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सत्यत् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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THE INTEGRAL VISION

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The "Manifested Universe".. .is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its EX-istence as "manifestation." But.. .the opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are but aspects of the One Unity in which they are synthesized....

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 15-16

IT is not difficult to accept vaguely the metaphysical conception of the duality of Spirit-Matter as the prototype, the essential polarity of Life, finding expression in every aspect, great and small, of that Life. We cannot fail to see something of the duality of positive and negative, centrifugal and centripetal, day and night, life and death, heat and cold, attraction and repulsion, pleasure and pain, good and evil, knowledge and ignorance, freedom and slavery, and so on *ad infinitum* through all the pairs of opposites. The trouble is that in expanding and applying the ideas we too often see them only in their opposing aspects, and forget that they are to be viewed, not as independent actualities, but as the two facets of the same underlying reality. Apart from it and apart from each other, they have no existence. Thus, concretized Spirit is Matter, and etherealized Matter is Spirit.

We would not recognize light as light if there were no shadow to act as a complementary foil.

According to the tenets of Eastern Occultism, DARKNESS is the one true actuality, the basis and the root of light, without which the latter could never manifest itself, nor even exist. Light is matter, and DARKNESS pure Spirit. Darkness, in its radical, metaphysical basis, is subjective and absolute light; while the latter in all its seeming effulgence and glory, is merely a mass of shadows, as it can never be eternal, and is simply an illusion, or Maya. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 70)

Just as Light and Darkness, Spirit and Matter, are not distinct and separate, so also good and evil. No one can point to the existence of *good per se* in Nature; nor can evil be shown to have a separate independent existence. Reality is neither good nor evil, as Life is neither Spirit nor Matter.

Archaic philosophy, recognizing neither Good nor Evil as a fundamental or independent power, but starting from the Absolute ALL (Universal Perfection eternally), traced both through the course of natural evolution to pure Light condensing gradually into form, hence becoming Matter or Evil. (*S.D.*, I, 73)

In human nature, evil denotes only the polarity of matter and Spirit, a struggle for life between the two manifested Principles in Space and Time, which principles are one *per se*, inasmuch as they are rooted in the Absolute. In Kosmos, the equilibrium must be preserved. The operations of the two contraries produce harmony, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which are necessary to each other—mutually interdependent—"in order that both should live." If one is arrested, the action of the other will become immediately self-destructive. (*S.D.*, I, 416)

Good and Evil are twins, the progeny of Space and Time, under the sway of Maya. Separate them, by cutting off one from the other, and they will both die. Neither exists *per se*, since each has to be generated and created out of the other, in order to come into being; both must be known and appreciated before becoming objects of perception, hence, in mortal mind, they must be divided. (*S.D.*, II, 96)

In the old Zoroastrian texts, the *Gathas*, the opposing forces are described as two Spirits, named Spenta-Mainyu and Angra-Mainyu. Ahura Mazda, the Supreme, refers to them as "my spirits."

The spirits primeval are a pair and they together communed. These two differ in thought, in word, in deed, one the enhancer of betterment, the other the fashioner of evil... The two spirits came together at the dawn—one the maker of life, the other to mar it, and thus they shall be unto the last. (*Yasna xxx*, 3, 4)

I announce to you life's first two spirits of whom the Good accosted the Evil: Never our thoughts, nor creeds, nor understandings, nor beliefs, nor words, nor deeds, nor consciences, nor souls can be the same. (*Yasna XLV*, 2)

The two primeval spirits are impersonal, universal and omnipotent forces—centripetal and centrifugal. They are the basis of the manifested universe, are coeval and coeternal and complement each other. Spenta-Mainyu is the power of Spirit. Angra-Mainyu of Matter; they are like seed and soil, both equally necessary for the birth of the tree.

Because of man's dual nature, spiritual and material, which the philosophical have always traced to its true source in the two spirits, the doctrine of two minds in man naturally and logically arose. *Vohu Mano* and *Akem Mano* are the higher and lower minds of our Theosophical philosophy. Just as the primeval spirits emanate from Ahura Mazda, so also the two minds are expressions of the Spirit in Man, the *Fravashi*, the Atma-Buddhic Monad.

