

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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THE TATHAGATA SHOWS THE WAY

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King Milinda said: "Did you, revered Nagasena, see the Buddha?"

"No, sire."

"Then did your teachers see the Buddha?"

"No, sire."

"Well, then, revered Nagasena, there is not a Buddha."

"But have you, sire, seen the Himalayan river Uha?"

"No, revered sir."

"Then did your father ever see it?"

"No, revered sir."

"Well then, sire, there is not a river Uha."

"There is, revered sir. Even if neither my father nor I have seen it, there is the river Uha all the same."

"Even so, sire, even if neither my teachers nor I have seen the Lord, there is the Lord all the same....He who sees Dhamma sees the Lord; for Dhamma, sire, was taught by the Lord."

—*Milindapanha*

ACCORDING to Buddhist history and tradition, Prince Siddhartha who became the Buddha was born on the full-moon day of the Hindu-Buddhist month of Vaisakh; on the same day 35 years later he attained enlightenment; on the same day when he was 80 years old he cast off his body of flesh. The Buddhist world celebrates this triple festival annually, and this year it falls on the 18th of May.

All students of Theosophy revere the memory of the Enlightened One and know of the spiritual kinship subsisting between his pure teachings and Theosophy. Stripped of its dogmas and ritualistic practices, Buddhism stands revealed as a grand expression of the ancient Wisdom-Religion.

It is but meet that this month we should direct our thoughts to some aspect of these teachings valuable to the devotee and the practitioner of the Esoteric Wisdom. The Buddha taught that he who takes refuge in the Enlightened Ones, in the Dhamma, the Law or the Teachings reiterated by Them, and in the Sangha or the Brotherhood of Co-Disciples, would in time be free from all pain; for "that, verily, is the safe refuge, the best refuge." The disciples of the Buddha down the ages have repeated the vow, "I take my refuge in the Buddha; I take my refuge in the Dhamma; I take my refuge in the Sangha"—words of power which dispel doubt and give the soul renewed strength to fight the ancient foes: *Mara*, Passion, and *Avidya*, Ignorance. Today laymen also repeat the words and they have lost at least some of their sacredness, just as has been the case with so many other things in other religions.

What does taking refuge in the Buddha imply? The Buddha proclaimed himself to be but one of the Deathless Race of Buddhas. In his lifetime he was addressed by the title of Tathagata—he who follows in the footsteps of his Illustrious Predecessors. The Buddhist recognizes a long line of Buddhas, as the Hindu speaks of the *Guruparampara*—the ever-lengthening chain of Gurus, each of whom is but a *shishya*, a pupil, to a mightier Lord. The office of the Guru was deemed essential and was greatly revered in the olden days when Soul-life was more of a reality than it is today.

In no country of the ancient world was the Ideal of the Guru higher, or better recognized, than in India; today it is corrupted to degradation and it is now said that at every street corner one can find a guru. These sham gurus, the worst kind of exploiters of the minds and hearts of men, have overrun this land because would-be pupils did not ascertain the credentials of their chosen guru. There have been many whose aspiration has been exploited but who could have saved themselves by a humble but cautious examination of the

claimants and their claims. The first step, to quote the words of H.P.B., is to "compare all things, and, putting aside emotionalism as unworthy of the logician and the experimentalist, hold fast only to that which passes the ordeal of ultimate analysis."

The Buddha taught never to believe merely on authority but to test the latter by means of one's personal reason and highest intuition. The true teacher is not he who invents new ideas—for great ideas are never invented; they are new only in the sense that they are never out of date—but he who, having rediscovered them through his own search and effort, is able to assimilate them, to make them part of his own store of knowledge and to reproclaim them for the daily needs of ordinary men. The Buddha, like other great Teachers, never claimed that he could dispel others' ignorance, sorrows or fears; he taught man to trace the source of his troubles and unhappiness to himself, to take his life in his own hands and himself to direct the process of his growth. His message of self-reliance, self-energization and self-redemption is his legacy to the ages.

The greatness of the Buddha consists not merely in the fact that, after efforts continued through many births, he rediscovered the Path to *Nirvana* and himself won the right to that state of Emancipation and Eternal Bliss—only to renounce it in order to remain with suffering humanity—but in his having rendered the attainment of *Nirvana* once more practicable for countless millions of human beings. The Path he showed could be trodden by *all*. Universality is the hallmark of his ageless Teaching.

Like all true Teachers his role was that of an Instructor as to the Way. To laymen his teaching was a simple one: All men suffer; but there is a way by which suffering, both personal and collective, can be overcome. Tracing the root of all misery in this jungle of life to *Trishna, Tanha, Kama*, the thirst and longing for sensuous existence, he taught that the force of passion overpowering the force of Compassion in the human heart produces strife, just as Compassion overpowering passion creates the peace and serenity of *Nirvana*.

The Buddha could be as profound in his teaching to his disciples as he could be simple in his exposition to lay people. The following

from the *Majjhima Nikaya* (iii, 107), as translated by F. L. Woodward in *Some Sayings of the Buddha*, throws light on his technique as a Promulgator of the Law:

Thus have I heard. Once the Exalted One was staying at Savatthi, in East Park, at the storeyed house of Migara's mother.

Then the brahmin Moggallana, the accountant, came to the Exalted One and gave Him friendly greeting, and after the exchange of courtesies sat down at one side. So seated, the brahmin Moggallana, the accountant, said this to the Exalted One:

"Just as, Master Gotama, one gets a gradual view of this storeyed house, a progress, a graduated path, and so on right up to the last step of the stairs, just so is the progressive training of us brahmins: that is to say, in our course of study (in the Vedas). Just as in a course of archery, the training of archers is a progressive one, so also, Master Gotama, with us brahmins the training, the progress, the approach is step by step; for instance, in counting. When we take a private pupil we make him count thus: 'Once one, twice two, thrice three, four times four,' and so on up to a hundred. Now is it possible, Master Gotama, for this Norm-Discipline of yours to point to a similar progressive training?"

"It is so, brahmin. Take the case, brahmin, of a clever horse-trainer. He takes a thoroughbred in hand, gives him his first lesson with bit and bridle, and then proceeds to the further course. Just so, brahmin, the Tathagata takes in hand a man who is to be trained and gives him his first lesson, thus: 'Come thou, brother! Be virtuous. Abide constrained by the restraint of the obligation. Become versed in the practice of right behaviour; seeing danger in trifling faults, do you undertake the training and be a pupil in the moralities.'

"As soon as he has mastered all that, the Tathagata gives him his second lesson, thus: 'Come thou, brother! Seeing an object with the eye, be not charmed by its general appearance or its details. Persist in the restraint of that dejection that comes from craving, caused by remaining with the sense of sight uncontrolled, those ill states which would overwhelm one like a flood. Guard the sense of sight, win control over the sense of sight. And so do with the other organs

of sense. When you hear a sound with the ear, or smell a scent with the nose, taste a taste with the tongue, or with body touch things tangible, and when with mind you are conscious of a thing, be not charmed with its general appearance or its details.'

