, the death penalty, and the callous selfishness that tolerates vivisection on the plea that animal lives are less valuable than human ones. The fratricidal horrors of war, the hatred of antagonistic ideas and creeds, the murders, violence, rapes and robberies that stain our society, could not these be caused by the reincarnation in our midst of souls but lately escaped from the savage condition? And it is the Karma of all the rest, too, that they are born in our midst. Ignorance, fear, selfishness, cause all our woes today, as in the past. Think for a moment of their opposites — Wisdom, Trust, Altruism — would not the crop be different if such seeds were sown? Yet we must subsist on the husks for a while, till we turn back to the house of our Father-Soul, that Great One in whose cosmic body each of us is a living cell. Let us remember the words of a sonnet by Robert Hillyer:

Forget not Memphis and the evening lights
 Along the shore, the wind in the papyrus,
 The sound of water through the glass-green nights,
 The incense curling upward to Osiris.
 Forget not Athens and the starry walks
 Beside Ilissus under the cool trees,
 The Master's garden, and the quiet talks
 Of gods and life to come. Forget not these.
 And in the after-years, forget not this:
 How in a withered world allied to death,
 When love was mocked and beauty deemed amiss,
 We met and pledged again the ancient faith.
 For this, of all our loves the loveliest,
 So thwarted and so strong, will seem the best.

Very strange are the workings of Karma in its whole cycle, to us who see only a little bend of its arc. The poets and dramatists, from Aeschylus with his *Prometheus Bound* to Shelley with his *Prometheus Unbound*, and all the wonderful stories, fables allegories and other literature of the world from ancient times till now, all these are instinct with a feeling, but are often unable to trace the working out of doom or destiny — just as we are unable to trace all the causes whose effects we

enjoy or suffer. Why can we not know them? Because they often lie far back in other lives, because in this last reincarnation of the old soul we have forgotten that

Men must reap the things they sow,
Force from force must ever flow,
Or worse; but 'tis a bitter woe
That love or reason cannot change.

Thus Shelley. Glimmerings sometimes come to the soul, as in this prescience of Browning's:

At times I almost dream
I too have spent a life the sages' way,
And tread once more familiar paths. Perchance
I perished in an arrogant self-reliance
Ages ago; and in that act, a prayer
For one more chance went up so earnest, so
Instinct with better light let in by death,
That life was blotted out — not so completely
But scattered wrecks enough of it remain,
Dim memories, as now, when once more seems
The goal in sight again.

We may expect that it was in sight again since he could write of later life:

My own, confirm me! If I tread
This path back, is it not in pride
To think how little I dreamed it led
To an age so blest that by its side
Youth seems the waste instead.

But if the causes often lie far back in other lives, what produced those causes? And there we come to the very kernel of the matter. Every act has a thought at its root; every thought, in turn, is rooted in some principle of our nature. Is there hate, jealousy, greed, selfishness? Are there wars, envy, malice, distortion? Naturally, for the first four produce the others. They are subjective on the inner plane of ideas at first; they become objective on the plane of acts at last. How well the old Greek dramatists understood this, whether dealing with nations or individuals! "Karma is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being," says H.P.B. "Though itself unknowable, its action is perceivable." And this the Greeks knew

well. Our destinies are written in our passions; these make our fate, according to the Greek idea.

In Euripides' play, *Medea*, the wife of Jason, deserted by him as he is about to marry the princess of the land, by her evil magic contrives to destroy the bride, and slays her own children by Jason for hatred of him. The Chorus is made to say at the end of the play:

Great treasure halls hath Zeus in heaven
From whence to man strange dooms be given
Past hope or fear.
And the end men looked for cometh not,
And a path is there where no man thought.
So hath it fallen here.

In this play so beautifully translated by Gilbert Murray, we see how the insatiable passion of *Medea* begets madness, murder. In *Jason*, the egotist, the consequences of his own acts lead to horror upon horror until in the end, friendless, shunned by all, and living in his old boat, the *Argo*, a beam of wood falls upon him while he is asleep and breaks his head — as *Medea* had foretold. Such terrible passions have their repercussions not only on the individuals concerned, but also on the state or nation to which they belong.

This Shakespeare well knew when in his tragedy of *Hamlet* he lets one of the characters say, "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." It has to be put right, the balance adjusted; and that is what the whole play is about. These are historical dramas. The Muse of History, most majestic of the Muses, has living men and women to act her dramas. The poets but transcribe them from life. But the great themes are in the "true" stories, and to the thoughtful student "searching nature's secrets far and deep," all history past and present becomes but an illustration of the great Law of Karma. The more one studies its workings in individuals as in nations, the more one sees it to be the fundamental Law that moves the universe. And whether we study it in poetry, or history, or even politics, we see it to be operated, not by any outside god extraneous to the universe, but by the beings *in* that universe. "Act maketh joy and woe."

Here is an illustration of it from history which Thucydides records for us. It is a small but significant event, the siege and capture of a little island called *Melos*, the massacre of all its adult men, and the enslavement of its women and children. Thucydides selected it as a type

of sin leading to punishment — that sin of *hubris* or pride which, according to Greek ideas, was associated with blindness and pointed straight to a fall. The Athenian envoys explain to the Melian senate that Melos should become subject to their empire. The power of Athens is practically irresistible; Melos is free to submit or be destroyed. The Melians plead to remain neutral; the plea is rejected. At any rate, they will not submit. They know Athens is vastly stronger in men and fleet and military skill; still, they hope, the gods will help the innocent. So they choose to flight and to hope rather than to accept slavery. The war proceeds to its hideous end and the Athenians put to death all the Melian males and make slaves of the women and children. And later they send 500 colonists and take the land for their own. The massacre of Melos produced on the minds of men like the historian Thucydides, the poet Euripides and other great writers a peculiar impression — like a revelation of naked and triumphant sin. And we feel the intention with which Thucydides continues the story. “And the same winter the Athenians sought to sail with a greater fleet than ever before, and conquer Sicily.” “This was the great Sicilian expedition that brought Athens to her doom,” adds Gilbert Murray in his book *Euripides and His Age*.