Their mutual interdependence can be seen from the fact that a virtue on which too much stress has been put is transformed into a vice, in the same manner as the eye that is tired from too long gazing on one colour will change over and reproduce its complementary. The man who is over-generous usually ends by being so at the expense of other people, his very craving for "generosity" leading him to acts of meanness. Even the intensive gratification of a vice can produce a temporary surfeit, but such satiety is only a *temporary* suspension; it is

not a reformation and a cure, and there will be a swing back once more into vice, since good and evil *per se* have no real permanence.

The duality of the higher or spiritual aspirations and the lower or material desires which in embodied existence work in every human consciousness, produces the three pairs mentioned in the *Bhagavad-Gita*—heat and cold, pleasure and pain, fame and ignominy. Krishna reiterates the advice that Arjuna should rise above these pairs. Robert Crosbie wrote that "there are always the 'pairs of opposites' in separative considerations, as these are effects. The One Reality sees both as reflections, as light and dark; if not seen, they do not exist." In day-to-day living this is most difficult to accomplish, but the principle of application and practice is given by W. Q. Judge:

Before we can hope to prevent any particular state of mind or events reaching us in this or in another life, *we* must in fact be detached from these things. Now *we* are not our bodies or mere minds, but the *real* part of us in which Karma inheres.

If the conception of the "pairs of opposites" still keeps the mind in its old separative groove, the conception of the "pairs of complements" can profitably be superimposed thereon. But though the theoretical distinction is made here between "contrast" and "complement," in reality there is none. The finite mind is accustomed to attach one or other idea to certain expressions, and it is therefore possible to circumvent the separative tendency of the mind by dwelling on those expressions that convey the idea of co-operation rather than of opposition.

It is in the realm of ethics and of self-development that these co-operative dualities are most easily seen. For example, we can link as complementary two qualities essential for self-control— practice and absence of desire, *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya*. The two are mutually interdependent, and only when they are practised together does progress result. Each of the Divine Paramitas, likewise, has its complementary counterpart.

Wherever we look we find duality piled on duality, contrast and complement, two in one. On the physical plane a man who has lost an eye finds that his vision loses thereby its stereoscopic sense of reality, its depth. It is the same thing with the inner sight, and there most people are unfortunately one-eyed or cross-eyed. Our task is to balance and unify our dual vision, to blend the mind and soul, for behind the illusion of the "pairs of opposites" lies the integral vision of the Third Eye, the Single Eye of Wisdom.

SAUNAKA asks in this [Mundaka] Upanishad a natural question, propounded by nearly every thinking man, especially by students of occultism who are continually seeking a royal road to the accomplishment of their objects. He wishes to be told what may be the great solvent of all knowledge. The reply of Angiras points out two great roads, which include all others. The lower road is the one of hard work for countless births, during which we acquire knowledge slowly in all directions, and of course, when that is possessed, one rises to the higher road....

In the journey along this road we will encounter great differences in the powers of our fellow travellers. Some go haltingly and others quickly; some with eyes bent on the ground, a few with gaze fixed on the great goal. Those who halt or look down will not reach the end, because they refuse to take the assistance to be found in the constant aspiration to the light. But we are not to blame them: they have not yet been often enough initiated to understand their error. Nature is kind and will wait for them much longer than their human fellows would if they were permitted to be their judges. This ought to give us a lesson in charity, in universal brotherhood. Very often we meet those who show an utter inability to appreciate some spiritual ideas which we quite understand. It is because they have not, so far, been able to transmute into a part of themselves, that which we have been so fortunate as to become possessed of, and so they seem devoted to things that to us appear to be of small value. .