"As soon as he has mastered all that, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson, thus: 'Come thou, brother! Be moderate in eating; earnest and heedful do you take your food, not for sport, not for indulgence, not for adding personal charm or comeliness to body, but do it for body's stablishing, for its support, for protection from harm, and for keeping up the practice of the righteous life, with this thought: "I will check my former feeling. To no new feeling will I give rise, that maintenance and comfort may be mine."'

"Then, brahmin, when he has won restraint in food, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson, thus: 'Come thou, brother! Abide given to watchfulness. By day, when walking or sitting, cleanse your heart from things that may hinder you. By night spend the first watch walking up and down or sitting, and do likewise. By night in the second watch, lie down on the right side in the posture of a lion, and placing one foot upon the other, mindful and self-possessed, set your thoughts on the idea of exertion. Then in the third watch of the night, rise up, and walking up and down, or sitting, cleanse the heart of things that may hinder.'

"Then, brahmin, when the brother is devoted to watchfulness, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson, thus: 'Come thou, brother! Be possessed of mindfulness and self-control. In going forth or going back, have yourself under control. In looking forward or looking back, in bending or relaxing, in wearing robes or carrying robe and bowl, in eating, chewing, tasting, in easing yourself, in going, standing, sitting, lying, sleeping or waking, in speaking or keeping silence, have yourself under control.'

"Then, brahmin, when he is possessed of self-control, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson, thus: 'Come thou, brother! Seek out a secluded lodging, a forest or root of a tree, a mountain or cave or mountain-grotto, a charnel field, a forest retreat, the open air, a heap of straw.' And he does so. And when he has eaten his food he sits down crosslegged, and keeping his body straight up he

proceeds to practise the Four Musings....

"Now, brahmin, for all brothers who are pupils, who have not yet attained mastery of mind, who abide aspiring for the security unsurpassed (which is Nibbana)...such is the manner of my training.

"But as to those brethren who are Arahants [perfected disciples], who have destroyed the *asavas* [the three fundamental tendencies: sensual desire, desire for existence, ignorance], who have lived the life, done their task, laid down the burden, won their own salvation, utterly destroyed the fetters of becoming, and are released by the perfect insight—for such as those these things are conducive to ease in the present life and to mindful self-control as well."

CIVILIZATION is a process the purpose of which is to combine single human individuals, families, races, people, and nations into one great unity, the unity of mankind. But, as has been shrewdly observed, the real trouble with the world today isn't that populations have multiplied but that they remain divided. In the present situation of general awakening, dominance will not be tolerated for long; dependence is humiliating; and when the world is fast shrinking, detachment becomes impracticable, indeed, almost impossible. We have, therefore, to fall back upon the message of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Fostering each other you shall attain to the highest good." This is *yajna*, which was promulgated at the very beginning of creation. In such ethical interdependence—I say "ethical" because it has to be induced by an inner understanding and urge and not to be imposed by any extraneous force—in such ethical interdependence on equal terms, in this mutual fostering, lie the true salvation and progress of men and societies....The *Gita* has strongly adjured that whosoever does not collaborate in rotating this wheel of sacrifice, lives his life in vain.

—R. N. DANDEKAR

THE PATH OF THE SOUL

THE path, the way, the road, is a very ancient metaphor and almost every religious tradition has used it to designate the path of purity which the Soul must take, the way to the spiritual world, the road of reform which makes a person as one newly born. That metaphor is not merely a poetic fancy, for the Path of the Soul is as real, as tangible as any road on the surface of this earth. A road leads to some place; it may be a short or a long way, but it ends somewhere. So also is the Path of the Soul: it is a long, long way, but it ends in the silence of peace, in the glory of light, in the sacredness of harmony and unity. Then again, any road has milestones and landmarks and some features by which it is recognized. So also on the Path of the Soul there are milestones of qualities and powers which indicate to each one of us how far we have travelled, and there are virtues and faculties which are the distinguishing marks for the travellers on the Path.

So the Path of the Soul is not indefinite, vague, fanciful; it is a definite Path, the only Path, and its landmarks and milestones are known, for it has been walked from the most ancient of days. The Path of the Soul leads from beauty to greater beauty, from one glory to a more sublime glory. There is some confusion about that Path and it has been variously described; in one place it is known as the Noble Eightfold Path, in another place as the Fourfold Way; some call it the Path of Purity, and others name it the Path of Love. But just as different painters and poets describe the same scene differently, so also here. Travellers on the Great Path have painted one or another part of it and in different colours. But the aim, the purpose, and the teaching or message of every traveller has been the same. For all diligent treaders of that Path of the Soul there has been but one aim—the gaining of Wisdom; but one purpose—the service of humanity; but one teaching—same and identical, constant and consistent, in every country and in every century.

How foolish and childish become the claims of religious creeds, each claiming superiority over the others! For instance, proselytizing creeds like Christianity or Islam claim that their creed is superior

to every other. That is not so, as any tyro in comparative study of religions knows. Then there are non-proselytizing religions like Hinduism and Zoroastrianism; with a superior attitude their followers tolerate other religions. It is a sham tolerance, inasmuch as neither organized Hinduism nor organized Zoroastrianism is in any way superior to Christianity or Islam. All religious creeds without exception are corrupt and no great teacher ever came to establish a religion. Jesus came to give a knock to Judaism which had become corrupted; Buddha came to demolish the superstition and foul practices of Hinduism of 600 B.C. No real Prophet ever undertook to establish a separatist and exclusive faith. This is important to know, for there is a great deal of nonsense talked about the power and influence of different religions which are supposed to give light to the Soul on the Path. As a matter of fact, religions are a greater hindrance to many a soul than they are helps. Religions often act like drugs and put the Soul to sleep; what is worse, in a subtle fashion separatist creeds arouse a sense of superiority, a holier-than-thou attitude of self-righteousness. Many are afflicted with the curse of religious materialism as others suffer from the curse of scientific materialism. Those who aspire to tread the Path of the Soul must meditate on that occult *mantram*: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate."

That really is the starting point. The very first step on the Path of the Soul is recognition of the Soul. The Soul is above sex, above caste and creed, above country and nation, and belongs to no particular land nor to any particular race. So when it is said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," what is implied is: discard that which divides and separates man from man. True religion is that which unites man to man. Religious texts need to be studied, and if there is one thing more than any other which strikes the impartial and intelligent student in these texts, it is the teaching about the Path of the Soul. The Path is mentioned in the Vedas, in the Gathas, by Moses and Jesus, by every true seer and sage. Yet a striking thing is that there are very few who bother about treading that strait and narrow Path.