It is not always given us to see such a swift working out of the great law of Karma-Nemesis. And it serves as an illustration of the fact stated that our destiny is rooted in our character — in this historic case, in pride; with Medea, in passion, jealousy, hatred; with Jason, in the egotism of personal desire.

Let us turn now to the exact opposite of these terrible straining passions and destinies, to the poetry of a different age, and read in Longfellow's “Evangeline” the tale of thwarted love that yet blossomed in superlative character, in gentleness, piety, peace. Its great note is constancy, and it brings to our minds one of the most puzzling aspects of the law of Karma — what H.P.B. calls “unmerited suffering.” That seems like a contradiction, since we are told that Karma brings to each his *just* deserts. One may recall the story of the betrothed lovers in the pleasant, peaceful land of Acadie in Canada, and of how on their wedding day all the men were seized and shipped away, and their land and possessions taken. The lovers were separated, and searched for each other all the rest of their lives, up and down that great unsettled country, with bitter disappointment at each hope deferred, until at last, when she was old and a sister of mercy tending the sick in a pestilence-stricken city, Evangeline found Gabriel on his deathbed. The shock was

so great that it killed her too. The poem opens with these lines:

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition, still sung by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

Now one may well ask, How had these two innocent young lives deserved so sad, so "unmerited" a fate? And that we cannot answer glibly; we cannot know what causes in past lives led to such sorrow, but this we can see, that even in "Acadie, home of the happy," as Longfellow described it, are the seeds of the old European strifes transplanted. The Norman French who settled there were supplanted by the Scotch and English Colonists who seized their villages and farms, and these two young lives were caught in the "wider track of the Karmic law."

And this, further, we can see, that the way they endured their unhappy destiny, the faithful, lifelong search, the great qualities of fidelity, tenderness, devotion, must bring a divine compensation. Who knows? Perhaps it was the last test of many lives, before reaching a great reward immediately beyond; perhaps "the more their feet will bleed, the whiter will themselves be washed." The after-death conditions and the ensuing lives will compensate. If one life were all, this would be a terrible injustice, but in the long succession of lives these two are on the way to enduring Bliss. Their destinies are written in the higher quality, unlike Medea's in the lowest aspect of Kama. Yet both were founded in desire, one low, one high.

There are many short poems in which the doctrine of Karma is implied. Here is one from a poet of the 16th century, John Fletcher:

Man is his own star, and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Commands all light, all influence, all fate,
Nothing to him falls early or too late.
Our acts, our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

And a thought of Matthew Arnold's:

Yet they, believe me, who await
No gifts from chance, have conquered Fate.

And from Whittier:

The Fates are just: they give us but our own;
Nemesis ripens what our hands have sown.

Some might recall W. E. Henley's lines:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

Here is a fine challenge to fate in R. L. Stevenson's "If This Were Faith":

Having felt thy wind in my face
Spit sorrow and disgrace,
Having seen thine evil doom
In Golgotha and Khartoum,
And the brutes, the work of thine hands,
Fill with injustice lands
And stain with blood the sea:
If still in my veins the glee
Of the black night and the sun
And the lost battle, run:
If, an adept,
The iniquitous lists I still accept
With joy, and joy to endure and be withstood,
And still to battle and perish for a dream of good:
God, if that were enough?

If to feel, in the ink of the slough,
And the sink of the mire,
Veins of glory and fire
Run through and transpierce and transpire,
And a secret purpose of glory in every part,
And the answering glory of battle fill my heart;
To thrill with the joy of girded men
To go on forever and fail and go on again,
And be mauled to the earth and arise,
And contend for the shade of a word and a thing not
seen with the eyes:
With the half of a broken hope for a pillow at night
That somehow the right is the right

And the smooth shall bloom from the rough:
Lord, if that were enough?

And one last thought of still another aspect of Karma. There is the self-chosen destiny of sacrifice for the sake of the greater Self of humanity — the Promethean quality which consents to be enslaved in order to set Humanity free. Here, in Shelley's words in the Epilogue to his *Prometheus Unbound*, are "the spells by which to reassume an empire o'er the disentangled doom":

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

YOU ARE the Tree of Life. Beware of fractioning yourselves. Set not a fruit against a fruit, a leaf against a leaf, a bough against a bough; nor set the stem against the roots; nor set the tree against the mother-soil. That is precisely what you do when you love one part more than the rest, or to the exclusion of the rest.

You are the Tree of Life. Your roots are everywhere. Your boughs and leaves are everywhere. Your fruits are in every mouth. Whatever be the fruits upon that tree; whatever be its boughs and leaves; whatever be its roots, they are your fruits; they are your leaves and boughs; they are your roots. If you would have the tree bear sweet and fragrant fruit, if you would have it ever strong and green, see to the sap wherewith you feed the roots.

Love is the sap of Life. While Hatred is the pus of Death. But Love, like blood, must circulate unhindered in the veins. Repress the blood, and it becomes a menace and a plague. And what is Hate but Love repressed, or Love withheld, therefore becoming such a deadly poison both to the feeder and the fed; both to the hater and to that he hates?