—W.Q. JUDGE

THE BUDDHA SHOWS THE WAY

IN the Buddha's system, self-control is the central theme. He also emphasized self-expression, but nowadays that word is used in a very different sense. Without self-control there can be no true self-expression. That which is to be controlled is the lower self, called the army of *skandhas*, or attributes. The deposits of matter, forms of matter, bearing certain impressions of the self, are to be controlled and then only can the Real Self express itself. Without control of sense-self there cannot come into expression soul-self. Among Orient lists who study the Buddhist canon only from the philological standpoint, there prevails the idea that the Buddha never taught the existence of Soul or God. Certainly he did not teach their existence as Christians and Westerners understand Soul and God; but he did teach the Soul persisting and gaining immortality, and he did speak of the permanence of *Nirvana*, its light and its peace.

To begin with, note verse 165 of the *Dhammapada*:

Evil is done by self alone; by self alone is one defiled. By self alone is evil left undone; by self alone is one purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself. No man can purify another.

To destroy one's own evil self is to live—live as a purified entity. Man is dual. In his inner nature he is homogeneous; in his outer, he is composed of numerous factors and forces. There are two poles in man: one is an indivisible unit, the other is made up of divisible components and is therefore manifold. The first is Spirit; the second, Matter. Spirit is pure and it may be designated Innocence in human language. Just as at the start of life the newborn babe is spoken of as innocent, so may we speak of Spirit. But that innocence is accompanied by ignorance, as in the case of the infant.

The other pole is matter. Its power consists in self-multiplication; matter divides and subdivides itself. It presents to the Spirit innumerable objects, and these myriads of objects are used to compare and to contrast them with Spirit. Pure Spirit cannot know itself and its own powers without the aid of objects of matter.

To understand this, the universe of matter may be compared to a gigantic mirror, which the Spirit uses to look at itself. Just as a man or a woman to dress well and come out in fine fettle uses a mirror to see how he or she looks, so also Spirit reflects itself in the mirror of matter to see how It looks. The seer, the observer, is the higher unit—the *Nirvanee* of Buddhist terminology.

The mirror of matter which each Spirit-unit uses is its own constitution—a compound unit made up of many constituents. This bundle contains all kinds of stuff—mind-stuff, feeling-stuff, sense-stuff. Matter of many types has combined to produce that mirror. This is our lower animal-nature. This bundle of different substances is named *skandhas* in Buddhist psychology. The doctrine of *skandhas* or attributes or deposits is difficult to grasp; but it may be regarded as a living mirror, a mirror of living, vital matter, into which the Spirit looks. In doing so, the Spirit casts its own reflection in the mirror. Just as the person observing himself in a mirror sees his own reflection, so also the Spirit looking at itself in the mirror of living matter casts a reflection. So there is: (1) Spirit, (2) reflection of Spirit, (3) living matter acting as the mirror.

Because the mirror is composed of vital, living matter with qualities and characteristics of its own, it affects the reflection of Spirit. This reflection affected by matter, and in its turn affecting matter, brings about in itself a new phenomenon. The reflection of the Spirit-unit and the mirror of matter affect each other, and through their mutual interplay springs into existence the false "I." Regard the highest pole in man, the Spirit-unit, as the Individuality; regard the lowest or material pole as a compound, offering itself as a mirror to the Individuality.

The reflection of the Individuality and the mirror of matter produce an entity which looks like Spirit but is not. It is *not* the Individuality; its name is—personality. When the Buddha said that soul is an illusion, he referred to the personality, this false "I." To regard this personality as immortal is the heresy of soul-belief named *Attavada*. The Buddha never denied that there was the Individuality, the *Nirvanee*, immortal and deathless.