All religious reformers, from the Vedic Sages to the Great Ones

who helped H.P.B. write *The Secret Doctrine*, have taught about the Path of the Soul, and as the very first step they have said that the nature of the soul be understood. What is the Soul? Where does the Path begin? Whither does it take us? Purifying and curbing of the senses is the first step, and the purifier and the controller is the Soul. Let the Soul control the senses and rise above the differences that separate us from the rest of our fellow-beings. If people would really understand this fundamental teaching, what a different world it would become! But we do not take advantage of all our opportunities, and though sage after sage, prophet after prophet, teacher after teacher have come to this world of mortals to show the Path of the Soul, we have missed the opportunity.

Every religion in one form or another takes us to the battleground of the senses, and calls upon the Soul within to fight the darkness of ignorance, of superstition, of unbrotherliness. Just as all the functions of our five senses have their centre in the brain, so also all the functions of the different religions come together in this one common teaching—let the Soul walk on its Path; and the first step to be taken is to recognize the nature of the Soul.

There are two Souls in each of us—the Incarnated Soul and the overbrooding Transcendent Soul. Within each one there dwells a God, a divine entity; but transcending it is its parent and its source. The Incarnated Soul is like the child of the Transcendent Soul. "Having pervaded the whole universe with a single portion of myself, I remain separate," says Krishna. So also in each of us but a fragment of our Real Soul pervades the universe which is the body, yet remains separate from the body in its transcendent glory.

The Incarnated Soul is immanent in the body—present everywhere, from the crown to the toe. In the blood and the breath, in the head and the heart, is the Soul; but for each human being there is one particular part or organism of the body where the Soul mostly abides. For many, the Soul lives in the hall of passions and from there spreads its influence everywhere; for others, the Soul lives in the hall of mind; for a comparatively few, the Soul resides in the hall of Buddhi, or the Spiritual Heart. In the land of the body there are three cities—city of Kama, of Manas, of Buddhi. The Incarnated

Soul resides in one of these cities, and from there rules the whole body. All of us have some part of our Soul in each of the three cities, but in one of the three we dwell most of the time. It is that central residence which marks the tendency and tone of all our actions.

How does this happen? Why are some centred in Kama, others in Manas, and others again in Buddhi? It happens according to the Soul's efforts in the past. When a person corrupts the heart, he becomes an outcaste from that Heart-city. When he debases his mind, he is thrown out of the city of Mind. Some people debase even the city of Kama, and become outcastes from there. The *Gita* teaches that a person's caste is determined not by the family into which he is born, but by the centre of his own body into which he is drawn by his past Karma and *gunas*, and in which he lives. Can he change his abode or residence? Can he leave, let us say, the city of Mind and go to live in the city of Heart? Of course he can. Freedom of the will is the cardinal principle and applies everywhere.

So each one of us, as an Incarnated Soul, lives in one particular part of the body. This Incarnated Soul is called the Dweller in the body, *Dehi*. But let us not overlook that there is the other, superior, overbrooding, transcendent Soul whose name is *Ishvara*, the Lord. He is connected with the *Dehi* by the slender thread of *Fohat* or *Daiviprakriti*, the superior nature of Krishna; and He, the Lord, *Ishvara*, the pure and powerful sacrificer, is not yet able to manifest himself through the *Dehi*, the Dweller in the body. But the essential natures of both the *Dehi* and the *Ishvara*, the Immanent and the Transcendent Soul, are one and the same. It is said in the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* that there are two birds who sit on the Tree of Life; they are companions, bound together; one of them on the lower branch eats sweet fruits, while the other looks on without eating. Similarly, on the Tree of Life are two Souls—one is the Incarnated Soul, the Dweller in the body, who eats sweet fruits; and the other, who sits without eating, is the Lord, or *Ishvara*. The Upanishad describes the embodied Soul as sunken or fallen, as impotent and deluded, and this Soul in the body grieves when he feels the presence of the Transcendent Soul or *Ishvara*, who is full of peace and contentment.

This allegory speaks of the Incarnated Soul, the Soul in the body,

as eating sweet fruits; this refers only to those beings who reside in their hearts; it does not refer to the two other classes of beings—those who are fixed in their desires and those who reside in their heads. It is said that people who live in the city of Kama or desires eat bitter fruits and their nature is bitter; they do not like any other foods and ultimately they suffer. The second class of beings who live in the city of the head eat and enjoy sour fruits, and they too ultimately suffer; for them confusion is the lot. Only those who have begun to live in the heart eat sweet fruits. So the Path of the Soul begins only when we live in the heart. But most of us do not live in the heart; we live in the passions and feelings and desires. For such, the first step is the weakening of desires, putting the desires to sleep by making active their thoughts and minds and by awakening the impersonal vision which comes from the heart.

As we read and repeat, as we study and apply, as we control our feelings and gain mental concentration, slowly but surely we make Manas the capital city and the Soul is less and less affected by the passions and feelings. As our attraction to dwell in the city of Kama lessens, we find ourselves drawn towards the city of Buddhi. Repeated efforts mould us and we become that on which we dwell and meditate. This it is which takes the Incarnated Soul to the Heart and helps that Soul to make the city of Buddhi his permanent capital.

All schools of yoga ask the aspirant to seek the Soul or Self in the Heart, but most people cannot find it even when they want to. They may hear lectures and they may aspire, but as long as they do not study and meditate they are bound to fail. But as they study Soul-philosophy and learn of the true nature of the Incarnated and Transcendent Souls, and as they begin to meditate upon *Ishvara*, the Lord in the body, they will feel and then know the Self in the Heart.

We have seen four steps on the Path of the Soul for the worldly person: (1) removing ourselves from desires and passions with the help of the mind, by study and understanding; (2) meditating on great ideas, memorizing and repeating them; (3) practising every day, every hour, in every place and under all circumstances, the

lessons of those great ideas; (4) seeking the Soul in the City of Buddhi, the Heart, where alone the Incarnated Soul in its pure state is to be found, linked to the glorious Transcendent Soul or *Ishvara*. This fourth step is the *first* mentioned in several Upanishads and other texts which take it for granted that people are intelligent enough to recognize that without control of feelings and possession of virtues, without concentration of mind and meditation on great ideas, without practice or application, real yoga, treading of the Path of the Soul, is not possible.

