

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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THE WORLD OF THE ELEMENTALS

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MR. JUDGE wrote in "Conversations on Occultism" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 131): "The elemental world has become a strong factor in the Karma of the human race." It is therefore necessary that students learn more about this strange world, hitherto a mystery, unexplained and unexplored. Yet, even with the details we are given, the subject is very difficult of comprehension, perhaps because our minds still find it hard to grasp the idea of an existence, of life of any kind, without form. Also we do not yet realize the truth that the mind builds forms in the astral light as we think or ideate. Unless we can get these ideas more firmly implanted in our minds, either we shall not make this problem vital and practical in life, or we shall materialize the concept, become conscious creators of evil, and fall under the domination of this realm of Nature. A serious study of the subject and an attempt to understand it should therefore be made.

The first point to grasp is that the elementals, the inhabitants of the three lower kingdoms of Nature, are forces and have no separate life of their own. They are generally visible only as a "disturbance in a transparent medium." It is the relationship of man, the thinker, to this world that is important, for it is by his thoughts that he creates forms which capture, so to say, a portion of this world, making of the captured portion a separate entity for the time being. The entity

thus "created" can be of three kinds: unconscious, *i.e.*, non-self-conscious; automatic, moving by natural impulse; or photographic. When the form is dissipated, its length of life depending on the force of the thought, the separate entity falls back into the realm of unconsciousness. But the imprint made on it by the thought-feeling of man remains. He has given a kind of intelligence, colour and character to that force, and these are stored in the elemental kingdoms of Nature.

Owing to the electric and magnetic character of those elemental kingdoms, our thoughts will draw to themselves the type of matter-force which harmonizes with them, and the entity thus formed will be able to respond to the lowest or the highest thought. Hence we have the creation of evil or the creation of good. There are as many variations of types of force in those three kingdoms below the mineral as there are variations in the kingdoms above it.

It is therefore obvious that elementals are what man makes of them. As he makes or mars the life on the physical, visible plane, so he makes or mars the life on the invisible elemental planes; and as there is a close relationship between elemental forces and the elements of Nature, the disturbances which man creates by his thoughts in the world of the elementals bring on such phenomena as storms, volcanic eruptions, famines, earthquakes, etc. Man is indeed a god, a creator. Man creates and destroys by his thought-feeling. His thoughts, by making a form or limiting wall, centralize or focalize forces of certain types; and as they are *his* thoughts and feelings, they will be drawn to him in the future. Therefore *The Voice of the Silence* tells us: "...harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm round humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils." It warns us also to beware of "the army of the thought sensations that, subtle and insidious, creep unasked within the Soul's bright shrine."

Another point to grasp firmly is that, as we are always thinking, elementals, ensouled thoughts, are constantly being sent out and received by us. We send out, Mr. Judge tells us, not only different qualities of elemental forces, but also different quantities. Our past

Karma makes itself felt in this way, and we create our future Karma. We make therefore a stronger link with the elemental worlds than with any of the other kingdoms of Nature. Though we look upon human beings as the agents of our Karma, it is really through the elemental worlds that we create and receive Karma. These elementals are the "presiding deities" spoken of by Krishna in the *Gita* (XVIII, 13); they are one of the agents of action. Their prototypes are the Lipikas and Maharajas spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine*. A study of Mr. Judge's article, "The Moral Law of Compensation" (reprinted in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 6*), shows in greater detail just how our own comes back to us. But we should not only think of the elementals as related to our own Karma; we must consider the relationship of the human kingdom as a whole to the elemental worlds. Since man became a separate entity possessing the "I-am-I" consciousness, he has created much animosity with the elemental worlds. To make up for this, he should develop in himself a reverence towards those worlds. *Light on the Path* gives us the method: "Inquire of the earth, the air, and the water, of the secrets they hold for you." The secrets of life which they hold, we have to find, and in our endeavour to find we should keep in mind the instruction: "Help Nature and work on with her."

What shall we do to begin this task and to stop creating harm? An analysis of our thoughts and actions will show us that we move, think and feel by desire-impulse, by fancy and by instinct. What we desire, we move towards impulsively, without conscious thought. Our desires are rooted in fancy, are instinctive and related to the animal nature. We are told to substitute aspirations for desires; imagination, image-building, for fancy; ideation for the instinct belonging to the animal man. The Great Ones ideate; They build permanent images; They build the forms for the highest elementals to ensoul. Even the highest powers of Nature are embodied thought-forms made by the Universal Mind. Without them, the world would sink beneath the weight of evil.

On the other hand, there are the dark powers, the enemies of the good. To which body do we wish to belong?

The key to the understanding of the elementals is man—man,

their creator. They are his servants, allies and pupils. They are also his enemies. Hence it is very necessary that the laws of the elemental kingdoms of Nature be learnt and those forces of Nature which are compassionate and pure be activated.

What are these laws? When man thinks, desires, feels, acts, he is using matter and centres of force which are not of pristine purity but have already been impressed and coloured through long ages by himself and others. He attracts the types which suit his thought, desire, feeling and action. He is also affected by those elemental forms impressed by others.

While thinking, feeling, desiring and acting, man uses memory and imagination and moulds matter into forms, imparting to these now individualized centres of force his own character. He photographs himself, so to say, on the matter-form with his feelings, thoughts, desires and acts, so that at some future date a good psychometer can draw from the matter a full account of himself. Man, in fact, impresses all he touches—paper, money, clothes, all things.

Feelings, desires, thoughts are often expressed in speech. Speech clothes them, and in the process many different types of elemental lives are attracted to the person, forming a combination which gives him his moods of depression or elation. Everyone is aware that one can talk oneself into any mood, or listen to others talking and take on their mood. Speech is therefore a very important *shakti* or force in life. *Mantrika shakti* is an important power, creative and destructive, sacramental and magical. From kind, friendly and truthful speech there is a long way to go before the sacramental and magical aspect is reached.

Sacramental speech is speech made holy, speech which gives forth sounds and ideas that pertain to the Spirit, to the realm of harmony and compassion. Magical speech is speech directed towards a definite end, and of course can be good or bad. There are words of power such as those employed by the Adept, who uses all Nature's forces as ally, pupil and servant, affecting others for good. Sacramental should be our attitude towards action, magical in its operation and its effects. The Universe itself came into being with

the sounding of the Word, the vibrations of which thrilled through matter, bringing all forms into existence. When the Sound is withdrawn, all will again merge into the ONE.

For us at our stage we have to begin learning that right knowledge and right compassion make for magical and sacramental action and speech. Thus shall we be able to make right promulgation of the Truth.

To take a few examples of the use of speech-sounds: As the Universe is built on the three, the triangle, so *mantrams* are a trinity of thought-sound-word. Man today uses *mantrams* unconsciously, and many different types have grown up—deprecatory sounds, invocatory sounds, propitiatory sounds, soothing sounds. Just as we learn that the great Planetary Spirits set going ideas which became inherent in humanity, so with sounds. Certain sounds are inherent in us. Just as we strive to express our ideas in words, so when we strive to express the great spiritual truths which are inherent in us in words a *mantram* is formed on this plane of matter.

If the elementals are a strong factor in our Karma, we ought to "people our current in space" with word-sounds and actions which strive to embody the highest elemental forces.