The Buddha taught that the interplay between the personality and the matter-mirror is the result of a certain power in matter which attracts the personal "I," impresses it, and causes it to forget its own spiritual pedigree and parenthood. This power or force inherent in matter is not evil in itself, but, attracting the personality, it arouses in the latter the feeling of like and dislike—the force of desire to which the Buddha gave the name of *Tanha*. Human desires and passions enveloping the reflection of the Individuality create a kind of new entity and make it believe that its source is not Spirit but senses and matter. This is the personality. The Buddha said that *Tanha* is the enemy of Man; the cause of all sorrows and sufferings is desire. *Tanha* is thirst for sense-life, for life in forms with its hundred chords which bind and imprison the soul. The Buddha compares the results of *Tanha* to a gigantic forest. He says:

Cut down the whole forest of desire, not single trees; danger lurks in that forest. Having cut down trees and uprooted the weeds of desire you are free, O Bhikkhus. (Verse 283)

Desires and passions—these are the dust of illusion settling on the mind which is the human power and principle par *excellence*. Mind is dual—one part or aspect belongs to the mirror of matter, and the other to the reflection of the Spirit-unit, the Individuality. The mirror of the mind, of which *The Voice of the Silence* speaks, is part and parcel of this other mirror—the mirror of matter. Says the Buddha: "Cut down the whole forest of desire." If you aspire to lead the higher life, you are called upon to deal a death-blow to every passion, to every longing of the senses, every yearning of the flesh. Therefore are we told:

Irrigators lead the waters. Fletchers shape the arrows.
Carpenters carve the wood. Wise people discipline themselves.
(Verse 80)

It is the same idea, more practically expressed; self-control is the beginning; self-control is the first step. The wise man tames his own personality. He who has tamed himself is a true wise man.

So we need an exercise, a practice, to tame the mind. But let us beware of practising what anyone tells us. There are many people today who teach meditation, etc., who themselves have not practised it. Says the Buddha:

A blade of kusa grass wrongly handled cuts the hand;
asceticism wrongly practised leads downward, to hell. (Verse 311)

Immortal Wisdom teaches us how to discipline the mind. The first steps are in *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Dhammapada*, the *Gita*; but we need to study the books before we begin to practise. What is the first lesson to learn?]

Let a wise man remove his impurities, one by one, little by little,
day by day, as a smith removes the impurities of silver. As the rust
sprung from iron itself corrodes and eats into it, so with the man who
sins. His own deeds bring the sinner to an evil end. (Verses 239-240)

"Rust" corrupts the mind. The passion-nature, and its corrupting influence which makes the mind rusty, is known as Mara, the Devil, and so it is said:

Like unto a fish snatched from its watery home and cast on land,
the mind trembles and quivers leaving the dominion of Mara. (Verse 34)

A man should hasten towards the good; he should restrain his evil
thoughts; if he is slack in doing good his mind inclines to delight in
evil. (Verse 1.16)

Here is the prescription—all that anyone in the world, aspiring to live the soul-life, needs: a clean mind, noble and unselfish deeds. When we are engaged in doing good, evil flies away. But those unselfish deeds must not be done casually, in a perfunctory manner. They must be done intelligently, for it is the mind that is to be freed. Kind deeds, thoughtlessly performed, injure others as well as ourselves. Also, whenever an unselfish deed is to be done, we must do it with thoroughness and exactitude. In finding ways and means of doing an action thoroughly and efficiently, we free the mind. Thoughtfulness

reveals to us our motive—selfish or unselfish. Then correct and thorough execution develops the faculty of the mind and the power of the heart. Knowledge and unselfish motive is everything.

Bodhi-Dharma, Wisdom-Religion, which all the Buddhas taught and which Theosophy advocates, lays down the first principle—study. Without study there is no understanding, and to practise anything without understanding is hazardous. But when study is undertaken, we become ready for practice or application. When we have applied, we need to test ourselves, whether that application is deep or superficial, and the way to test our own application is—promulgation. When we try to impart to others what we have learnt, try to help and to serve our fellow-men, then only do we find out if we have really learnt. Service of others is no easy task; it is not just a matter of feeling. Great harm is done by thoughtless and emotional service. The method of right service needs to be learnt.

Soul-service is a science, and it has its own technique. Wisdom-Religion, lived in terms of its tenets, *i.e.*, according to true knowledge, not only evolves our own faculties and unfolds our own soul, it gives us the insight into the entire process of the cosmic life, and we are able to break all fetters as the Buddha himself broke them. Having broken them, he served the Race.