When, by practice, purification of Kama and of Manas has taken place and the presence of the Soul in the Heart is felt, that Soul eats sweet fruits, *i.e.*, its nourishment in this world of actions is composed of sweet deeds of *dana*-charity, *tapas*-austerity and *yagna*-sacrifice. These three are "my deeds," says Krishna in the *Gita*. With such daily exercises the Incarnated Soul in the Heart catches the glimpse of the Transcendent Soul, its parent and father. And when the glory of this Lord, *Ishvara*, our own Transcendent Higher Self, is seen even for a moment or two, then return to our Incarnated existence seems like a prison, and despondency results. The Upanishad verse says that the incarnated *Purusha*, the *Dehi*, the Soul in the body, grieves for his impotence and his delusion when he perceives the peace and contentment of *Ishvara*, both of whom, like the two birds, find themselves on the Tree of Life. We feel despondent because we have seen the glory of the Self, *Ishvara*, and have lost it. But there is the aspect of confident hope locked up in that despondency. If we have seen the glory once, we can secure that vision again, by continuing the work. Now is the stage of real worship, *i.e.*, becoming worthy of relationship with *Ishvara*, the Lord in the Heart.

So this is the beginning of the Inner Path. It is this Incarnated Soul, whose capital city is the Heart, who is taught in dreams and visions of the night. It is this Soul who in the meditation stage is given pictures and images of the pure world of *Akasha*, which are called Ideas by Plato, and whose pale and often distorted copies are to be found among the thousand and one idols of Hindu ritualism. This Heart in which the Incarnated Soul meditates is called by some

Vishnu-puram, the Hall of Vishnu; and by others, *Shiva-puram*, the City of Shiva. This man in the Heart grows as year after year and life after life he continues with his practice of devotion. It is in this Hall of Wisdom which is Devotion that one meets the Real Guru. Those who claim to be gurus obscure the light between the aspirant and the Real Gurus. Therefore did H.P.B. say, "I am not the Guru, I am not the Light. I am but the window through which the Light comes." In her message and books, the true Path of the Soul is described; and with the help of the key that she provides, we are also able to comprehend the steps of the Inner Path as given in other ancient texts. What is still more valuable, with the help of the knowledge she has offered we are able to distinguish falsehood and false ways, half-truths and dangerous ways, from the right ways.

Let us not think that the Path is too difficult for any of us. If we will but feel the strength of our own Soul and remove from ourselves the bondage of social customs, religious rites, false nationalism, etc., and if we know that pride and egotism exist in us, but that they can be killed by the power of mind and heart which also is ours, and if we begin to view ourselves as Souls incarnate in the heart, linked to the great source of Power which is our own Higher Self, then soon our lives will change and we shall find ourselves on that Path which leads to the real Gurus, the true Mahatmas. They wait and watch and it is for us to make the move, to take the initiative, to learn to listen while we labour for the good of all. Wonderful, wonderful is the Path; thrice glorious the life, full of difficulties but full of power, full of trials but full of peace, full of longings but also full of realizations. Like the river that life flows, now slow, now fast, over rugged surface and also smooth, till the Ocean of Compassion is seen and we empty ourselves without losing either consciousness, knowledge or the power to serve.

HAPPY is the man who cultivates the things that are hidden and lets the things that are apparent take care of themselves.

—KUROZUMI KYO

WHAT CONSTITUTES PROGRESS?

Great intellect and too much knowledge are a two-edged weapon in life and instruments for evil as well as for good. When combined with selfishness, they will make of the whole of Humanity a footstool for the elevation of him who possesses them, and a means for the attainment of his objects; while, applied to altruistic humanitarian purposes, they may become the means of the salvation of many.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

STUPENDOUS and rapid has been the accumulation of scientific and technological knowledge in recent times. Science has become peculiarly important in our modern world and its supreme position constitutes a challenge to humankind. Has this phenomenal increase of scientific knowledge ennobled or diminished man? Has it inspired or degraded him? Has it promoted man's inner growth? In other words, can we equate this increase of knowledge with the progress of man? This is a most important problem, which is claiming the attention of the thoughtful among us.

The pertinent question that is often asked is: "Can science be called a blessing without recognizing its social obligations and moral principles?" The colossal surge of practical invention in recent years has put equipment in our hands which is far more powerful than anything in history, and there is promise of more to come. It is almost like giving children sticks of dynamite to play with and then lighting the fuse.

What is needed is the development of the right qualities of mind, a linking of scientific genius with humane and courageous thought. Science liberates us from the tyranny of the external environment but it does not liberate us from the tyranny of inner passions.

Once again is the basic issue being raised and attention drawn to the need to reconsider our values. Has scientific knowledge been won at too heavy a price? Science it is that has given modern man the power to wage war on a scale impossible for any previous civilization. The "promise" of more knowledge, of the conquest of outer space, may indeed become the means of total destruction! Is

man called upon to know more and more about the world outside and less and less about himself? Is the tremendous power which is now his through his conquest of Nature to be directed against himself and thus render all his efforts futile and turn all his achievements into a menace and a mockery?

Is it not high time to pause in our mad rush towards more and more knowledge and ever-increasing power and to ask ourselves a few fundamental questions: Where are we going? Where do we *want* to go? What is our destination? We boast of our scientific knowledge and call it progress. But is such knowledge true progress? What constitutes progress for Man?

By its very derivation from the Latin, the word "progress" means "going forward or onward"—toward an objective. On the long journey of evolution it is Man who is moving forward. We have sorely confused the issue by taking the improvement of the road itself to indicate progress for the man travelling on it. Many there are today who believe with Dickens that "our hearts have benefited as much by macadam as our boots." But this is not true! The quality of one's heart does not change with the mere physical improvement of the road one walks upon! Far more good-hearted and noble-minded men and women walk barefoot on dusty or muddy country roads than on the crowded streets of large cities!

All inventions can be rightly used; they can also be evilly used. The determining factor is in the motive and intention of the user, that is, of Man himself. He it is who uses the knowledge of science and turns it into a curse or a blessing. And so it matters little or not at all whether the man is wearing shoes or going barefoot, travelling on foot or on a bicycle, in a bullock-cart or a supersonic jet. What matters is *why* he is travelling, to what end. Is he on the right road and walking on it in the right direction?

Real progress can only be the progress of Man himself, his inner growth, the increase of his moral perception, the deepening of his sense of responsibility, the improvement of the quality of his character.

We are not called upon to work miracles: to rearrange the pattern of the starry firmament or to change the order of Nature's laws. But

we *are* called upon and expected to purify our motives, to become truly human and learn to live together in peace and amity. We are expected to endeavour to become brothers and sisters to all men and women throughout the world.

Let us direct our efforts at creating such conditions as will foster a determination to make this earth a better place to live in. Such efforts must be not merely along physical lines, but primarily towards improving the moral climate and raising the level of our thinking.

By all means let us continue to grow in scientific and technological knowledge, but not at the cost of losing the vision of our goal. To revert to the illustration of the road: let us have better means of transport, let us improve external means of communication and minimize the restrictions upon freedom of movement, but only because we want to use these facilities for the benefit of all.