Though it is true, as we are taught, that the elementals are only forces of Nature without form, unless we give it to them, we need to remember that "there are some classes with forms of their own." The important fact for us is that we are their creators, we give them character, direction and power; we meet our past through them and build our future with them. "There is not a single thing going on about us," says Mr. Judge, "no matter what, that elementals are not concerned in, because they constitute a necessary part of nature, just as important as the nerve currents in your body."

WHAT is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man. That is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary.

—Talmud

REINCARNATION AND KARMA IN DAILY LIFE

FOR those who believe in Reincarnation and Karma, these doctrines impart an almost unique practicality to everyday living. For people who do not believe in them, the living of the life according to the tenets of, say, the "Sermon on the Mount" is well nigh impossible, not just because injunctions such as "resist not evil" and "turn the other cheek" are supremely difficult to practise, but because such people lack that philosophical background which the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma provide. No heart, however intuitive, can undertake any soul-exercise without a rational foundation which gains the sanction of the head or intellect.

In Brahmanical and Buddhistic religious literature—for instance, in the Twelfth Discourse of the *Gita* and in more than one sermon of *Sutta-Nipata*—we find steps and stages, advice and admonition, information and instruction, meant for all men and women; some can undertake one kind of soul-exercise, others, another kind, each according to his or her own stage of mental and moral development. This very variety in programme is indicative of the reality of Reincarnation and Karma, two primary laws of soul-growth, that growth which shows itself in mental perception and moral stamina.

Our civilization is in sore need of a moral philosophy of life, and no moral philosophy will prove practical unless it accepts the basis of Reincarnation and Karma, called the twin doctrines. In India, absence of the *study* of these philosophical doctrines has brought into existence a set of beliefs which are mostly superstitions or half-truths. The illogical view that the human soul can enter the body of birds and beasts has come to prevail; this deprives the Law of Reincarnation of its aspect of progression and introduces what is its antithesis—the aspect of retrogression. Likewise, Karma has degenerated into the degrading doctrine of fatalism, resulting in the evil of mental and moral indolence. Another difficulty is that the westernized Hindu "thinks his fathers fools as wise he grows"—by what he regards as the light of science. Not that modern science has

no light, but the westernized Hindu needs to *study*, not just believe in, the old philosophical propositions which made ancient Aryavarta glorious.

To begin with Reincarnation: it means literally rebirth, a return to the corpus, the body of flesh and blood. The central idea that needs to be grasped is that there is something in our own make-up, now and here, which has returned to a new body. What it is and how it came back are of secondary importance. The first thing to note is that within our own constitution an indestructible, immortal entity exists. It is called the Soul, or Spirit, or by other names. The *Gita* says: "As a man throweth away old garments and putteth on new, even so the dweller in the body, having quitted its old mortal frames, entereth into others which are new" (II, 22). So there are two categories, clearly enunciated—body and the dweller in the body. This dweller in the body is the Soul. What are its characteristics? Says the *Gita*:

The weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth it not, the water corrupteth it not, the wind drieth it not away; for it is indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible, and is not to be dried away: it is eternal, universal, permanent, immovable; it is invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable. (II, 23-25)

The Soul is immortal—cannot be destroyed, cannot be touched. Unless a person gives up his old garments of caste, colour, race, religion and earthly state, he cannot enter the Kingdom of the Soul.

Look at the tremendous variety everywhere visible in the human kingdom. Fools and sages, weaklings and saints, all live together; and do what one may, one will not be able to solve the mystery of this vast variety of natures in the kingdom of mortals save and except by the Law of Reincarnation. We are, each one of us, wearing bodies of flesh and blood, and no two of these bodies are alike. Then we have a moral nature showing in our character, and no two characters are exactly alike. Our mental perceptions, too, are different. As Prof. Huxley once pointed out, there is a big difference between the intelligence of a man and that of a black beetle; and he added that it is conceivable that there may exist

Intelligences who are as superior to ordinary men as the latter are superior to black beetles.

How do the *Gita*, the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma-Sutras* explain this mighty magic of *Prakriti* or Nature? Leaving metaphysics and psychology alone as subjects for individual study, let us continue the examination from a popular angle of vision. Reincarnation above all implies that this body of ours is an instrument used by the Soul for gaining knowledge, for garnering wisdom. The Soul experiences in and through the body whatever it needs to experience. Love and hate, good and evil, pleasure and pain, are devices which the body provides. Just as a particular kind of machine works on land, another on water, and still another in the air, so also all bodies are machines; the body of a fool, even that of a congenital idiot, is a machine in and through which the Soul is progressing; the body of a sage or a saint too is a machine in and through which a more progressed Soul is progressing still further. Perhaps of all known machines—and we live in an age of most intricate machines—there is none so complex, none so elaborate, none so exquisitely balanced, as the human body. The constitution of the bodily machine of the Soul is tersely defined in the Thirteenth Discourse of the *Gita*, where it is described as the field, the *Kshetra*. Reincarnation teaches the first great truth—the dweller in the body, the Soul, fashions ever new bodies; and residing in each of them, it grows, unfolding and expressing its own divine powers.

All of us are learners. The type of body each of us possesses is the most suitable one for the dweller within it. This might not only sound strange but also at first hearing might bring forth resentment. Is it possible that the Soul within a crippled body needs such a body? Confusion and resentment arise because the complementary law of Karma is misunderstood. A person is born, say, blind, so that the Law may fulfil itself. There are two main ideas which must be grasped to see the inwardness of this particular truth: (1) Reincarnation asserts that each person's body is the instrument needed by the Soul; (2) the Soul secures the body it needs for its own further development.

By what process does the Soul get the body it needs? The answer

is, by the operation of an infallible Law, the Law of Causation, the Law of Karma, the Law that always and ever compensates. Reward and punishment are words which confuse the issue. Karma does not reward or punish; Karma is the law of compensation. Much confusion would vanish if we cease to speak of our good Karma and bad Karma; all Karma is good and beneficent, because Karma ever compensates—for all acts, all words, all feelings, all thoughts. That is the first fact we need to present to the mind, over and over again, before we are able to assimilate it—Karma is the Law that compensates.

The second important fact we need to grasp is that the dweller in the body is not self-conscious about this process, this operation of the Law of Karma; the Soul is not aware of how the Law compensates. Just as a child's heart beats, but the child does not know it; the child feels pain and cries, but is not aware of the process of pain—so also with the Soul in the body. That Soul lives in the body and the great Law continuously operates, now compensating with joy, now with pain, now with health, and then again with disease. But through that compensatory process the Soul is learning, growing, evolving, progressing. To take another example: A boy or girl at school learns and gains knowledge of the alphabet, the multiplication table, etc., yet is supremely ignorant of the process of learning—of how the lessons transform themselves into knowledge; and yet the process exists and the act of learning is compensated by knowledge. So too with the Soul. Most of us living in bodies of flesh and blood, feeling pleasure and pain, going through days of health and days of sickness, are unaware of the process of growth, but growth *does* take place.

These two facts need to be put together—that everything that comes to us in life is a compensation, and that whatever the nature of that compensation, the dweller in the body, the Soul, is learning—and we see daylight where before there was darkness. With knowledge of these two facts we begin to see life from a new perspective. We realize that this body of ours is a beneficent and needed compensation in and through which we, the Soul, are progressing further. Karma is seen not as fatalism, but as a Law

most just and merciful, the Law of Motion, the Law of Action, which always causes progress and never retrogression. Once this is seen, we feel energized to fight our daily battles against our own sin and ignorance, for we know we are self-responsible, and that Life is a wonderful school where justice prevails. We see that *Kurukshetra*, the field of battle, is indeed *Dharmakshetra*, the field of duty; and our own duty, the means of improving ourselves.