—MIKHAIL NAIMY

DEATH AND AFTER

[Reprinted here in condensed form is an extract from the Zoroastrian Avesta text — *Yasht XXII*. The following passage from *Isis Unveiled* offers the key to this rendition which allegorizes the post-mortem conditions of man:

“The trinity of nature is the lock of magic, the trinity of man the key that fits it. Within the solemn precincts of the sanctuary the SUPREME had and has no name. It is unthinkable and unpronounceable; and yet every man finds in himself his god. ‘Who art thou, O fair being?’ inquires the disembodied soul, in the Khordeh-Avesta, at the gates of Paradise. ‘I am, O Soul, thy good and pure thoughts, thy works and thy good law . . . thy angel . . . and thy god.’ Then man, or the soul, is reunited with ITSELF, for this ‘Son of God’ is one with him; it is his own mediator, the god of his human soul and his ‘Justifier.’ ” (II. 635)

—Eds.]

ZARATHUSHTRA asked Ahura Mazda: Thou Pure Spirit, the unfolders of all that is beneficent, when one of the impure dies where does his Soul abide?

Ahura Mazda answered: Zarathushtra, that Soul desiring his desires, wailing his dirge of despondency cries — “To what land shall I turn? To whom shall I go?” and this on the first night, and the second, and the third, and, through it all, suffering is his, the suffering he caused to all.

At the end of the third night as the dawn rises, that Soul wends its way northward, inhaling the stench of impure corpses, and contemplates — “Whence this stench, the worst I ever inhaled?” And he sees a hag approaching, foul, loathsome, gaping, of demoniacal lineage, of the seed of passion; and the unfortunate Soul questions her, “Who art thou, O ugly witch?”

“I am thou, thy lower self,” answers the hag, “thou man of evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds, and evil faith, I am thy self. Clad in hideous vice thou didst show thyself to mortals down on earth as I now show myself to thee. Thou didst deride the teaching about the Inner Self and pray to idols of greed and passion and pelf, strewing poverty all around, destroyer of beings on their upward way, causing consternation to the good and despair to the righteous. I was not beautiful and thou madest me ugly; I was not fair and thou madest me hideous; I had not a forward seat and now I am fallen backwards. Henceforth

mortals will remember me with fear and dishonour.”

Then through the hell of bad thought, and then of bad word, and then of bad deed, the Soul plunged himself in the gloom of darkness.

And one of the wicked who had arrived there previously, asked him, “How didst thou depart, O wicked man, from the life of the material world unto the spiritual, from the decaying unto this the undecaying one?”

Angra Mainyu interposed: “Ask him not, who has just finished the dreary way, the life of the body.” Then the bad Soul and his passion spouse feasted on experience like unto the poison and of poisonous stench.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: Thou Pure Spirit, the unfolder of all that is beneficent, when one of the pure dies where does his Soul abide?

Auhra Mazda answered: Zarathushtra, that Soul, engaged in his ideation, sings the *Ustavaili Gatha*: “Prosperity to him through whom prosperity comes to all,” on the first night, and on the second, and on the third; he enjoys the peace which comes to all mortals through his chanting.

At the end of the third night as the dawn rises, that Soul wends his way southward, inhaling the fragrance of orchards and the scent of the flowering shrubs, and he contemplates — “Whence that fragrance, the sweetest ever breathed?” And he sees, approaching him, a pure Virgin of fifteen summers, as fair as the fairest thing of earth, handsome, radiant, heroic, stately, of appearance that attracts, of divine lineage, of the ancient seed of the Spirit; and the good Soul questions her: “Who art thou, the fairest maid I have ever seen?”

I am thine own Daena, inner Spirit-Self,” answers the Maid, “thou youth of good thoughts, good words, good deeds, good faith, I am thy Self. Clad in those virtues bright thou didst appear to others on earth as now and here I appear to thee. When some derided the teachings about the Inner Self and prayed to idols, and some shut their door against the poverty-stricken, and some were engaged in destroying growing plants and trees, thou didst sit singing the Gathas, praising the Waters of Life and the Fire which is the Soul, the Son of Ahura Mazda, and made happy the righteous near and afar. Oh, radiant youth, I was lovely and thou madest me lovelier; I was fair and now I am fairer; I was desirable and thou madest me still more desirable; I used to sit in a forward place and now thou madest me sit in the foremost place; henceforth mortals will worship me for thee having sacrificed long in converse with Ahura Mazda.”

Then first through the paradise of good Thought, and then of good Word, and then of good Deed, the soul found himself in the Heaven of Light.

And one of the faithful who had arrived there previously, asked him, "How didst thou depart, O holy man, from the life of the material world unto the spiritual, from the decaying unto this, the undecaying one?"

Ahura Mazda interposed, "Ask him not, who has just finished the dreary way, the life of the body." Then the Good Soul and his Spirit Spouse (Daena) feasted on the food of experience like unto the butter skimmed from the fresh milk of spring.

FACT is the only tribunal we submit to and recognize it without appeal. And before that tribunal a Tyndall and an ignoramus stand on a perfect par. Alive to the truism that every path may eventually lead to the highway as every river to the ocean, we never reject a contribution simply because we do not believe in the subject it treats upon, or disagree with its conclusions. Contrast alone can enable us to appreciate things at their right value; and unless a judge compares notes and hears both sides he can hardly come to a correct decision. *Dum vitant stulti vitia in contraria* — is our motto; and we seek to prudently walk between the many ditches without rushing into either. For one man to demand from another that he shall believe like himself, whether in a question of religion or science, is supremely unjust and despotic. Besides, it is absurd. For it amounts to exacting that the brains of the convert, his organs of perception, his whole organization, in short, be reconstructed precisely on the model of that of his teacher, and, that he shall have the same temperament and mental faculties as the other has. And why not his nose and eyes, in such a case? Mental slavery is the worst of all slaveries. It is a state which, as brutal force has no real power, always denotes either an abject cowardice or a great intellectual weakness.