Let us strive to labour unitedly for the spiritual elevation of the human race, never forgetting that life is an aspiration and its mission is to enable us to grow unto the Truth. Progress, for Man, means journeying deliberately towards Self-realization, the realization of the One Self, and the oneness of the Human Family.

Is it for us to assume in our theosophical work that we, poor, weak, ignorant tyros, are able to select from the mass of our fellows the one or the many who may be fit to receive theosophy? Such a position of judge is vain, ridiculous, and untheosophic. Our plain duty is to present the truths of theosophy to all men, leaving it to them to accept or reject. Desire neither notice, fame nor wealth. Unknown you are in retirement. Being fameless you are undisturbed in your seclusion, and can walk the broad face of the earth fulfilling your duty, as commanded, unrecognized.

—W. Q. JUDGE

MEMORY OF PAST LIVES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Again, Mr. Judge declared:

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

Mr. Crosbie in turn repeated to a correspondent that the process of development was said to consist in the recovery of the memory of the past, but this, he understood, could not mean "the sordid details of physical existence...or what 'part' one played in the

various dramas of existence, but a something larger, finer, greater—the memory of the divine Ego, and those functions of our real life which go on during sleep."

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

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

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

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

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

There are different ways in which the reminiscent aspect of memory may find expression, one of which is among the classes of

dreams enumerated by Madame Blavatsky at the end of the Appendix on Dreams included in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*. These were designated as "Retrospective; dreams of events belonging to past incarnations." Waking visions or "dreams" are also possible for sensitive individuals.

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

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

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

Again he has written of memory existing in other inner departments of our natures:

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

To recover that whole memory, to make that great knowledge of the past usable, here and now in the brain and in the body, is the true work of "salvation." Only when we understand what we

really are, shall we be able to take a conscious, active, purposeful part in the evolution of our race. Only when we gain the perception that we are the Eternal Spirit, that Death never touches us at all, that we may have a conscious life in spirit, not in matter—only when we begin to think and act from that basis, can true memory come through to the brain.... That true memory is possible for every living being.

Krishna assures Arjuna that "he who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time"; and we are told in *The Voice of the Silence* that true devotion may bring back to the toiling pilgrim that knowledge which was his in former births.

Why "may bring" instead of the positive assurance that it *will* bring him this knowledge? What prevents such a recovery of memory? We find a thought-stimulating hint in "A Hindu Chela's Diary," published in Mr. Judge's *Path* in 1886 and reprinted in our pages in April and May 1940. The Chela was there told:

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

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

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

And finally we may quote the expression used in the article "What Is Theosophy?" by "A Paramahansa of the Himalayas" (reprinted from *The Theosophist* for August 1882 in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for November 1971): "a balmy calmness, which is the heart's eye, to penetrate the mysteries of nature."

THOUGHTS ON KARMA

ONE of the Aphorisms on Karma (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*) states that "effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another." The question arises: How can an individual be affected except by his own thoughts and actions?

We have to remember that nature's method of accounting is double-entry. We do not have a thought and do not perform an act except in collaboration with someone else. Our thoughts and acts produce a change in us, but that is at the initial stage. Since they are visited upon another, they produce a modification in him, willingly or unwillingly; and then, in the course of time, that which we sowed with other beings we reap from other beings.

If someone visited evil on us, and we knew it was evil but did not resent it; if we did not have any condemnation or blame for him, in spite of knowing how we suffered at his hands—then that Karma is over so far as we are concerned. Since one half of the problem has already been solved, it is immediately an amelioration of circumstances for the other half, although not always to his consciousness. Otherwise, why should Buddha have said, for example, "Let the sins of the whole world fall on me"?

We come down to this fact, that there is no such thing as the Karma of anyone, exclusive of the Karma of all. We might hurt our foot, which is one member of the body, and then we could counteract or mitigate the injury to the foot by using the hand. There is nothing hard to understand about that when we realize that self-consciousness is *Buddhi-Manas*—and there is only one *Buddhi-Manas* in manifestation. That *Buddhi-Manas* is the whole of humanity, not this individual or that individual. From the standpoint of enduring consciousness, there is only one man-consciousness here on earth; that is the consciousness of all humanity. So each physical personal being stands in relation to the collective consciousness of humanity—*Buddhi-Manas*—as one of the members of the body stands to the whole body.

Each one of us is a portion of the body corporate of humanity, and any part of the body corporate—physically or metaphysically—

can be used to injure other portions, or it can be used to ameliorate, mitigate or counteract any injury inflicted on, or about to be inflicted on, the rest. We know that is so. A person meets with an accident and would die if someone did not stop the flow of blood. Is not the effect of the collision by which this person was knocked unconscious and so wounded that his life-blood was ebbing away—is not this *Karma* mitigated by the action of the one who stays the flow of blood? Or one's rent may be overdue and he is about to be thrown out on the street. A neighbour lends the money, or the landlord gets a change of heart—is not this *Karma* ameliorated?

Take our U.L.T. meetings. Some of us get strength from the collective mind, from the collective motive, which of ourselves we could not muster. That is a mitigation, a mitigation through others of the individual *Karma*. Otherwise, what is the sense of any association? All associations are either for good or for evil, and that means they can make good bad; or bad worse—or they can make good better; and evil less bad.

Given a certain situation, we say, it is "karmic." Has the individual some choice in the matter? Is he the helpless victim of that situation, or can his will operate to change it? He does have a choice. If one wants to read a psychological study of the subject from the standpoint of Theosophy, it would be worth while to read a short story by Edgar Allan Poe, "The Pit and the Pendulum." There is a man in a situation so awful that it is almost unbelievable, but he reconciles himself to it. The story does not show him the victim—that is, the loser—in the struggle.

Our usual view is that everything that happens to us is *Karma*; we do not think of *Karma* except in terms of effects experienced. Yet there is the other side to it—the causes of those effects. When anything happens to us, it is the *ego* who feels, whether in the body or out of the body. Out of the body, the *ego* knows the causes of those effects, and so he struggles, even unwittingly, when he is back in the body and no longer can perceive the causes. He struggles, although he does not understand why he struggles, against these bad effects.

An old school of philosophy all down the ages has taught that

man is the creature of the environment; that is, in fact, the philosophy of materialism. In the philosophy of religion, he is just as much a creature as he is in materialism. In one case, he is the creature of matter, of his environment, of his birth. In the other, he is the creature of "God." The materialist—the genuine one—knows that it is no use to struggle. He believes in Kismet, fate, destiny, no free will. Yet he goes right on struggling, and does not perceive the contradiction in himself. The religious man believes that everything that happens to him happens by the will of his God, but he is as busy as a bee all the time; he does not perceive the logical absurdity of his own position.