Thus we come to the field of application. Our ancient Sages emphasized these twin doctrines so that men and women would make use of them in their daily lives. The test of a practical philosophy lies in its teachings being capable of application. We can apply the teachings of Reincarnation and Karma in daily living—in corporate social life, and in our own individual lives.

Take the problem of education. Educationists are not agreed, and conflicting theories of education prevail. Supposing the educational reformer were to accept the truth of Reincarnation and Karma; were to study the nature of the Souls occupying the bodies of the young pupils, Souls who have not come to earth for the first time but have been to this school of life many, many times before; supposing he studied and accepted the propositions of Asiatic Psychology—he then certainly would evolve a system of education very different from what is now in vogue. And how very different would be the attitude of the parents because of their conviction that the dweller in the infant body has been an old friend of previous lives, who has returned to a particular family to learn more with the co-operation of its members!

Take the problem of criminology. What a difference it would make for the criminals, prison authorities and social reformers if some among them studied and applied the laws of psychology implicit in the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma! Many of the criminals have become so by force of circumstances, or because of ignorance, and there is a large number of young delinquents who need, not the hard labour of a jail, but the gentle treatment of a sympathetic institution.

Turn for a moment to politics. The national or collective aspect of Karma is a fascinating subject. Why was a country like India in

bondage for almost two centuries? Have we considered the question in the light of Reincarnation and Karma? Were not the people paying for their own ancient sins? With millions enchained by untouchability in a caste-ridden society in the past, is it just to overlook the hand of Karma in our fettered enslavement? We made *pariahs*, outcastes, of millions, and we were treated as *pariahs* in turn. Political conditions are but the shadows of conditions in the inner planes of being.

How can we apply Reincarnation and Karma in our own individual lives? First, there is the lesson of alertness in our daily living. If day by day, nay, hour by hour, the Soul in the body is learning, let us pay heed to whatever presents itself. When things go wrong, let us not say, "This is my Karma," but let us look and see how we can overcome the undesirable conditions. Let us learn from every experience, and that needs study and reflection.

If our body, character and mind are the compensations for the actions, feelings and thoughts of our previous lives, it is clear that we are building our future body, character and mind by hourly acts performed now. As we think, so will our mind be. As we feel and desire and aspire, we colour our character. Our treatment of the body now will result in the body of the morrow. No God or outside power brings ignorance, wickedness, or disease; no evil force can touch us if we are attentive to our own moral worth. Man is the maker of his destiny, and as we act as Souls, our lives become happy and sublime.

Finally, the lesson of reincarnation brings the vision splendid that Emancipated Souls, *Jivan-Muktas*, exist. They are those who have finished the round of birth and death. The Sages and Rishis of old are not dead. Living Mahatmas are a fact in Nature. The Great Gurus teach today as they did of yore. The injunction of the *Upanishad* works its miracle now as it did in the past: "Awake, arise, seek the Great Ones, and learn!" As we become consubstantial with Living Mahatmas, will we gain that real freedom from all fetters, salvation from the round of birth and death, and attain the state of true service, which is the badge of all true *Sannyasis*.

CONCENTRATION, CONTEMPLATION, MEDITATION

ALL of us seek peace, harmony and happiness. It is the goal towards which we strive, but which we rarely attain. Lord Buddha investigated the problem of human suffering, and gave the answer in the form of the Noble Eightfold Path. It is the path of insight into the nature of reality. To be able to solve the problem, we should try to see the situation as it really is. We have to learn to look within, into our inmost nature, our emotions, thinking, intentions, etc. All our life we have been used to looking outside.

The Noble eightfold Path is an elaboration of the basic triad of *Sila*, *Dhyana* and *Prajna*. *Sila*, or moral practice, includes Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood. *Dhyana*, which is right mind-development, includes Right Effort, Right Awareness and Right Concentration. And *Prajna*, the capacity of perception, includes Right Views and Right Aspirations.

Sila and *Dhyana* must go hand in hand. Merely restraining our words and deeds is useless if the mind is full of craving, aversion, lust, etc. The fight is in the mind. What is needed, then, is "mental training," and that consists of three stages—Concentration, Contemplation, Meditation. People often take up these practices with a very narrow view. Meditation practices are often undertaken out of curiosity, to gain powers, to escape the monotony of life, and so on. The motive with which one starts is extremely important, because, when one aims at gaining powers or awakening *Kundalini Shakti*, etc., one is slowly led towards *Hatha-Yogic* practices instead of *Raja Yoga*. The distinction between the two must be clearly understood. *Hatha Yoga* deals with physiological development and is mainly concerned with acquiring good health and training the will. Practitioners of *Hatha Yoga* concentrate on awakening the *Kundalini* through certain *chakras* or plexuses in the body in order to gain psychic powers. *Hatha Yoga* is dangerous, in that it can lead to psychological or mental imbalance, besides ruining physical health. It is not concerned with mind-control, and whatever progress is made, is at the expense of spiritual progress.

So we find *yogis* and *sadhus* who exhibit certain powers, but have no control over their lower tendencies.

As opposed to this, *Raja Yoga* is concerned with control of the mind and is infinitely safer. *Raja Yoga* practices are divided by Patanjali into eight steps: *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi*—forbearance, purificatory observances, postures, suppression of the breath, restraint, concentration, contemplation, and meditation.

Yama includes certain rules like truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, not coveting. *Niyama* includes purification of mind and body, austerity, study and self-surrender to the Supreme Soul. *Asana* is the steady, comfortable posture in which one can meditate with ease, holding head, neck and spine erect. *Pranayama* or control of the breath, which involves regulating of *pranic* currents, should not be undertaken by an untrained person. An injudicious practice of breath-control may open wide the door to influences from the wrong quarter. With breathing practices it is easy to awaken in ignorance forces over which one has no control. *Pratyahara* means restraining the mind from going out towards the objects of sense.

After these preparatory steps come concentration, contemplation and meditation. *Dharana* or Concentration has been defined as "the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything pertaining to the external universe, or the world of the senses" (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 1 fn.). The eyes are closed to ward off external images. Concentration does not consist in gazing at the tip of the nose or at a spot on the wall. Concentration consists in dwelling upon a noble idea like Love, Brotherhood, Masters, etc.

What happens, however, as soon as we close our eyes? Our mind is flooded with memories and fantasies. Patanjali mentions the obstacles to concentration: sickness, laziness, sleep, false perceptions, clinging to sense enjoyments, doubt as to whether the practice is worthwhile. But all these obstacles have their root in the mind. It is important to consider the nature of the mind. Our senses and organs are instruments and have their normal demands, but it

is not the eyes that long for pleasant sights, or the tongue that desires sweet tastes. It is when the mind intervenes and submits to the dictates of the *Kamic* nature, to senses and desires, that troubles arise. Just as water takes the shape of the vessel it is poured into, so also our mind takes the shape of the object it is thinking about. It becomes that to which it is devoted. Thus, when we keep thinking about the things we like, we gradually form a mental habit, and soon we find ourselves thinking about these things *unconsciously*. This being the nature of the mind, it is not surprising that it wanders when we sit for concentration. The thing to do is to note what particular subject or object the mind goes out to. As the *Gita* suggests to the would-be devotee, "To whatsoever object the inconstant mind goeth out, he should subdue it, bring it back, and place it upon the Spirit."