As a lump of salt melted in water cannot be perceived by the eye but is tasted only by the tongue, so indeed the ever-existent Brahman shining in the depth of the heart cannot be realized by the external senses, but by the light of that gracious awakening which comes from the word of a seer-teacher: "Thou indeed art this Brahman, not the phenomenal universe that appears around."

—SRI SANKARACHARYA

SERVING HUMANITY

Theosophy should not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical ethics, epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy *must be made practical*; and it has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless digressions, in the sense of desultory orations and fine talk. Let every Theosophist only do his duty, that which he can and ought to do, and very soon the sum of human misery, within and around the areas of every Branch of your Society, will be found visibly diminished.

—A MASTER OF WISDOM

WHAT contribution can students of Theosophy make to the solution of the problems confronting humanity at the present hour? Theosophy being practical, it contains teachings which are applicable to all that concerns the race-mind.

The mind is the real plane of action and the chaos which prevails today prevails primarily in the mind of the race. Clear perception of our problems is lacking and their solutions are not thought out.

Though Universal Brotherhood is on everyone's lips, it is not in everyone's heart; that is so because man does not adequately use his head to inquire and determine. H. P. Blavatsky, who could perceive what man was heading towards and what future lay in store for him, also indicated the means to ameliorate it, if it were not possible entirely to avert it. In *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 644) she wrote:

...the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony—a Brotherhood IN ACTU, and *altruism* not simply in name. The suppression of one single bad *cause* will suppress not one, but a variety of bad effects. And if a Brotherhood or even a number of Brotherhoods may not be able to prevent nations from occasionally cutting each other's throats—still unity in thought and action, and philosophical research into the mysteries of being, will always prevent some, while trying to comprehend that which has hitherto remained to them a

riddle, from creating additional causes in a world already so full of woe and evil.

Thus H.P.B. knew that the present situation would be caused by unbrotherliness, the "insanity of the age," that it would be the legitimate and due effect of causes set in motion by humanity itself, and that it could be ameliorated by the promulgation of the broad teachings of Theosophy. True ideas are the crying need of mankind.

One confusing problem for the student of Theosophy arises from the existence of a large number of bodies which claim to be serving humanity and to be actuated by the principle of Universal Brotherhood. As H.P.B. pointed out, "Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind." She stated that as individuals they should feel free to engage themselves in any of these movements in particular, but "as Theosophists we have a larger, more important, and much more difficult work to do." What is that work? "To open men's hearts and understandings to charity, justice and generosity."

Applying to himself the idea put forward, each must recognize that as a student of Theosophy his task is that larger and more important one to which H.P.B. referred. Self-examination and self-analysis have to be used to tear off the mask which hides mental laziness and moral passivity. Many a student sees the need for the "larger, more important, and much more difficult work"; but the output in actual service is often superficial in quality and restricted in quantity.

That particular type of service of humanity depends upon a clear perception of two things: (1) The individual's duty to himself and consequently the work he has to do on and with himself. In the home, as well as where his livelihood is earned, and in connection with the modes and methods of his recreation, his enlightened heart has to produce self-reformation. (2) His duty to the Movement in which a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood is to be established and through which the sphere of the race-mind has to be stirred, awakened and enlightened.

These propositions need serious and sincere consideration by every earnest student who aspires to learn so that he may serve. Each must work out the implications of H.P.B.'s statement—"Theosophy is the most serious movement of this age."

THEN a woman said, Speak to us of Joy and Sorrow.

And he answered:

Your joy is your sorrow unmasked.

And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was oftentimes filled with your tears.

And how else can it be?

The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.

Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven?

And is not the lute that soothes your spirit the very wood that was hollowed with knives?

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy.

When you are sorrowful, look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.

Some of you say, "Joy is greater than sorrow," and others say, "Nay, sorrow is the greater."

But I say unto you, they are inseparable.

Together they come, and when one sits alone with you at your board, remember that the other is asleep upon your bed.

Verily you are suspended like scales between your sorrow and your joy.

Only when you are empty are you at standstill and balanced.