Higher Manas is perception on the plane of causes; lower Manas is experience on the plane of effects. In other words, the teaching of *The Secret Doctrine* is very simple. Whenever the immortal ego incarnates, it becomes a compound unity of spirit and matter, which together act on seven distinct planes of Life and Consciousness. If we regard it from that point of view, the problem begins to clear up.

We enter into union with our brother lives of lower grades of intelligence than ourselves. While in union with them, we see through their eyes, on their plane. How else could we see? In other words, we become for the time being the other fellow—the animal self, the astral self, the Kamic self, the physical self. Not until the combination is loosed, whether by sleep, or by death, or by the regaining while in the body of Manasic knowledge, are we able to live free from the contingencies of the environment.

We could put it, according to Chapter VII of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, in some such fashion as this: call what H.P.B. otherwise calls the immortal ego, or the reincarnating ego, by the name of "Manas," without qualification. The moment that Manas enters into union with the forms of life on a lower plane than its own, it is modified by the union. Lower Manas is the modification of higher Manas; higher Manas is that part of Manas which is not modified by contact with matter. What else is that part than that which is in contact with Buddhi?

If we regard lower Manas and higher Manas not as two separate entities, but think of lower Manas as a modification induced in

Manas by its union with matter—that is what the word "incarnation" means—then we can understand the distinction. Mr. Judge goes on to show that the modification of this lower Manas—the original modification—is subject to four further modifications: the modification induced by the body alone; the modification induced by the astral body; and the modification induced by the principle of Kama, or the intelligence which belongs in the astral and physical natures. Those are three of the modifications, and Mr. Judge says they are all due to memory. When we study our body, it is seen to be a product of memory; our astral body is a product of memory; passions and desires are the product of memory—these are nothing but the reanimation of the three forms of memory in matter. What reanimates them is our incarnation.

And what is the fourth modification of Manas? Lower Manas is still integral with Manas, and so there is some Manasic action, even in that part of Manas which is present in the body and intoxicated, as we might say, by incarnation. But we want to know *why*. That is Manas. Whenever we are trying to find out the cause of a condition that afflicts us or others—not trying to dodge it, but trying to find out what caused it; whenever we are trying to cure the bad effects we are experiencing by admitting our share in bringing them about, and are determined to set up better causes; there is the action of Manas in the body—pure Manas.

Important changes in one's life come every seven years. This is not strange at all. All the events of Nature move in just those cyclic orders. It is the Law of the whole universe. It pertains just as much to the atom as to ourselves and to the sun. This very universe we live in—in a state of intense activity now—will have a rest, retire into silence and secrecy, and then after that emerge again into another new mode of activity. It is the same way with ourselves. We are living here on this earth now, intensely active, and we are going to die; we will have our rest, and we will come back again to earth. We will reincarnate, as Theosophists say, because we have left unfinished business here. There are beings acting here that we were acting with before; we do not act alone; we all act together, and every time we act mentally, or morally, or physically, we involve the whole

universe in our actions—some, of course, more remotely and some more immediately.

Just as a seed in the vegetable kingdom grows to a certain kind of fruitage and no other, so it is with us. "Causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for rigid Justice rules the World." There is no accident; there is no miracle, and there is no God that brings these things to pass in our lives. We have set up the causes for them; we have brought about these events. So we can actually be the makers of our own destiny for good or ill, and we are making that destiny every minute. So long as we work for the good of all beings in the universe, we are acting for our divine destiny; but if we act for self alone, then for an infernal destiny.

If we really come to know this Law, we shall be more intelligent beings, and we shall bring to bear upon this earth that Law of Harmony and translate it into what we all would love to see—Universal Brotherhood. That is not only a name to Theosophists—that is what they are trying to make all the time.

WE Theosophists say that "Good" and "Harmony," and "Evil" and "Disharmony," are synonymous. Further we maintain that all pain and suffering are results of want of Harmony, and that the one terrible and only cause of the disturbance of Harmony is *selfishness* in some form or another. Hence Karma gives back to every man the *actual consequences* of his own actions, without any regard to their moral character; but since he receives his due for *all*, it is obvious that he will be made to atone for all sufferings which he has caused, just as he will reap in joy and gladness the fruits of all the happiness and harmony he had helped to produce.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

CYCLIC MOTIONS

OF all sciences, astronomy is perhaps the best calculated to reveal to the human mind the regular, harmonious, orderly rhythm of Nature. Observation of the starry heavens, contemplation on the activities of the heavenly bodies, brings us to the recognition that there is in the Universe an immutable, ever active, ever present principle of Motion, and that it is that Law of Motion which makes every orb rotate on its own axis and revolve around the sun of its own solar system, as it is that Law which compels solar systems themselves to revolve around an invisible centre of energy. No room is left for luck or chance, whim or fancy, in the movements of the planets and solar systems, where order and harmony prevail to such an extent that the course of the heavenly spheres once understood, it becomes possible to make precise calculations and predict the return of astronomical cycles with mathematical accuracy.

Every star, every planet, every sun has its own individual movements, its own appointed course, and partakes in the greater course of a collectivity of bodies; and yet in this motion within motion, in this constant, ceaseless movement, absolute harmony prevails, order and rhythm are rigorously observed.

What wonder, then, that from time immemorial the mysterious unrevealed Deity has been pictured and described in its only truly philosophical aspect—that of eternal, ceaseless Motion, the thrill of the creative Breath in Nature. Deity is Life, Energy, Force, ever present, ever active, ever potent, and that Life is Motion. The Divine Law, the Basic Law of all laws, that Law inherent in Life, is the Law of Motion. Life ever pulsates, ever throbs, ever thrills, ever moves and moves, so that its one and only attribute which is itself is Motion. "Motion is eternal and infinite in the unmanifested, and finite and periodical in the manifested," says an occult axiom. Non-manifestation and manifestation are themselves the result and aspects of Motion. Universes and Solar Systems appear and disappear, moved by that same invisible Law which is the Law of all Life. The great Brahma breathes out and the Universe comes

into manifestation; he breathes in and the Universe goes out of manifestation. This breathing in and breathing out is rhythmic and cyclic and recurs at regular intervals. The period of manifestation or the Day of Brahma lasts as long as the period of non-manifestation or the Night of Brahma.

This exemplifies vividly what a cycle is—the measurement in time of a motion of Life in space. Everywhere Life is moving and its various motions form geometrical figures in space. The completion of each figure lasts a definite period of time, and that period we call a cycle. A cycle may be a moment, a few moments, or embracing aeons upon aeons. The very origin of the word "cycle" indicates that the ancient Greeks, from whom the Europeans derive both the word and the concept, understood its real significance.