—*The Theosophist*, July 1881

THE WORLD INVISIBLE

O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

—FRANCIS THOMPSON

THERE IS a similitude between war and death. War dismembers a civilization; death, a body. Men and women in their thousands do not seem to have learnt from the repeated lesson of history that wars are disintegrators of human society. The reason is obvious: the stench of the rotting corpse is recognized as signifying death, that of rotting society is not. After the death of a human being the survivors refashion their lives, and so do peoples and nations after a war. But in doing so peoples and nations do not apply the lesson of death, any more than do the human survivors of a relative or a friend, most of whom do not enquire into the meaning and purpose of death. In the one case, death is death of the corpus; who talks of the Soul of the departed? How many seek satisfying knowledge of the subject? Similarly, after a ghastly carnage, how many ask about the spiritual side of things, about what A.E. called the National Being, the soul of the nation?

By our education we are prepared to look only at the material and visible side of all phenomena — even psychological phenomena. Sickness is sickness of the body, death is death of the body. In national affairs, it is economics and the visible aspects of the corporate social order which not only loom large, but are the sole basis of thought and consideration. Hygiene of the body is valued disproportionately in comparison to the hygiene of the mind, just as words are used guardedly because they are heard by others, while thoughts are allowed to create cesspools by men and women who fancy that unseen thoughts leave no aroma behind.

The invisible occupies a far greater space in cosmos than the visible. The ocean of air is invisible but plays a vital part in human life. A hundred animalcules are invisible in a tumbler of water, but they cause life or death, health or disease, to the person who drinks that water. Electricity is invisible, but it gives light and heat; it can cure or kill. If people would only look around they would very soon find that in their own existence the invisible plays not only a very vital part, but also a very large part — larger than that which the visible plays. In the way we see and hear, the invisible plays a greater part than the objects

seen and the voices heard. Speech which brings us in contact with our fellowmen is almost altogether an invisible process, the only visible aspect being the movement of lips and of tongue. We can go on multiplying instances to show the importance and extent of the invisible in our lives.

One of the objects of our Theosophical work is to show the importance of the invisible while demolishing the superstitions about it. For there are very stupid superstitions about the invisible, rooted in false knowledge. Spiritists play with one aspect of false knowledge about the invisible, the orthodox religious ceremonialists with another, and there are other classes who dabble in objectionable practices, fruitless or very mischievous. Absence of true knowledge plays havoc. Ignorance is bad, but false knowledge is worse.

Where shall a person begin to get correct knowledge? He should begin with himself: What is he? A body of flesh and blood only? What is his mind? What is the relationship between brain and mind? What are human emotions? Whence depression and elation, meanness and magnanimity? How can jealousy be conquered and kindness developed? As money cannot purchase peace of mind, what can purchase it? If emotional agitation drives sleep away, what can conjure it to bless the agitated to calmness and refreshment? Here are some of the aspects of the invisible which touch us to the quick, and with them a person should begin.

In the olden days religion was not a matter of blind belief; knowledge of religion was sought and pious men taught it in a dozen different ways. Ancient religious texts clearly indicate that priceless knowledge existed. We have to learn not only the old languages in which the books were written, but also the mould and form in which great ideas were cast. For, the ancients, being nearer to the invisible nature than we of the 20th century are, used allegories, symbols, comparisons which look somewhat bizarre to us. One of the reasons why men and women today do not study their own religious scriptures is that the language used to convey ideas unfamiliar to modern knowledge is not understandable by them.

Madame Blavatsky recorded these old ideas in modern language, and in her books a connected and complete body of knowledge of the invisible is available. Her books are erudite and are found by many, in East and West alike, to be difficult to comprehend. Her faithful pupil and co-worker, W. Q. Judge, translated into simple terms these great

teachings about Spirit and Soul, mind and body, feelings and sensations, about man and the universe in which he lives.

Death is an universal experience and is so near to us that we take the phenomenon for granted and do not even care to ascertain whether any reliable knowledge about it as a process is available. Equally universal is the phenomenon of day-to-day living, with its pleasures and its pains, its evil and its good; between birth and death men and women laugh and weep, but they know not what precedes birth, what follows death, what laughter is and how tears are formed. "All is mystery," say men, with a nod which they think is a nod of wisdom and humility, while most of the time it is but the nod of ignorance and mental laziness.

In the Wisdom-Religion of the ancients this knowledge is to be found; for the modern world it is made available in Theosophy — the scientific religion, the religious science. In its authentic textbooks men and women will find reliable information about Spirit, Soul, Body; about the Good in themselves and the Evil which envelops that Good; about their moods caused by hurt feelings, or intoxications caused by inflated egotism. But we know that in our civilization people find no time for reading and study. Men are busy making money — but they do not ask what they will do when they come to possess it; women are climbing the social ladder, some of them panting for their very breath in the process, and they, too, do not know what it will feel like when they have reached the top! The fundamental truths of genuine Soul-science alone can help on the evolution of the *real* man, the *inner* man, and unfold his spiritual vision. Spiritual and divine powers lie dormant in every human being; and the wider the sweep of his spiritual vision the mightier will be the God within him.

THE NON-OFFENDING MAN is surrounded by a sphere that repels the evil others would do to him — even after many births.

—*Book of Items*

A MYSTICAL POEM

[Reprinted from *Theosophy (The Path)* for January 1897.
The translator, Vera Johnston, was H.P.B.'s niece.—Eds.]