We sit for meditation and wonder why we do not succeed. How can we suppose that just half-an-hour of meditation, with the remaining hours spent whichever way we like, will enable us to concentrate? Our whole day should be an exercise in concentration. Let us do each act as though our very life depended on it, eliminating all idle, purposeless activities. We allow our energies to drain away by engaging in idle conversation, mental rambling, reliving past experiences, or being anxious about things that have not yet happened. Every moment must be spent usefully.

Once we succeed in warding off internal and external images, the next step is *Dhyana* or contemplation. It is defined as continuance of attention, where we expand our thinking from seed idea to a field. It is continuation of concentration where one moves from one idea or thought to another, without losing the thread. So the branching off should be relevant. It is easy to drift away from the subject of concentration because of the association of ideas. For instance, the idea of brotherhood may make us think of H.P.B., and that in turn makes us think of Russia, and that again reminds us of aeroplanes and the airport, and so on. This is not contemplation. Real contemplation is more along the lines of concentration on Self, leading to penetration into its mysteries—like one's own Self not being different from other Selves, as there is but one Self of all

creatures, etc. *Dhyana* is the state of consciousness in which the person is still conscious of himself as separate from others. He retains his individuality. *Yoga* is the hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle, and when we come to the *Dhyana* stage, the mind is free from all other thoughts and desires. So there is no modification of the mind as the result of thoughts of other objects and subjects. The only modification of the mind that occurs is due to the conscious taking up of the object or subject for contemplation.

The state of *Samadhi* is described thus in *The Voice of the Silence*: "Where is thy Individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean, the ever-present ray become the All and the eternal radiance." This state of consciousness is called oceanic consciousness. The perceiver, the perceived and the perception all become one. Here, a person loses consciousness of every individuality, including his own. Individuality is there, but it is latent; and it has to be latent otherwise the *Yogi* would not be able to come out of *Samadhi*.

Just as a student of physics or chemistry first learns the theory and then tests it out in the laboratory, so also the highest intellectual knowledge is tested in the state of *Samadhi*. There is direct perception. Reaching such a state is very, very difficult.

Mr. Judge classifies meditation into two types: (1) Meditation practised at a set time, and (2) Meditation of an entire lifetime ("Meditation, Concentration, Will," *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*). For each person there is a single thread of intention or desire running through his entire life. This is his line of life's meditation. A philosopher, saint, businessman, criminal, artist, each has his own line of life's meditation. Each pursues that on which his heart is set. If one is after money, then that will be his line of life's meditation. He may engage in a hundred different activities, but they will all converge to the thought or desire that is uppermost in his life.

What are the results of successful meditation? At our stage, we would feel our level of consciousness raised. We would feel at peace with ourself and with others. We would be full of goodwill towards all. True meditation should make us more loving, more

compassionate, produce in us joy when we see others happy.

Progress would be gradual, as we are trying to change, through half-hourly meditations, those wrong habits of thought that we have built over many lives. We must have patience—like the craftsman who thinks his life well spent if during an entire lifetime he creates but one perfect masterpiece. Always remembering that no effort is wasted, we must persevere.

It may be humiliating to "Modern Exact Science" and repugnant to the whole of Christendom to have to admit that the Pagans whom they have despised, and the "Heathen Scriptures" they long ridiculed or ignored, nevertheless possess a fund of wisdom never dreamed of under Western skies. They have the lesson, however, to learn, that Science by no means originated in, nor is it confined to, the West, nor are superstition and ignorance confined to the East.

It can easily be shown that every real discovery and every important advancement in modern science have already been anticipated centuries ago by ancient science and philosophy. It is true that these ancient doctrines have been embodied in unknown languages and symbols, and recorded in books inaccessible to western minds till a very recent date. Far beyond all this inaccessibility, however, as a cause preventing these old truths from reaching modern times, has been the prejudice, the scorn and contempt of ancient learning manifested by the leaders of modern thought.

Nor is the lesson yet learned that bigotry and scorn are never the mark of wisdom or the harbingers of learning; for still, with comparatively few exceptions, any claim or discussion of these ancient doctrines is met with contempt and scorn. The record has, however, been at least outlined and presented to the world. As the authors of the *Secret Doctrine* have remarked, these doctrines may not be largely accepted by the present generation, but during the twentieth century they will become known and appreciated.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE INNER VOICE

Labour to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called conscience.

—GEORGE WASHINGTON

WHAT is the Voice of Conscience? Is there a set meaning to this expression or does it lend itself to various meanings?

The dictionary defines "Conscience" as the "consciousness of the moral goodness or badness of one's own conduct or motives, together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good"; "a faculty, a power, a principle concerned to decide as to the moral quality of one's own thoughts or acts enjoining what is good." The third meaning is given as "inmost thought or sense."

H.P.B. says in *The Key to Theosophy* that a Theosophist ought to do "that which his conscience and higher nature suggests to him; but only after mature deliberation."

In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, she says that it is "the impressions projected into the physical man by this Ego which constitute what we call 'conscience'" (pp. 62-63). She defines the term as "the thought and voice of the Higher Ego."

We can see from these definitions that the Voice of Conscience is almost a general expression applying to various aspects of man's nature and experience. Looked at specifically, it can be said to be the voice of past experiences, whereas the Voice of the Silence can be said to pertain to the Higher Ego. This Voice speaks to us when we turn to it for guidance and have reached the condition when we can hear what it says. It gives us the intuitive knowledge of how to act. Our conscience warns us and tells us what *not* to do; the Higher Ego goes further and tells us what is best to be done.

The main question for us is, therefore, How do we progress from reliance on conscience to hearing the Inner Voice? The answer is given in H.P.B.'s words quoted above: through "mature deliberation." An animal knows what not to do by instinct. Man has to a great extent lost his instinctive faculty, and before he gains the capacity of intuition he has only his reason to guide him when in doubt. And reason is based on premises from which conclusions are

drawn. If conscience is the voice of past experiences telling us what not to do, our reason and mature deliberation have to be used in order to see what *to do*.

When reason is applied to conscience, we find that there is more than one aspect to it. Sometimes the false conscience speaks, and does so in terms of what we have been taught as wrong in childhood, or what we have come to accept as tradition: what to do and not to do on the Sabbath day, to drink or not to drink, etc. It is important that children should not be taught that things are wrong that are not wrong in themselves, for when the growing and developing reason realizes this, the true conscience is often thrown overboard with the false. But reason has to be developed in the child so that he sees for himself why such-and-such a thing ought not to be done or ought to be done.

The voice of past experiences which tells us what not to do has a positive side as well; *i.e.*, if we do not act in one way, we are *ipso facto* acting in another way, so that conscience can be said to cause us to act in certain ways by refusing to let us act in other ways. It is only when we break new ground, so to say, that we get no help from conscience and have, through reason and aspiration, to find the Inner Voice.

Fundamentally, what is the characteristic of the Inner Voice? Is it not true morality, compassion absolute, universal ethics based on law? Our moral character is but the reflection, however dim and full of shortcomings, of the Higher. It is to this reflection of how much we have already learnt that the ordinary man turns when in doubt, and, through his endeavour to act the best he knows how, learns in time the right way of action.