The word "cycle" is derived from the Greek *kuklos*, meaning a ring or a circle. And *kuklos* in its turn is akin to the more ancient Sanskrit word *chakra* or wheel. The ancient Greeks knew and understood the doctrine of the ever recurrent cycles operating everywhere in nature and forming circuits or circles. They taught the rotatory motion of the minutest atoms as well as of the greatest heavenly spheres, and the very word *Theos* or God is derived, Plato tells us, from a root meaning "to move" or "to run." He adds that the first astronomers who observed the motions of the heavenly bodies referred to the planets as "gods," recognizing that Motion and Rhythm are the expression of Divine Life. The Greeks derived this knowledge from the Egyptians, who borrowed it from the Chaldeans, and the latter in turn received it from the Brahmins who belonged to the esoteric school of ancient India. The Brahmanical knowledge of the *yugas* and *kalpas*, of the greater and smaller cycles, even exoterically is the nearest approach to the true doctrine of cycles. The very fact that the ancient knowledge disappeared is in itself an exemplification of the Law.

A cycle is then a movement or motion taking place in a specific period of time and completing a circle. It is motion returning on itself, coming back at the point from which it started, and thus tracing a complete circuit or circumference.

That this motion is essentially circular is strikingly exemplified

in the Earth's movements. Three great motions belong to our Earth—cycles of rotation, of revolution, and sidereal cycles. They mark the cycles of day and night, of year following year, and sidereal cycles of 25,868 years.

As above, so below; as in heaven, so on earth; as in nature, so in man. Man has his cycles of daily experiences of the lower personal self—waking and sleeping, cycles of eating, etc. Next there is the cycle of the individual Ego—one incarnation followed by another incarnation after a period of rest. Then there is the whole cycle of evolution of the human *jivatma*, the divine Spirit in man.

There are also cycles of Initiation and cycles of the appearance on Earth of great beings. One class of human intelligences come and go, incarnate and reincarnate continually. Another class of beings appear at greater intervals, at the culmination of important cycles. They it is who revivify and keep alive innate ideas—the divine inheritance of humanity as a whole. Then there are the cycles of *Avataras*, Divine Incarnations, who strike the keynote at the opening of greater cycles.

Cycles must operate in man, and since man and earth are akin and man is united to the universe, we have striking correspondences.

What causes cycles? It is Life which is Motion, from within without. In man that Life has ceased to act in terms of natural and therefore rhythmic and harmonious motion. Life has become self-conscious and each man moves according to his own choice. He becomes the generator of his own cycles. He acts and thus obeys the law of Life which is that of Motion, or Action. But he can move in any direction he chooses; he can act as he determines. His action is a moving energy, it goes out from the centre of his own being and must return to that same centre. Action and reaction are equal and opposite. Karma moves in circles—cause-effect-cause again. Thought, feeling, word and act are so many forces moving cyclically.

Application of the Law of Cycles in our own lives implies regulation of our own movements—regular habits, punctuality, order, method in all our acts.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Why study history? What can it teach us? Is its function merely to give us a picture of external events? Those who brush it aside as simply a "fortuitous flux" void of plan or sequence, rhythms or patterns, cycles or evolution, indeed miss much. It has been said that "those who ignore history are condemned to relive it," for history, like everything else, proceeds in cycles.

In the opinion of Rene Zapata, director of UNESCO's Culture of Peace Unit, the teaching of history needs to be re-thought and textbooks revised so as to inspire understanding and recognition between peoples instead of war and division. Seeing our past as a series of dates, battles and warriors distorts it, masking the history of peoples that most of us have yet to learn. The February issue of *Unesco Sources* observes that there is "history beyond the battlefield":

History textbooks are the mirror of our societies. They reflect our way of looking at the past and glorifying it in such a way that it will serve as an example for future generations. "The history which is taught in most of the world, however, and even in the democratic countries, is a subject wherein the actors are essentially political and military figures, and the principal theatres battlefields," says Mirta Lourenco of UNESCO's Culture of Peace Unit.

Moreover, these heroes are often tyrants or slave traders. Full of clichés, this history fosters a vision of belligerence, prejudicial to the popular will for peace. "In assessing the causes and monstrosity shown in the conduct of two world wars, for example, governments, international associations and educators placed a considerable portion of the blame on the type of education provided to young Europeans. In particular the teaching of history was found guilty of contaminating the youth with all those negative attributes brewing conflicts," says Dr. Evangelos Kapos, the Senior Balkan Area Adviser at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy in Athens....

"UNESCO and its various commissions composed of

historians, teachers, publishers, and educators, propose to conceive history no longer as a succession of conflicts between states but as a mesh of relationships with the potential for cooperation, solidarity and integration," says unit chief Christophe Wondji... Revising textbooks, bringing history closer to that of peoples' daily lives, will help us to get to know each other better and hopefully become more tolerant.

To make world unity a reality, the peoples of the world must become familiar with one another; and this means becoming familiar with one another's history, since human beings do not live just in the immediate present. The whole conception of history must change and it should include all those branches of knowledge, all those departments of human thought and activity, which ultimately lead to the well-being and progress of humanity. That would mean a readjustment of our ideas of how the ideal history ought to be written. No history can be complete unless it embraces three broad divisions: the relation of man to his environment; the relation of man to man; and the relation of man to the ultimate purpose of his life. History, if it is to play its part adequately, must give us the intimate, inside picture of the human heart and feelings and make man alive to us.

We stand today at a crucial point in our history where our future on this planet is uncertain, says Ervin Laszlo in his article "Moral Criteria on an Endangered Planet" (*Holistic Science and Human Values*, Transaction 4, 1999). Laszlo, science adviser to UNESCO and author of many books, sounds a note of warning and stresses the need for a new ethic:

While on the one hand we could pave the way towards a system of social, economic, and political organization that is peaceful and capable of ensuring an adequate level of sustainability of the human life-supporting environment, on the other we could find ourselves on a descending path towards growing social, political and environmental crises and possibly catastrophes. The choice at this point of bifurcation is still open.

It merits deep reflection and decisive action.

Opting towards a positive scenario calls for an improved set of behaviours. This in turn requires a set of moral criteria, authoritative enough to be accepted by people and assimilated into their everyday life.... Today, the power of religious-doctrine-based codes for moral behaviour has been diminished by the advance of science. Yet, even if science has displaced religion as a source of authority in the minds of modern people, scientists have not come up with alternative codes and criteria. There have been a few attempts, yet in the twentieth century they have been largely abandoned....

Since the time is short and the choice pressing, a conscious formulation of a scientifically based ethics is a high priority; it is needed to accelerate the discussion, and ultimately the acceptance, of a suitable set of criteria for guiding individual and social behaviour.

The required criteria are to provide guidelines for the interaction of people with people, and people with nature. This means criteria based on a naturalistic science-based ethics: a planetary ethics....

The practical application of planetary ethics must be the next development. Its principles need to be explicitly stated and widely propagated. The recognition must dawn that all living things, and all systems made up of living things, have value in and of themselves, including the biosphere, the largest system on planet Earth. And all things that make up the relevant environment of these systems have instrumental value in view of their contribution to the subsistence and evolution of the biosphere and its manifold systems.