THE FOLLOWING is a free translation of a poem by Derjavin, one of the standard Russian poets. It will be clear to anyone who reads it in the right spirit, that the poem was written from a philosophic standpoint very much akin to the cosmogenesis of *The Secret Doctrine*. One or two educated Hindoos to whom I happened to mention some passages in it were greatly excited about the poem being pure Vedantism, according to them. Pure Vedanta or not, it will by no means be lost time to compare the thoughts in it with the thoughts in Shankaracharya's *Atma Bodha*, or the Awakening to the Self.¹ The poem bears the title of "God" and was written at the end of the last century, when everybody who was anybody at all in Russia was sure to belong to some Lodge of Free Masons. So it is just possible that the point of view in it is the one of all enlightened Free Masons. And in this case, it shares its origin with *The Secret Doctrine* at least to some extent. But I, for one, would be better pleased to think that the resemblance was simply due to the purity of the author's own spiritual clear-sightedness and independent inspiration. It may interest Theosophists to know that this poem was a great favourite of H.P.B.'s.—VERA JOHNSTON

Endless in space, living in the eternal motion of Substance, Thou, who wast before the flight of ages, who art impersonal in the three persons of Deity; Spirit present everywhere and indivisible, with no assigned abode and with no cause, whom none can understand as yet, who fills, embraces, creates and preserves everything by the very essence of itself, the One whom we call God.

Though a high intelligence might measure the deep ocean, and count the sands and the rays of planets, for Thee there is no number and no measure; even Spirits of Light, born of Thy Radiance, could not conceive of Thy ways; as soon as the thought dares to lift itself to Thee it is doomed to disappear in thy Greatness, like a moment, passing into eternity.

Thou hast called forth from the abysses of eternity the primordial existence of Chaos; and founded in Thyself this eternity born before the

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ages. Self-born and radiant, Thou art the light whence all light proceeds. Creating everything, in one word, expanding in continually renewed creation, Thou hast been, Thou art, Thou shalt be forever.

Thou containest the chain of beings in Thyself, Thou sustainest it and givest it light. Thou makest the beginning harmonious with the end, and givest life through death. Like streaming and whirling sparks, so are the Suns born from Thee. Like crystals of frost sparkling, moving and shining on a clear frosty morning, so are the stars in the abysses below Thee.

The burning millions of stars stream in the immeasurable space, fulfilling Thy laws, and shedding life-giving rays. But all these burning torches, and the ardent rocks of crystals, and the boiling hosts of golden waves, and the fiery ether and the totality of all possible shining, when compared to Thee will be like night before day.

Before Thee our whole system is like a drop before the ocean. Then what is the world to which I belong, and what am I myself? When I have added to all the worlds of the heavenly ocean hundreds of millions of other worlds, the total will be like a speck if I dare to compare it to Thee: and so before Thee I am certainly nothing.

I am nothing! Yet Thou shinest in me with the Greatness of Thine own power. Thou art mirrored in me, like the great Sun in a tiny drop of water. I am nothing! Yet I feel my own being, I yearn everlastingly to hover in great heights; my soul longs to become Thyself; it penetrates into things, it thinks, it reasons: I am, therefore Thou art as well.

Thou art! the whole plan of nature tells me of this, my own heart repeats it to me, and my reason assures me of it: Thou art and I am, no more, a nothing! I am a part of the complete universe, and I dream of having been placed in the exact middle of being, where Thou hast ended creatures of flesh and begun the heavenly spirits, having tied with me the complete chain of beings.

I am the link of the scattered world, I am the culminating point of matter, I am the centre of everything created, I am the initial letter of Deity; with my body I decay in the dust, with my mind I order the thunders; I am a king, I am a slave, I am a worm, I am a God! But wondrous as I am, whence do I come? — I do not know; but through myself I could not be.

I am thy creature, O Creator! I am the work of Thy wisdom, O source of life, giver of blessings, soul of my soul and King! The ends of Thy

truth necessitated that my immortal being should pass through the abyss of death, that my spirit should clothe itself with mortality, and that through death I should return, O Father, into thy deathlessness.

O Ineffable and Inconceivable one! I know that the imagination of my soul is powerless to trace Thy mere shadow. It is a duty to praise Thee, but what other worship can weak mortals give Thee, but the yearning to raise themselves up to Thee, and with tears of gratitude to lose themselves in the untold difference between them and Thee!

PHYSICALLY and intellectually we stand at the centre of immensities. Science itself is neither a magic wand nor a poisoned arrow. Neither do I believe, as I have in the past, that it is neutral in its impact. Its deepest pursuits are inextricably entwined with human purpose and existence. In a strictly localized sense, a community can develop its scientific activity to support a framework of society. The manner in which it does so is of vital concern because science, through technology, is an immensely powerful force for good or evil. . . .

The vital question is whether the framework of society in which science is pursued can develop the ethical basis and moral purpose necessary to ensure that in our future progress we overcome the forces leading to decay and destruction. It appears that within the last century the transcendental view of the world "sky-woven and worthy of a God," derived through centuries of religious thought and activity, has been abruptly eroded. . . . The mind of man is adrift and the peoples of the civilized world derive their satisfaction from activities that are so often alien to and destructive of both the physical and intellectual environment. One world view has been eroded and the inadequacy of its substitute is being demonstrated. We have deluded ourselves that through science we find the only avenue to true understanding about nature and the universe. Furthermore, we have persuaded the society in which we work to support our activities in the belief that our discoveries will inevitably, in some way, be of practical benefit. The simple belief in automatic material progress by means of scientific discovery and application is a tragic myth of our age. Science is a powerful and vital human activity — but this confusion of thought and motive is bewildering to man, and it is a most alarming thought that the present antagonisms of society to scientific activity may deepen further.

deepen further.

—SIR BERNARD LOVELL

THE IMPERFECTIONS OF SCIENCE

[This article by H.P.B. is reprinted from *The Theosophist* for February 1881.—Eds.]