To take an illustration: A father beats his son because all other efforts to make the son mend his ways have failed and he is perhaps indulging in some bad habit which might involve himself and others in great danger in the future. We know, Theosophically, that this is a wrong decision, but the father has not yet learnt this; his past experience, his voice of conscience, has not yet taught him that it is wrong, but he has the "consciousness of the moral goodness or badness of his own conduct or motives," the power "to decide as to

the moral quality of his own thoughts or acts enjoining what is good." In time such a man will come to the truth. His present consciousness of moral goodness leads him to act as he does, and the knowledge he gains through this wrong action will teach him a higher moral code.

It is often difficult for us to realize the slow degrees of progress. To speak categorically of the "still small voice" which tells us what to do, and of the voice of conscience which tells us what not to do, will land us in trouble, because we shall overlook the bridge between the two. While we know that it is motive that is the most important, we also know that it is difficult to decide what our true motive is. And we often think that our actions are based on the dictates of the "still small voice" when they are based only on the moral perceptions of our conscience. Only if we take into consideration that lower *Manas* can transmute itself into the higher, can we see that the whisperings of the Voice of the Silence come to us through the higher aspects of our working agent, the voice of conscience. Let us live up to that, after mature deliberation, attending to the highest Voice we can hear at our stage. Reason, searching upwards for the universal aspect of life, will be coloured by it, and little by little the true Voice of Intuition will speak in us.

If I am walking with two other men, each of them will serve as my teacher. I will pick out the good points of the one and imitate them, and the bad points of the other and correct them in myself.

—CONFUCIUS

THE CENTRAL FLAME OF TRUTH

"The purpose of life is to learn—it is all made up of learning."

IN the course of the brief space of time since Theosophy was re-established openly in the world by H. P. Blavastky, many battles have been fought. Essentially these battles have been for "self-responsibility" and for "self-authority" under the guiding light of Truth and the rules of practical Universal Ethics that derive from it.

The practical realization of the "general fellowship of mankind," called also "Universal Brotherhood," is the purpose for the manifestation of that focus of Truth which we call the Theosophical Movement. This Movement, in its wider sense, is as ancient as Theosophy (meaning, literally, Knowledge about God, universal and impersonal), or Truth itself. It represents the link between the pole of material evolution (physical nature) and the pole of "Spirit" (universal, transcendent Law).

Though the Theosophical Movement is age-old, we are naturally more aware of its history since it was launched into the public world by H.P.B., in 1875. Since then it has passed through many vicissitudes, as students of the history of the Movement know, and there have been and are today many groups and societies calling themselves Theosophical. Individuals are attracted to these foci—the organizations called "Theosophical"—those which strive, or merely claim, to teach and practise principles derived from the One Flame of Truth.

If the existence of so many different organizations seems confusing, consider that any problem in a science like mathematics can have only *one* solution that is true and universally correct (based on universal, self-evident, acceptable axioms and facts that are patent to all fair and free-thinking, unprejudiced inquirers and experimenters). There are innumerable false, or partially false, or partially true, answers, but there can be only one true solution. Experimenters and investigators in the so-called "pure" and "applied" physical sciences all agree to this general statement. No textbook could ever be written or published for general use, nor could academic recognition be accorded round the world to gradu-

ates and proficient in any field, unless this fact were tacitly accepted.

Applying this, then, to the present Theosophical Movement and to a centre for study and service like the United Lodge of Theosophists (which is "a name given to certain principles and ideas"), we might consider the following analogy:

Visualize Theosophy (a statement of Truth and Law in Universal Nature) as an enormous Flame, a fountain of pure Fire, for ever rushing onward and upward.

Individuals who are responsive to the light and warmth of this Flame come close to it and ally themselves to one or another organization that springs up around it. Individuals, as mind-souls, are in their innermost natures sparks from and one with this One Universal Flame. Outwardly, in body, feeling and personality, they appear separate—both from one another and from this great flaming Truth.

Organizations are composed of persons whose characters are made up of prejudices and blind acceptance of "authority," of enthusiasms and moods of dejection, of fanaticisms and liberalities, of aspirations and cunning, selfish motives, of dark desires and noble generousities, of miserliness and philanthropy, and so on almost infinitely, so that the confused record of modern investigation into the psychic and personal feeling-mind nature of humanity only attempts to sketch the almost illimitable confusion of that mysterious compound—the psychic soul of Man. All this bears close correspondence to the innumerable false, partly false and partly true views mentioned earlier.

Organizations thus come to have a character that mirrors the general character of those individuals who compose them, reflecting their psychic average. The one Flame of onrushing Truth, however, is for ever unaffected by the limited views and confused wanderings of individuals and of organizations.

Persons and organizations come and go, grow and strengthen or falter, hesitate, decay and die. Orthodoxy, prejudice and corruption lead to the inevitable end—death; the pages of history are full of examples. The myopic eye of the prejudiced mind forbids the

consideration that "one might be wrong." Pride forbids the humble safety of mutual consultation. Degradation of the individual or of the organization results from the following of formalisms and rituals from which the inner spiritual spark of Truth has already been banished. Few see this. Fewer still know what to do about it. To rekindle fire from a burnt-out cinder is impossible. To develop the phoenix-like quality of regeneration and re-creation before complete decay has set in is difficult, but possible. The student of history can discern how this has been done again and again down the centuries. The same immortal life-giving Fountain of Truth is mirrored for a while in an individual here and an individual there; an organization of like-minded and sympathetic devotees arises. It remains coherent so long as the attracting power of sympathy is there. Sympathy is only one of the many aspects or powers of the psychic soul of Man; other faculties need equal attuning, otherwise only a partial alliance is formed, based on a limited understanding of Law and a restricted vision of the One Immutable Truth. This ultimately leads to distortion and to the degeneration of the organization and of the individual adherent, if he has not learned to develop the phoenix-like quality of self-regeneration through alliance, a direct self-made and self-sustained alliance, with the Spark of Truth *within himself*, independently of the views, opinions, suggestions, rules or regulations made by his companions and associates.

To continue the analogy: The great, pure flame of Truth for ever rushes on at the heart and source of all Nature. All beings, regardless of their degree of intelligence or evolution, carry a spark of it in their innermost, most secret centre—the *core* of their being. In the process of the evolutionary development of intelligence, the being becomes aware of this spark within. The stage of Self-consciousness (Manhood) is reached.

Since the purpose of life is to learn (through self-effort), freedom of choice and of decision is concomitant with the realization that all Knowledge, all Wisdom, is attainable by and open to the mind of man—provided he makes his aspiration to this ideal a matter of continued, unrelaxed, strenuous effort, discipline and

training. To hold the vision of the Ideal constantly before the eye of the mind and to work strenuously towards it; to do all actions and to perform all duties for its sake, regardless of anticipated results or the precipitations of Karma in one's personal life, and to build this attitude into the character; to become the window through which the light of the Spark within may shine forth without; to achieve closer unity with the Flame of Truth in all things—all this may appear extremely repulsive to the false sense of "independence" (pride), but it is a fair statement of the attitude of the *true* disciple of Truth. And this attitude and work are to be persisted in for many lives, by learning and moulding one's own character, capacity and instruments.