When the treasure-keeper lifts you to weigh his gold and his silver, needs must your joy or your sorrow rise or fall.

—KAHLIL GIBRAN

ARCHETYPAL IDEAS

THE seeds of wisdom are the immortal and eternal ideas of all ages given out by the Great Teachers to humanity. They have appeared, disappeared and reappeared in the world of mortals at different times and places, clothed in different languages and different forms suited to the needs of the people. They have been given out time and again, but such is the frailty of human nature that they are soon forgotten and the mighty art of life gets lost. People first get slack in application, then careless, indifferent and lazy, and somehow prefer to drift along in the ocean of ordinary existence rather than to set sail according to right principles in the direction of the haven of peace and concord.

Just as it is not possible for ordinary seeds to grow in a barren soil or a ground full of weeds, so also with the seeds of Wisdom. They can only fructify in a soil well cultivated and well nurtured with daily efforts along the right lines. There must be first the awareness that such seeds exist, then there must be the inner urge and yearning to acquire them. Once acquired, they cannot be neglected or misused for selfish purposes.

These seeds of Wisdom were first impressed upon the mind of infant humanity by high exalted Beings, Divine Intelligences who had perfected themselves in prior fields of evolution. In the Ninth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna states: "I am the origin and the dissolution, the receptacle, the storehouse, and the eternal seed." These are significant words. Krishna, the One Self, the Omnipresent Spirit, is the eternal seed of all Wisdom, the storehouse of Eternal Verities, the origin and dissolution of all forms. Herein lies the key to understanding the origin of all Wisdom, the archetypal ideas and archetypal forms. It is from that eternal seed that have sprung all religions, sciences and philosophies. This is the reason why in the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna states: "Men say that the *Ashwattha*, the eternal sacred tree, grows with its roots above and its branches below, and the leaves of which are the *Vedas*" A contemplation on this subject opens our minds and hearts to the way this seed took root and spread for millennia upon millennia, and still Great truths came down to humanity

at first orally, from one generation to another, then a record was made in geometrical signs and symbols, and much later on it was written down.

In the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Krishna mentions his divine pedigree:

This exhaustless doctrine of Yoga I formerly taught unto Vivaswat; Vivaswat communicated it to Manu and Manu made it known unto Ikshwaku; and being thus transmitted from one unto another it was studied by the Rajarshees, until at length in the course of time the mighty art was lost, O harasser of thy foes! It is even the same exhaustless, secret, eternal doctrine I have this day communicated unto thee because thou art my devotee and my friend.

It is an eternal fount whose life-giving waters ever assuage the thirst for Wisdom of all aspirants and earnest seekers after truth, though the mighty art disappears from the public world in course of time. Krishna the eternal seed! Therein lies the clue to all mysteries of nature and man. Underground vaults and mountain caves may contain vast libraries of recorded knowledge about life on earth and beyond the gates of death, about the laws of Nature, about sorrow and suffering and how to remove them, and various other subjects, but it is well to recognize that the source of all Wisdom is the eternal seed. And once that realization dawns, life takes a different turn altogether.

The seeds of Wisdom cannot sprout and grow in airless space. To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in Maya's realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the changeless SAT, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions. (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 28)

Here we are given the means and the method of cultivating the seeds of Wisdom within ourselves. We are advised to soar beyond illusions. Most of the time we are affected and influenced by the fleeting

panorama of life, the experiences of pleasure and pain, success and failure, etc. We have to learn to recognize them as passing shadows, remembering that they create obstacles in the quest of Truth. Fancy's false suggestions are to be turned down as unreal and impermanent. The mind has to breathe the pure air of the high altitude of the immortal soul to reflect its light and radiance, its glory and power, its wisdom and compassion. The earthly atmosphere clogs the mind, and a hundred chords of desire and sense inclinations bind it till finally the soul becomes a victim of the lower self. The mind needs breadth of vision and depth of understanding to keep on its own track of soul-light without wavering and without turning back. The mind-soul has to work in unison and harmony. "Thyself and mind, like twins upon a line, the star which is thy goal burns overhead" (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 21). This has to be kept in mind always. The mind and soul, though twins upon one line, are at the present time divorced and in eternal conflict with one another. What are the "points" that will draw the mind towards the Diamond Soul? The assuming of a firm position; reliance on the Higher Self and the Great Law; the constant practice of Raja-Yoga, the Kingly Science and the Kingly Mystery; service of our fellow beings; in one word, altruism. One of the main "points" should be to keep before the mind's eye the ideal of the great perfected beings, the custodians of the seeds of Wisdom. Concentration, meditation, performance of all duties without thinking of the reward, are all of the utmost necessity in living the life of the soul. The mind must change its level from the personal to impersonal and universal ideas.