For centuries, it was the world's great religions that disseminated moral criteria in the form of codes and commandments. The trend is now changing. Not only did the second Parliament of the World's Religions convened in Chicago in 1993 note that "there will be no better global order without a global ethic," but the Union of Concerned Scientists was of the same opinion. "A new ethic is required," claimed the statement signed in April 1993 by 1670 scientists from 71 countries, an ethic which "must motivate a great

movement, convincing reluctant leaders and reluctant governments and reluctant peoples themselves to effect the needed changes."

The responsibility of those who educate the young is especially great; they share with parents the custody of that crucial phase of life when the soul begins to unfold itself. The word "education" means to draw out—to draw the true self, or the inner potential, into outer expression. By over-emphasizing one aspect of human nature, we draw out into activity only a portion of this potential. In this way, the young are left less able to achieve that wholeness of nature which must be achieved if the wholeness and interconnectedness of life is to be perceived, and a spiritually-oriented life lived.

World Goodwill Newsletter (1999, No. 4) looks at some of the fundamental principles which should condition the education of children and examines a few key issues that arise out of the drive towards what has been variously called "lifelong learning," "the learning society" and "the learning age." The opening article, "The Heart of Education," states:

What is needed is an education which engages the whole person right from the start, developing the latent powers of the individual sequentially throughout life, so that these gifts may be freely used in service to the world. An education of this kind would naturally be a powerful way of building a different kind of society, one modelled on the principles of freedom, unity, and right relations....

Shouldn't education be seen as the life-blood, energizing every major organ of society, producing not only the ability to maintain the healthy functioning of the whole, which can be equated with civilization, but also the power to expand the conscious horizons of culture, to sense new types of beauty and new visions of spirit?

Other important truths about education also resonate with this latter perspective. Just as the blood is continually vitalized by the breath, so education must constantly be renewed by the inflow of the living breath of the spirit. And when education is recognized as primarily an activity of the heart, it becomes clear

that educators must be able to communicate not just mind to mind, but also heart to heart. For educators to establish such a deep and sympathetic understanding of each individual learner, they must be motivated by the loving wisdom of the heart, for no other motive is strong enough.

The "objects of all true education" are thus described by H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy*:

to cultivate and develop the mind in the right direction; to teach the disinherited and hapless people to carry with fortitude the burden of life (allotted them by Karma); to strengthen their will; to inculcate in them the love of one's neighbour and the feeling of mutual interdependence and brotherhood; and thus to train and form the character for practical life.

Instances of "split" or "multiple" personalities have been reported from time to time and have evoked much interest. Fiction, television and motion pictures have given such cases greater publicity. Psychologists blame curbed desires, faulty coping strategies, childhood abuse, poor self-esteem—or all of these put together. *Health and Nutrition* (February 2000) gives real-life instances and provides a glimpse into the world of multiple personality disorders:

As the name implies, Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD), now known as Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), is a mental condition in which two or more personalities appear to inhabit a single body. However, do not go by the face-value of what has been conveyed in books and films, much of which is highly dramatized in order to arouse the attention and interest of the public....Dissociation, the main element in this disorder causing the split, is normally due to a faulty coping strategy—the belief that "this is not happening to me"—and a major lack of self-esteem....

Psychologists deem that most cases of split personalities or MPDs are usually preceded by a traumatic event, normally traceable back to childhood days....The abuse is so painful and so devastating that the child cannot bear it and dissociates (from

the immediate surroundings into another world), only to create an alternative personality to handle it. If the abuse continues, additional "alters" (personalities) are created to cope with what the main personality or the previous alters couldn't.

In answer to a question, Mr. Judge explained:

Physicians...cannot explain how a man suddenly loses his identity and becomes a raving maniac. Or in milder cases, where a man periodically becomes for months at a time some other person with no memory of the former state, and so relapses from one to the other....Karma rules in this as in all else, and it is only when one limits his view of Karma to this one life that he can be confused....Remember, the mind of each is connected with the body in a certain definite manner and not merely in an imaginary way. This definite method is by certain channels and filaments or nerves: among the most difficult to explain are the magnetic and electric ties for the mind. Now our hold upon the body we have been born into may be so weak that we are not able to keep possession of these channels, and stronger forces may even unconsciously go in where we have tried to stay. This is not caprice any more than it is caprice that water will leak from a tank if there be any cracks. So there may come a time that the building called the body, which we hoped to occupy for a long time, becomes so imperfect that our mental tenancy is no longer possible and we drift off altogether, leaving it to the use of other forces or intelligences good or bad; or, as is often the case, we are now driven out for a time and then again get complete possession for a short term, until in that process the cords of magnetism and the electric channels are clogged up or destroyed so far as we are concerned, when we leave altogether. (*Forum Answers*, pp. 32-33)

According to a Reuters report from Cairo (*The Times of India*, January 18), belief in the evil eye is widespread in Egypt. Ms. Manal Aneis, registrar at the Daher district registry office, says that not just ignorant people but even the educated believe that the evil eye is responsible for ill health and many other misfortunes.

Complimenting someone on his or her health, or saying of a child "Hasn't he grown!" or, "Isn't she pretty!" could well strike fear in the heart of an Egyptian and is strictly taboo. New babies and small children are seen as especially susceptible to the evil eye.

Such beliefs are prevalent not just in Egypt but also in India and elsewhere. The power of the eye is a fact, however many superstitions may have gathered round it. H.P.B. has described the eye as the most occult of all our outer organs. The subject is related to that of magnetism. The ancients taught that the magnetic fluid projected from the eyes and the palms of the hands can be employed as much for a good as for an evil purpose (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 144). If for a good one, it is white magic; if for an evil one, it is called sorcery. "The *jettatura*, or evil eye," H.P.B. wrote, "is nothing but the direction of this invisible fluid, charged with malicious will and hatred, from one person to another, and sent out with the intention of harming him."

Writing in *Lucifer* for December 1888, H.P.B. defined the power of the "evil eye" in terms that should give pause to those who believe themselves to be free of any trace of malevolence. For it she wrote,

simply a great plastic power of thought, so great as to produce a current impregnated with the potentiality of every kind of misfortune and accident, which inoculates, or attaches itself to any person who comes within it. A *jettatore* (one with the evil eye) need not be even imaginative, or have evil intentions or wishes. He may be simply a person who is naturally fond of witnessing or reading about sensational scenes, such as murder, executions, accidents, etc., etc. He may be not even thinking of any of these at the moment his eye meets his future victim. But the currents have been produced and exist in his visual ray ready to spring into activity the instant they find suitable soil, like a seed fallen by the way and ready to sprout at the first opportunity. (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, p. 208)