As in all things, the process of training and of the formation of new habits is a slow one. Generally we are all impatient of results. Usually we desire quick and entire success in one short day, or one brief year, or within this life-span at the most. If we were endowed, somehow, with the gift of virtues and powers without working for them, we believe that we would enjoy a condition of continued pleasure and felicity, untroubled by worry or want. This is the greatest error that waylays aspirants and lures organizations away from the hard core of pure, burning Truth, one of the main principles of which is Fairness, *i.e.*, no one receives anything he does not work for or deserve.

Individuals attracted to the Central Flame of Truth band together through mutual sympathy and form brotherhoods and organizations, to achieve the aims and objects they adhere to and to realize the vision of Truth that they share and perceive individually and collectively. They approach the Central Flame, come within its influence, and are energized by it to the extent that the nature of their aspirations and ideals conforms to its nature. To the extent that it scorches and burns their natures that still retain prejudice, untruth, selfishness and the desire to achieve personal fame, position or attainments, they fall away from it in time; and, as drops of water in a fountain, or the cinders and sooty residue of a flame describe parabolas away and out from the centre, so these individuals and organizations, scorched and smarting in their personalities,

describe parabolas of divergence away from the Central Flame of Truth. They descend again to earth and, permeating the place surrounding their descent with their natures and characters and the hurt of their scorching, create dogmas and rituals that no longer point directly to the Truth. Burnt and hurt in their personal and selfish natures by its fiercely unprejudiced character, they develop the scar-tissue of prejudice and ritual.

The student of history can thus see why certain persons have left the Fountain of Truth and formed cliques and factions and organizations, employing the language of idealism and promising results (for little effort), playing on the prejudices and desires of others (for their own ends), and eventually turning the organization into a money-making concern (to fill their own pockets). Thus a new sect or cult is formed and another path away from the Fountain of Truth comes into being.

Thus, in the Fire of Theosophy many persons have come and gone. It is interesting to see that among the individuals attracted to the original Theosophical Society founded by H.P.B. were those who later proved to be the most antagonistic to its purposes—so that the poles of construction and of destruction have always been in very close proximity. Individuals who contact the mighty Movement come into this concentrated field and place themselves consciously or unconsciously under the influence of these opposing influences.

Great Souls have so attuned their natures that they are completely consubstantial with that great Flame and live comfortably within it. They fear no hurt or suffering, as in their natures there is nothing left to be burnt or scorched by it. Students like ourselves need to strive constantly to make ourselves fit and pure enough to do likewise, in due time. We need patience and true resignation to the pain and suffering that result from the working out of the errors made by ourselves in the past. The dross burns itself away and the pure gold of our real inner nature becomes all the more bright when it emerges from the fire of self-purification.

THE ILLUSION OF SEPARATENESS

WE are told in *The Ocean of Theosophy*: "...down to the smallest atom all is soul and spirit ever evolving under the rule of law which is inherent in the whole." Here is a *mantram* the truth of which is immediately admitted by all Theosophists. Its demonstration, however, poses certain difficulties. If "all is soul and spirit" what becomes of matter? Has it no existence? Is matter a complete phantasy of the senses? Is it an illusion, partial or entire? Our general conception of matter is that it is something solid, substantial, inert and outside us, which is somehow related to us because we contact it with our senses, but which is in general opposition to us as we constantly struggle to resist its influence as it imposes itself upon us.

This concept of matter must eventually be discarded, for its acceptance is at the basis of the heresy of separateness. It is this false dualistic conception which is at the foundation of all creedal religions. God and devil, good and evil, salvation and damnation, heaven and hell—all these misconceptions and the consequent wrong actions spring from the belief that things are separate and distinct one from another. But the idea of Soul and Spirit as the only principle pervading the manifested universe contains the solution to most of our philosophical difficulties.

Spirit *is*: Soul is its modification. A simple illustration is that of a string upon which knots are formed. Let the string represent Consciousness or Spirit unmodified; let the knots represent soul, any soul, mineral, vegetable, animal, human or divine. These are all modifications of Spirit. Has the quality or substance of the string changed because of the modifications we call knots? So with our monistic concept of Soul and Spirit. The cause of the knots, the forms of consciousness, is to be found in the Three Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine, especially in the Third.

We should stop thinking in terms of Spirit inhabiting a form of matter and think of matter as a form of Spirit. This approach gives a practical basis for overcoming our sense of separateness. We are told over and over again that existence is an illusion, that matter has

no real existence. At the same time we are confronted with the evidence of our senses which insist upon the reality of matter and, moreover, a nomenclature which constantly employs contrasting terms that imply separateness, dualism.

What then of the kingdoms above and below us? Have they no existence apart from what our senses convey to us? Of course they have. The illusion lies in our sense of separateness. Our dualistic thinking prevents us from realizing the unity of all souls with the Universal Oversoul. If, however, we regard matter or objective existence as a modification of Consciousness, a form of Spirit, many paradoxical statements become more comprehensible.

Consider the phrase: "The highest sees through the eyes of the lowest." This statement becomes quite understandable from our monistic viewpoint. The eyes represent embodied experience or modified consciousness which we may call the mineral kingdom; this realm of consciousness becomes the basis for the expression or seeing of the vegetable kingdom; the vegetable consciousness provides the eyes or basis for the animal; the animal for the human, and the human for the divine. In this process man becomes the focalizing point for all the forms of souls or consciousness as they are objectivized in the various kingdoms.

Since all beings are the same in kind and differ only in degree, interdependence is an absolute Law of Life. Everything is dependent upon a higher degree of consciousness. Here the figure of the lame man perched upon the shoulders of the blind man and directing the latter's steps is suggestive. Thus man progresses only to the extent he can raise the animal kingdom and through that kingdom the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. Similarly the beings above the ordinary man can progress only to the extent man raises his consciousness to the plane of Unity. Thus all are parts, in varying degrees, of one Spiritual or Conscious Totality which ever moves forward as a Unit according to the Law inherent in the Whole.

ALMOST all our suffering is caused by not having the power of detachment.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

ONE

[Reprinted from *Lucifer*, May 1890.]

WHEN we come to analyse and define the meaning of the word ONE we are confronted with apparently contradictory attributes of the term, for while ONE has a signification of separate individuality it means also the aggregation of quantity. ONE means sole, only, and yet unity implies harmonious plurality. Swedenborg says there is no such thing as ONE merely; the idea only arising from the unity of many things which form or seem to form a ONE. Absolutely, ONE is not a real quality of finite things, and is not imaginable. Indivisibility is applied by chemistry to the elements, but obviously in a merely theoretical manner, for not even an atom of an element is so minute as to have no parts. To have no parts would involve having no magnitude, like a mathematical point, which is also hypothetical, and can have no corporeal existence. The symbol "1" is used in mathematics, but it is a symbol of the supernatural, as surely as the symbol of the fourth or the *n*th power. ONE is not, strictly speaking, a number at all, but applies in its true sense to the Infinite, and therefore the unknowable on the natural plane. This truth receives embodiment or recognition, consciously or unconsciously agreed upon, in games of cards, in most of which the ace is not the lowest, but the highest in value, actually transcending not only all the numbers, but the very Kings and Queens. ONE transcends number as spirit transcends matter—or further it transcends number as the Divine transcends spirit. There can be only one ONE. That is, the Divine is not only ONE but the only ONE. Swedenborg puts it that "in Him infinities are distinctly one." And because oneness implies this sort of plurality, the idea of a trinity, and even of many divinities, has found a place in men's minds. The conception starts from a truth though it wanders into error. Almost every heresy will lead us to the common soil of truth, if we track out its roots. If there had not been some stratum of verity for it to start from, it could not have flourished. So, paradoxical as it seems, the roots of the Upas tree of "Gods many" are sustained by the immutable underlying truth that God is the only ONE. All phenomenals are items of a