These seeds of Wisdom cannot be bought or sold. Madame Blavatsky states:

There was a time when the acquirement of Divine Wisdom (*Sapientia*) required the sacrifice and devotion of a man's whole life. It depended on such things as the purity of the candidate's motives, on his fearlessness and independence of spirit; but now, to receive a patent for wisdom and adeptship requires only unblushing impudence. (*U.L.T Pamphlet No. 32*, p. 6)

People usually like short cuts, but we are warned against them by Theosophy.

The last effort was made by the Masters of Wisdom during the last quarter of the 19th century when they sent out their Messenger, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, with a few of the seeds of Wisdom suited to the age and to the mind of the race. Future efforts will very much depend upon the use made of the seeds given already and their proper growth. It is the duty and the responsibility of every student to nurture the seeds so that they may bear fragrant flowers and luscious fruits which will remove the starvation of the soul.

The seed produces the tree and the fruits, which in their turn produce other seeds, and thus from the eternal seed emanate seeds of Wisdom, the accumulated Wisdom of the ages. The study, application and promulgation of the seeds leads us to the eternal seed, Krishna, the Divine Self which permeates all and everything.

IN view of the ever-increasing triumph and at the same time misuse, of free thought and liberty...how is the combative natural instinct of man to be restrained from inflicting hitherto unheard-of cruelties and enormities, tyranny, injustice, if not through the soothing influence of Brotherhood, and of the practical application of Buddha's esoteric doctrines? For everyone knows that total emancipation from the authority of the one all-pervading power, or law—called God by priests, Buddha, divine wisdom, and enlightenment, or Theosophy, by the philosophers of all ages—means also the emancipation from that of human law.

—*The Great Master's Letter*

THE crisis in our religious and social life that we are often face to face with indicates the need for going to first principles. That untouchability exists in spite of legislation against it is a fact—a degrading and saddening fact—which must be faced. No one can deny that change and reform are overdue; but we must first seek for the philosophical basis of untouchability. Nothing can come out of nothing, and the most debasing and gross forms of life are caricatures of some reality or fact in Nature.

Untouchability is not peculiar to India alone. In one form or another, it exists almost everywhere. It may have an ethnic source; the racial discrimination that exists in some countries is a brand of untouchability. The fight for racial equality goes on, and here, too, legislation alone has not been able to solve the problem. Or its source may be vocational; certain professions in life are regarded as low, bring less earnings compared to other professions, and those engaged in them are looked down upon. A charwoman and those whom she serves do not enjoy the same socio-economic status. Social clubs are a standing manifestation of this type of untouchability—there are commercial clubs and clubs for gentlemen!

Racial and vocational untouchability is not based on religious considerations. In India, it has been given a religious basis, which in reality does not exist. If a religion sanctions unbrotherly treatment of one section of human beings by another, then that religion cannot be true. The very function of true religion is to unite man to man and to uphold the Ideal of Brotherhood, for as Souls, immortal and divine, all are but aspects of the One Self. True religion teaches man to look upon all other men as Souls, and all honest labour as sacred, and it cannot support the degradation and the crime of untouchability. The claim that Hinduism sanctions untouchability is most false—not true Hinduism at any rate.