MR. ROBERT WARD, discussing the questions of Heat and Light in the November *Journal of Science*, shows us how utterly ignorant is science about one of the commonest facts of nature — the heat of the sun. He says: “The question of the temperature of the sun has been the subject of investigation by many scientists. Newton, one of the first investigators of the problem, tried to determine it, and after him all the scientists who have been occupied with calorimetry have followed his example. All have believed themselves successful, and have formulated their results with great confidence. The following, in the chronological order of the publication of the results, are the temperatures (in centigrade degrees) found by each of them: Newton, 1,669,300°; Pouillet, 1,461°; Zöllner, 102,200°; Secchi, 5,344,840°; Ericsson, 2,726,700°; Fizeau, 7,500°; Waterston, 9,000,000°; Spoeren, 27,000°; . . . Deville, 9,500°; Soret, 5,801,846°; Vicaire, 1,398°; Violle, 1,500°; Rosetti, 20,000°. The difference is, as 1,400° against 9,000,000°, or no less than 8,998,600°! There probably does not exist in science a more astonishing contradiction than that revealed in these figures.” And again, ever since the science of geology was born, scientists have accepted the theory that the heart of our globe is still a mass of molten matter, or liquid fire, and only a thin crust is cool and solid. Assuming the earth’s diameter to be about 9,000 miles, this crust they have estimated to be relatively to it only as thick as the film of a huge soap-bubble to its entire diameter. And they have assumed that the alleged increasing temperature in certain deep mines as we go from the surface downwards supported this theory. But science, through the mouth of Mr. Ward, rebukes this as a fallacious theory though still without sufficient data — “it is confidently asserted that the interior of the earth is in a red-hot molten condition, and that it is radiating its heat into space, and so growing colder. One of the results of the *Challenger* and other explorations of the deep ocean is to determine that the water towards its bottom is freezing cold. Considering that the ocean covers nearly three-fourths of the entire globe, this fact certainly does not support the theory of central heat accompanied by radiation. The coldest water, it is true, usually sinks by its greater weight towards the bottom, and that, it may be said, accounts for its coldness; but, on the theory of radiation the water of the ocean

has been for long geological ages supported on the thin crust of the earth, through which the central heat has been constantly escaping; and yet it is still of freezing coldness! Experience would say that the heat cannot have escaped through the water without warming it, because the capacity of water for heat is greater than that of any other substance. We can no more imagine such a radiation, and consequent accumulation of heat in the ocean, without the natural result of a great rise in temperature, than we can believe in a pot resting for hours on a hot fire without the usual result of boiling water. We have no reason, therefore, to believe, as has been suggested, that the earth is growing colder, or that we, in common with all living things, are destined to be frozen out of existence and the earth itself finally swallowed up by the sun."

And now let us ask our smart young graduates of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Lahore how they like this view of the infallibility of that modern science for whose sake they are ready to abandon the teachings of their ancestors. Is there anything more unscientific in their speculations, granting, even, that they are as stupid?

IN CONDUCTING our life we must not let ourselves ignore the natural order of things.

The opposition between freedom and the natural laws makes asceticism imperative.

Periods of decadence are characterized by the mediocrity of their leading men.

To teach others to behave well, one must first of all behave well oneself.

—ALEXIS CARRELL

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Over the last several years, scientists have been conducting experiments into the relationship between alcohol and virtually every aspect of human physiology, with a series of ominous results. Even “moderate” drinking, they are now admitting, can be more harmful than physicians previously believed. (*Span*, April 1976)

The new research focuses on three organs of the body: the liver, the heart and the brain. Regular use of alcohol, even by those who cannot be considered to be alcoholics, produces damaging effects on these most vital of our organs:

Alcohol liver disease, especially cirrhosis, is one of the world’s chief public health problems. . . . Most liver specialists believe that cirrhosis is the culmination of changes in the liver marked by several stages, the first being a usually harmless condition called fatty liver. . . . Between 1959 and 1968, Dr. Charles S. Lieber and his colleagues conducted research in test tubes and with alcoholic volunteers and found that alcohol had a number of startling effects on liver metabolism. It would stop the liver from burning its normal fuel — fat — in order to burn alcohol instead. The result: fat accumulated in the liver. The alcoholics, even on a good diet, developed not only fatty liver but elevated levels of blood lipids (fatty substances such as cholesterol and triglycerides) and uric acid, which is associated with gout. . . .

The relationship of alcohol to the synthesis of fats and fatty compounds has profound implications for other parts of the body besides the liver. “There is evidence that some people are at significantly higher risk of getting coronary artery disease if they drink. I think this is a very hot area,” says Dr. Jack Mendelson. . . . There is another, more direct effect of alcohol — on the heart muscle itself. . . . It diminishes the strength of contraction. . . .

Research on the brain is painfully slow. After decades of trying, we still do not know exactly how and where in the brain the first flush of alcohol works its changes. But we are beginning to gain some inkling of the possible bases for its damaging effects. . . . According to a 1972 publication of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, “heavy drinking over many years may result in serious mental disorders or permanent, irreversible damage to the brain or peripheral nervous system. Critical mental functions such as memory, judgment and learning ability can deteriorate severely.”. . . One experiment was reported late in 1973 in the

journal *Science* by Don W. Walker and Gerhard Freund of the Veterans Administration Hospital and the University of Florida, Gainesville . . . Their experiments, Walker and Freund contended, "strongly supported the conclusion that prolonged alcohol consumption per se can result in an impairment of associative processes in the central nervous system." . . .

The ultimate goal of much of the new alcohol research is to develop models that will reveal not only how alcohol works in the body but, by extension, the whole nature of drug dependence.