series, while the Divine is the unique. In man there is, apparently derived from a remote past, a widespread, a universal tendency, almost an instinct, to worship the unique in some form. It is just as conspicuous in the selfish man as in the unselfish, in the religious man as in the atheist, in the nomad as in the civilized modern. The essentials of this devotion to the unique glimmer through all the ruling passions and guiding principles of human life, however protean the outward aspects. Those who in early time, or now in uncivilized countries, thought or still think that but one sun or one moon exists, have adored and still adore the sun and moon. On the other hand those who know that there are many suns and moons, those who worship themselves and are civilized, try to think, and not without success, that there is a uniqueness about that Self-God. They strive to be cleverer than others, to be sharper in business, to accumulate more money, to cultivate a more handsome exterior skin, and so on. Self is their God and so must be unique. In this case, of course, the heresy is not in the worship of uniqueness but in its appropriation. It is not wrong to excel, unless the motive of excellence is to exalt Self with the adorable quality of uniqueness. It would be easy to trace out the divers distortions of the worship of the unique in a thousand other forms, even down to the curious passion for collecting rarities and curiosities. And here again all the evil is in motives. There is no harm in being the possessor of a Mulready envelope, an orange cowrie, or a bath-white butterfly, unless the acquisition of these rarities is allowed to imbue the Self with the essential attributes of Divinity. The very same act may be evil to one, good to another, according to the motive. But even as we use the word "God," while the Divine is incapable of being expressed in natural terms, so too while, strictly, ONE applies only to the infinite, it has a general though somewhat loose meaning on the phenomenal plane. It has in fact a sort of appearance of existence, just as a wave has an appearance of onward motion, though really there is none but only a series of successive upheavals and depressions. Further, while it is necessary, owing to the exigencies of the human mental organization, to assume that undulations are actually onward movement, so it is equally neces-

sary, while we are on this plane, to hypothesize the existence of ONE in finites. But if, instead of recognizing the hypothetical character of this conception of unity, we come to look upon it as really and strictly applicable to finites, then arise such heresies as those alluded to above.

ONE has its poetry, derived doubtless from its ultra-naturalness. How many a poem has been prompted by the idea of the "first" or the "last" of a series of events or things! And all the beauty and sentiment is surely derived from the symbolism of the Divine suggested by the bare idea of uniqueness. The "first night" has been woven into the very grandest of English sonnets by Blanco White. The "last man" has been immortalized by Montgomery. Such topics owe their charm to their really sacred associations, their symbolism of the only ONE—the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. In one of our grandest blank verse poems, the author, perhaps unconscious of the inspired significance of his thoughts, imagines at the commencement of his meditations that "the bell strikes one." Greatness, sentiment, solemnity, and every attribute of the Divine are suggested in the comprehensive idea of unity, which reaches downward to the unimaginable limits of indivisibility, and upward to the all-embracing inclusion of absolute infinity.

—CHARLES E. BENHAM

IN everything you do, consider what comes first and what follows, and so approach it. Otherwise you will come to it with a good heart at first because you have not reflected on any of the consequences, and afterwards when difficulties come in sight you will shamefully desist.

—EPICTETUS

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Our age has been called the age of transition when society and all systems of thought and all levels of human activity are changing. In recent times, the pace of change has been accelerated. Not all change, though, is for the good and there are enough disconcerting signs. In view of the powerful forces for change that have been set loose, there is today a movement involving scientists, businessmen, social reformers, government officials and others to forecast the kinds of things that might happen in the future. The "futurists," as they are called, point out that the world will never again be what it was and that the value of "futurism," or study of possible futures, is that we can shape tomorrow more wisely.

As we approach the end of the present millennium and the beginning of a new one, a boom in trend-watching and futurism is on, observes Jennifer Tanaka in *Newsweek* (March 9, 1998):

Everywhere you look these days, from books to seminars to magazine stories, someone's trying to peddle his version of tomorrow....In particular, futurists are reporting a surge of interest from the business community....

Futurism has struggled with its public image since it got started in earnest in the 1960s. The point that futurists most urgently want to clear up is that they don't predict the future. "People often ask for predictions, and we argue that there's no certainty about what's going to happen," says Clem Bezold, president of the Institute for Alternative Futures in Alexandria, Virginia. Bezold explains that futurism is really just an extension of the long-range planning that businesses already do, not the flaky guesswork some people imagine. Futurists, like economists and demographers, look at data, detect trends and extrapolate them to forecast changes....

Futurists, being the discipline straddlers they are, think creatively. They do the work of novelists, spinning out "what if" scenarios, the most important of which are those that illustrate what Bezold calls paradigm shifts.

Of all possible changes, those in the scientific sphere may well

be the most significant. Genetic tampering, for instance, and in particular attempts to produce human clones, might well open up a frightening new era. The problems presented by these and other developments, and the increasing fear they are causing, should have convinced men of science that they have already created more than they can control. There can be little doubt that, once what are today considered scientific possibilities are made actualities, it will be difficult to prevent the prostitutions and desecrations which may well make of them instruments of harm rather than of good. The immense responsibility that attaches to the attainment of knowledge is not yet as strongly recognized as it ought to be.

Probably no heavenly body has received as much attention from humans in all ages as our moon. In recent decades, even scientists have not escaped the fascination.

The preliminary findings from the Lunar Prospector, launched this January to study the composition of the moon, show that relatively large amounts of water exist there, scattered in craters over vast spans of the north and south poles. Scientists say that the orbiting spacecraft's measurements of atomic particles escaping from the moon were the "first unquestionable results" showing water at both lunar poles—enough to sustain lunar colonies and provide fuel for rockets exploring the solar system. (*The Times of India*, March 10)

In what sense, then, is the moon "dead," as Theosophy asserts? It is dead only as far as its inner—*i.e.*, psychic and spiritual—principles are concerned. Its physical principles are not dead, but have a certain activity (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 149 fn.). Its spiritual principles, we are told, have been transferred to our Earth (*Ibid.*, I, 155-56). Modern science, which has yet much to learn—and to unlearn—may dismiss this, but the occult theory bears investigation, that the moon, now a deserted body, was once vital and full of living beings. It lived its life, went through its cycles, and at last, after vast ages had passed away, came to the moment when it had to "die"; that is, the time came when the beings on the moon had to

leave it, because its period had elapsed. It threw out into space all its energies, leaving nothing but the physical vehicle. Those energies revolved and condensed the matter in space nearby and produced our Earth; the moon, its parent, proceeding towards disintegration, but compelled to revolve round her child, this Earth. In like manner, some future day, the Earth will become "a moon" to some newer planet not yet born.

In mid-March, a "potentially hazardous asteroid" speeding around in an orbit that would bring it dangerously close to our Earth, got some specialists genuinely worried. But the threat of its hitting our planet soon evaporated. Astronomers say that this does not mean that Earth is out of danger for ever; any wildly racing comet or asteroid "could make Earth go tilt—or worse." That heavenly orbs do indeed stray away from their orbital course and on occasions collide "is one of the most significant discoveries of the space age," says astronomer Clark Chapman. Experts, however, say that they are taking steps to defend our planet against such threats by intercepting an approaching asteroid and changing its course. (*Newsweek*, March 21)

Oliver Morton observes in the same issue of *Newsweek* that the remarkable thing which emerges from all this is that it is changing the way we look upon space. Space now seems closer to us than ever before:

The discovery of ice on the moon showed that space, just like the far-flung corners of the Earth, contains natural resources that can and will shape the politics and economics of its exploration. The ice on the moon and the possibility of death from the skies are two faces of the same coin—natural resources and natural disasters that are part of the human world. It's just that the world humanity now lives in is larger than the planet it lives on....

The technology of asteroid nudging is not that much more astounding than many others. The ability to manipulate atoms one by one is, in its way, just as remarkable as the ability to

manipulate asteroids; atoms are far further removed from us in scale, are far harder to isolate and behave according to far weirder rules. Yet atomcraft is becoming remarkably commonplace. We change the constituents of our atmosphere; we decipher genes and rewrite them; we bottle suns. Compared to such feats, mining a moon or moving a mountain—even a flying one—does not seem that much more impressive.

And yet there is something about space that makes humanity's achievements there look both greater and more poignant than technological accomplishments on Earth. Space, an emptiness from which everything can be seen, occupies a privileged place in our imaginations. Space travel has come to stand as a metaphor for all scientific discovery, for all the ways in which science makes visible that which is hidden from human senses by the scales of distance and time. In space, the universe and all its history is laid out for our inspection.... We look into the deep abyss of time and then back at the Earth that time has wrought, and we gain a new perspective....

But space and the other worlds of science are not actually inhuman, or separate. They are extensions of the human world. Space exploration extends humanity's reach in a peculiarly literal way.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, found in a dark cave in the Judean desert 50 years ago, have evoked a great deal of international interest. Over the years, thousands of fragments of parchment have been pieced together into 80 documents. The majority of the scrolls have now been interpreted and published, and are on display at the Israel Museum in a special pavillion called the Shrine of the Book, which has become a popular tourist site. (*Israel Today*, January-February 1998)

To mark half a century since the discovery of the scrolls, the Israel Museum is putting on two special exhibitions, focusing on life in Qumran, the Dead Sea sect, its scrolls, etc. In addition, a congress is to be held in Jerusalem this July to review the work done so far and indicate avenues for future study. It is expected to draw internationally-renowned scholars.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, written years before the Christian era, "represent a turning point in Jewish history," stresses Dr. Adolfo Roitman, curator of the Shrine of the Book. "They reveal the link between Biblical Israel and the Jewish culture of the Talmudic period." According to Dr. Magen Broshi, who served as curator from 1965 to 1995:

Not only are the scrolls the oldest known copy of the Old Testament, but they belonged to the Essenes, a mysterious ascetic Jewish sect that existed about 2,000 years ago and is believed to have had a great influence on the early Christians. Most of the Essenes, who were mentioned by the contemporary historians Pliny and Josephus, lived on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea region. Nearly a third of the documents that were found in the caves of Qumran overlooking the Dead Sea contain the books of the Old Testament....

Many of the non-Old Testament scrolls contain details about the Essene sect and their values. One of the scrolls tells the story of the battle between the "sons of light and the sons of darkness" and echoes the struggle between good and evil. The Essenes included celibate men, a phenomenon rarely found in Judaism, and their influence on the early Christians is unquestionable, making the scrolls of immense interest to Christian as well as Jewish scholars.

Who were the Essenes? *The Theosophical Glossary* states that they were a mysterious sect of Jews said to have lived near the Dead Sea for thousands of ages. *Isis Unveiled* (II, 132) tells us that they were "the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judea at one time, since the reign of Asoka, the zealous propagandist." In still another place, H.P.B. states that Jesus was "trained in the high school of the Essenes, those virtuous descendants of the botanical as well as astrological and magical Chaldeans" (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, September 1953, p. 257). And again in *Isis Unveiled* we are told that Jesus' "code of action and walk in life [was] Essenean."

Every tradition shows that Jesus was educated in Egypt and passed his infancy and youth with the Brotherhood of the

Essenes and other mystic communities. (*Isis*, II, 548 fn.)

Contrary to popular opinion, psychiatrists look upon the system of competition, now endemic in almost every field of activity, as a cause for worry. "Competitivitis," as they call it, is a pathological condition or sickness where individuals chronically compete with anyone around them and live in a permanent state of frustration. "The focus of these people keeps on shifting," says Asit Sheth, psychiatrist. "The result is that they never relax or stop to enjoy life, which ultimately leads to an early burn-out."

Piali Banerjee's article in *Saturday Times*, February 28, analyses this growing trend. The signs are everywhere—in business, education, research, and even in welfare organizations. Where there should be joint efforts in working towards a common goal, there are often several individuals or small teams working on the same topic independently, all engaged in the race to the finish. To achieve real success, the author suggests, life should be viewed as a co-operative, not a competitive, arena. Making one person's success depend on another's failure—which is what competition involves by definition—simply does not bring out one's best.

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of competitiveness [writes Banerjee] is this assimilation of it as an unconscious, habitual response. Where one is neither aware nor ready to accept that he/she is constantly running an imaginary race, faster and faster. So Sheth prescribes awareness as the first antidote to "competitivitis."

We are in urgent need of antidotes to competitiveness today. To realize that life is not a series of contests and we don't have to live each day competing with our spouse, our colleagues, our friends. To recognize that most of life is an interdependent, not an independent reality.

Especially susceptible to the growing trend of competitiveness are children, who live under constant pressure. Studies have shown that stiff competition demotivates the average student and is inimical rather than favourable to good education. The system

today's reformists would change is the same as that so vigorously indicted in 1889 by H.P.B., in her *Key to Theosophy*:

Every young man and boy, nay, every one of the younger generation of schoolmasters will answer: "The object of modern education is to pass examinations," a system not to develop right emulation, but to generate and breed jealousy, envy, hatred almost, in young people for one another, and thus train them for a life of ferocious selfishness and struggle for honours and emoluments instead of kindly feeling. (p. 263, Indian ed.)

The Theosophical ideal for education that H.P.B. formulated goes even deeper than today's proposed reforms:

We would endeavour to deal with each child as a unit, and to educate it so as to produce the most harmonious and equal unfoldment of its powers, in order that its special aptitudes should find their full natural development. We should aim at creating *free* men and women, free intellectually, free morally, unprejudiced in all respects, and above all things, *unselfish*. And we believe that much if not all of this could be obtained by *proper and truly theosophical* education. (p. 268)

ACTUALLY, all of us have an ability to pick up valuable information we may not be able to verbalise clearly. Some of us call this ability the inner voice, intuition or simply a gut feeling....It is a topic of debate as to how exactly our intuition works. Whatever the method this inner voice has of garnering information, one thing is clear, that our perception of the world is not limited only to the conscious information which we get from our sense organs. We also have an inner sense offering us its wisdom, which quite often is valid. Being in harmony with this ability can add tremendously to our psychological strength as we deal with people and situations. Perhaps it is time we learned to honour and tune in to this special capacity within us.

—DR. RANI RAOTE

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

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THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.
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THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE
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SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"
IN MEMORY OF HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY, BY SOME OF HER PUPILS
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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

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