Someone who regularly drinks alcohol should re-evaluate what he is doing after seeing the body of evidence that alcohol is causing so much damage. Its direct, marked and very deleterious influence on man's psychic condition should cause even greater concern than its effect on the body. There is ample evidence that the action of alcohol on the internal environment mars the personality generally at all stages of its development, from the injury to the developing embryo by the mother's indulgence in alcohol to its effects upon the adult, which include loss of judgment, paralysis of the higher centres of the brain and of the critical faculty, the blurring of moral twinges and the impairment of self-control.

An editorial in *The Times of India* for March 17 states:

Just before it goes out, a candle sputters and flares into an extraordinary brightness. This phenomenon has been frequently applied to the last moments of a man's life, especially in sudden, near-fatal accidents. A deep study made by American psychiatrists and clinical psychologists of 104 cases (who were all on the verge of death but escaped to tell the tale) confirms the widespread belief that at the very end "all life seems to flash by" in a few seconds, with the memories being total and absolutely vivid. Most of the experiences recalled were pleasant; a few persons said they felt like "standing off, observing," as if they were not participants. . . . everyone felt a sense of calmness and serenity, not panic. These reports and their interpretations are most fascinating in that they shed new light on time, memory, the recall mechanism and the psychology of man. To see one's whole life pass by in a flash is to compress time; in fact, some persons investigated said they felt that time stood still. Does it mean that this profound mystery, time, is a more subjective experience than scientists now feel?

The editorial attributes the memory recall part of it to the brain: "In the span of, say, 50 years, several quintillions of experienced data

are 'engraved' on the RNA molecules or the brain's cells. How are they so swiftly and precisely retrieved?" Scientists are still in the dark.

What does Theosophy say? At the moment of death, for every man without exception, the Spiritual Soul, Atma-Buddhi, radiates from above on the incarnated Ego who is about to leave the body. There comes a raying forth of peace, of strength, a kind of benediction. This afflatus creates such lucidity that a retrospective insight into the life just closing becomes possible. In "Memory in the Dying" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 25*), H.P.B. gives a rational explanation of the phenomenon of the dying person remembering all the events of his life about to close:

While physical memory in a healthy living man is often obscured, one fact crowding out another weaker one, at the moment of the great change that man calls death—that which we call "memory" seems to return to us in all its vigour and freshness. May this not be due . . . simply to the fact that, for a few seconds at least, our two memories (or rather the two states, the highest and the lowest state, of consciousness) blend together, thus forming one, and that the dying being finds himself on a plane wherein there is neither past nor future, but all is one present? Memory, as we all know, is strongest with regard to its early associations, then when the future man is only a child, and more of a soul than of a body; and if memory is a part of our Soul, then, as Thackeray has somewhere said, it must be of necessity eternal. Scientists deny this; we, Theosophists, affirm that it is so. . . . The links of the chain of cause and effect with relation to mind are, and must ever remain, a *terra incognita* to the materialist. For, if they have already acquired a deep conviction that, as Pope says—

"Lulled in the countless chambers of the brain
Our thoughts are link'd by many a *hidden* chain . . ."

—and if they are still unable to discover these chains, how can they hope to unravel the mysteries of the higher, Spiritual, Mind!

Under the title "Stranger Than Fiction" (*Reader's Digest*, Indian ed., February 1976), Wilma Yeo recounts an extraordinary experience she had when she went from her home in Kansas City, U.S.A., to attend a writers' conference at Indiana University. Her previously submitted manuscript was to be discussed with her by a workshop leader, a celebrated woman writer, and the private interview was scheduled for five o'clock the first day of the conference, in the latter's second floor room at

the Indiana Memorial Union where the conferees had been given accommodation.

When she entered the room, the workshop leader, on seeing her, started showing signs of great distress and kept saying, "I don't know what to say to you!" She was so upset that she begged to put off the interview for another occasion. Mrs. Yeo, puzzled at being so abruptly dismissed, went down the stairs to her own room on the first floor, and went down on her knees to search through her bag for the room key. Just then the leader who had behaved so strangely a while ago happened to pass by, and when she saw Mrs. Yeo kneeling beside her door, she came out with an equally strange remark, "Then it's you, not me."

Later that evening, news arrived that Mrs. Yeo's husband had been killed in a plane crash. It had happened at five o'clock, the very time the two women had met. Two months later she received a letter from the workshop leader; the latter expressed her sympathy and wrote:

I feel I must tell you what happened to me that day at the Indiana conference. The minute you walked into my room I was almost overpowered by a sense of impending tragedy. The feeling grew stronger by the second, and I could not break through it — could not even speak through it.

The same all-encompassing premonition of disaster had come to me one other time in my life. It was many years ago when my own husband was killed in an accident at sea. I did not know if the unseen presence you seemed to bring into the room foretold tragedy again for me, or if it was for you. But I recognized it. I knew it was there for one of us.

I was frantic with the thought that something might have happened to someone in my family. As soon as you left, I started down the steps to the main desk to ask if there had been a message for me. When I reached the first floor and saw you kneeling in front of your door, I knew: my premonition — call it what you will — was for you. I went on down to the desk anyway and called my home. Everything there was all right. Later, I heard what had happened to your husband. I felt I should write to you and explain.

Some people dream about impending disasters — or happy events — and their dreams come true; others have premonitions in daytime in ordinary places. In fact, "there was a day when all that which in our modern times is regarded as phenomena, so puzzling to the physiologists now compelled to believe in them — such as thought transference, clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.; in short, all that which is now 'wonderful and

abnormal' — all that and much more belonged to the senses and faculties common to all humanity" (*S.D.*, I. 536-37). A premonitory dream, or an analogous vision in a waking state, may also be received for another who is unable to be impressed himself. In that case it is "often due to the conscious or unconscious co-operation of the brains of two living persons, or of their two Egos" (*Transactions*, p. 72). Such phenomena defy explanation on materialistic lines, but Theosophy offers clues to the understanding of their rationale.

The Astral Light contains pictures of all things whatsoever that happened to any person, that are happening in the present, or are about to happen, the causes for which are sufficiently well marked and made. If a person is at all sensitive, he can see the reflections in it either as a dream or as a waking vision, or he may simply be overpowered by an "all-encompassing premonition of disaster."

Brahmins today are hardly deserving of that appellation. In the *Free Press Journal* for February 22, Shankar Menon explains why this is so:

The Brahmin had his justification, with other elites, only in a context where his main concern was to give knowledge, rather than take the rewards of such. Yet what do we see today? Nowadays whenever the word Brahmin is used, up springs before us the picture of a fat cook or priest-Panda, Bhat Maharaj. . . .

A seeker of knowledge is a Brahmin. Historically, the seekers of knowledge got together and became a group known as Brahmins. Anyone with the ability to seek knowledge could join this group. They loved humanity because it yielded the secrets of knowledge.

Unfortunately, a saturation point came, when knowledge awaited men of genius to take it to higher plateaux. During this period, the Brahmins began to grumble about each other. Why? Some wanted to assert themselves. Envy came in and the sublimation of the seekers of knowledge broke down. . . . Also came in then the tradition of feeding Brahmins on every important occasion, religious or spiritual, marriage or death. So a seeker of knowledge became a seeker of food. . . .

The real Brahmins today, then, are the seekers of knowledge . . . who come from any strata or community. The old Brahmins who are in a position of authority because of inherited learning, merely seek power, but do not seek knowledge impartially. They have become cynical because they realize their lack of worth; they

survive by feeding their hypocrisy. Which is why scriptures are quoted for what cannot be proved logically. . . .

It is also interesting to see that when the Brahmin lost his interest in knowledge and became ritualistic in his personal life he became a strict disciplinarian. . . . It is also likely that, since education was in the Brahmin's hands, Macaulay's Minutes notwithstanding, cramming became unconsciously important in a system managed by him.

The Brahmin's disciplinary processes being rigid, have laid the roots of violence in our society. . . . The Brahmins' behaviour patterns indicate particular intolerance towards those not of their clan, and even intolerance within their sub-groups for each other. And intolerance leads to violence.

An allied result of the feeling of omnipotency, is the Brahmin taking to fortune-telling and horoscope-reading. This misleads a credulous society; chaos begins. . . . Fortune-telling has wrought as much destruction in our society as floods or drought. The faith that an average person seeks to guide him in his daily life becomes perverted by those whose omnipotent feelings are all that remain from their journey as seekers of truth.

In a companion article, T. V. Ramanujam defines the code that is expected of a Brahmin:

He should be a man of the highest moral character, he should be very learned, and his life should be dedicated to serving other members of society. How many Brahmins fulfil these conditions?

The *Mahabharata* contains a short conversation between Yudhishtira and Nahusha in which is given the definition of a "twice-born" Brahmin. The Pandava says:

Honesty, charity, integrity, patience and good conduct, forbearance and meditation, it is these that make a Brahmin. A Brahmin is not to be known as such merely by his name or from the accident of birth, nor is a Sudra by his. Where virtue and goodness prevail, there is the Brahmin. A Sudra is he who is without these.

We read elsewhere in the Epic:

Not birth, not sacrament, not learning, make one *dvija*, but righteous conduct alone makes it.

He that serves as a raft on a raftless current (of *samsara*) or helps to ford the unfordable, certainly deserves respect in every way, be he a Sudra or a member of any other class.

These ideas accord well with the meaning given to the word Brahmana in the *Dhammapada*:

Not by matted locks, not by lineage, not by caste does one become a Brahmana. By his truth and righteousness man becomes a Brahmana. He is blessed.

What avails thy matted hair, O fool? What avails thy deer skin? Outwardly you clean yourself, within you there is ravaging.

The presence of ancient Indian culture in the Mexico-Peru-Ecuador regions of South America in the pre-Christian ages is said to have been established with the deciphering of the inscribed stele and stone tablets by a noted Indologist, Dileep Kumar Kanjilal (*The Times of India*, April 4). He claims that the writings on the stele and tablets belong to the "Brahmi class" of writing used in the third century B.C.

Publishing his findings in the January-February issue of *Ancient Skies*, the official logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society, Dr. Kanjilal stated that of 56 signs of the stele, collected by Fr. Carlo Crespi of Cuenca, Ecuador, about 50 were "identified as Brahmi" found in the inscriptions of Asoka.

Evidence of ancient links between the continents continues to pile up.

"Until the appearance of a map, published at Basle in 1522, wherein the name of America appears for the first time, *the latter was believed to be part of India*. . . . Science also refuses to sanction the *wild* hypothesis that there was a time when the Indian peninsula at one end of the line, and South America at the other, were connected by a belt of islands and continents. The India of the pre-historic ages . . . was doubly connected with the two Americas. The lands of the ancestors of those whom Ammianus Marcellinus calls the "Brahmans of Upper India" stretched from Kashmir far into the (now) deserts of Schamo. A pedestrian from the north might then have reached — hardly wetting his feet — the Alaskan peninsula, through Manchooria, across the *future* Gulf of Tartary, the Kurile and Aleutian islands; while another traveller, furnished with a canoe, and starting from the South, could have walked over from Siam, crossed the Polynesian Islands and trudged into any part of the continent of South America." . . . This was written from the words of a MASTER — a rather doubtful authority for the materialists and the sceptics. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 327)