The significant question is—by what process has the curse of untouchability arisen? It results as a residue when castes, instead of serving the purpose they were meant to serve, function on a wrong basis of competition and exploitation. It should be noted that castes, too,

are a universal phenomenon. They have been known as classes in Western society. Class struggle is but another phase of the same problem. While the division of castes is based on religious beliefs, religious prejudices and religious misunderstanding, the division of classes is based on social beliefs, social prejudices and social misunderstandings. The struggle between the capitalist-ruler and the working-man has been no less acute than the struggle between the high-caste and the low-caste. To seek the philosophical basis of castes, classes, and all divisions in human society, we must understand that in the human kingdom diversity persists as naturally as in the other kingdoms. Castes and classes, communities and races, have a basis in Nature herself. They are produced by the urge of the evolutionary process. The course of that urge is from within outwards; that is, the creative urge rises at the centre and spreads to the circumference. This spreading is manifestation, which our ancient philosophers named *Prabhava*. Hence manifestation necessarily means differentiation and diversity. The One Principle of Universal Life starting to manifest or expand from a central point becomes heterogeneous in its countless expressions. Creation is expansion of the will-force of Spirit or Purusha, and we call it the Brahma aspect. What has emerged or what is created is preserved by the Vishnu aspect of Spirit. The change, disintegration and destruction which recreates and regenerates is the Shiva aspect of Spirit. Thus Purusha by its triple activity keeps the different kingdoms of Nature going, cycle after cycle, age after age, replacing one type with another. For example, the animal monsters of past yugas are no more, but their transformations exist today. The human giants of earlier races are extinct, but their transformations are to be found in our day. Castes and classes are no longer recognized as the religious and spiritual institutions they were meant to be in an age when true Religion prevailed, but have degenerated into socio-economic institutions because ours is the Age of Iron, the dark *Kali Yuga*, and our civilization is made and ruled by the machine and by rupees, pounds or dollars. Thus, philosophically examined, we can see that the grouping arrangement of Nature persists in all her kingdoms, including human.

All thinking men recognize that castes have had their day and that they must cease to exist in their present form. But the grouping arrangement of Nature cannot be destroyed; it should be utilized. It is precisely in using it along right lines that Harmony and Brotherhood can be established.

There is only one way in which the problem of castes as of classes can be solved. For centuries men have fought for their "rights." The problem of distinctions and divisions will not be solved till the ideal of duty or *dharma*, the property of the Soul within, is substituted for rights wrested from without. Let each individual fulfil his own *dharma*, discharge his own responsibility, and thereby serve not only his own caste or class, but all his fellow beings, irrespective of any distinctions. The only nobility and superiority recognized from the spiritual point of view is that of the Soul and is rooted in the intrinsic value of one's own character and inner perception. No caste is superior or inferior, any more than one colour is superior or inferior to another.

The curse of untouchability arose in India and brought about the degradation of the country because the profoundly true and profoundly practical teachings of the *Gita* were disregarded. Another wonderful opportunity came to India when two thousand five hundred years ago the Great Buddha exposed the absolute fallacy of castes by birth and heredity. India did not listen. When she did, as during the reign of King Asoka, then peace and glory surrounded her. Modern India is determined to do away with the evil, yet is encountering opposition from vested interests. No truly religious thinker can support the idea of maintaining the *status quo* in this matter. Not only India, but the world as a whole is

ripening for the practice of *dharma* as taught by Krishna and by Buddha.

What is *dharma*? It is the Law of Life in every kingdom. It is the *dharma* of the fire to burn; it is the *dharma* of the water to find its level; it is the *dharma* of the flower to open and of the fruit to ripen. *Dharma* is the right expression of the inner properties of life. It is a magnificent word, this word *dharma*, and it throws a flood of light on the subject of

human duties, human religion, human progress. Its teachings are of universal application.

We must relate the ideal of *dharma* to the existence of castes. The *Gita* says that castes, four in number, exist in the human kingdom as a grouping of Nature. And these four castes arise from *Gunas* and *Karma*. Not our birth or the profession of our fathers, but our own inner disposition and our own actions assign to each one of us his or her caste. Verses 41-45 of the Eighteenth Discourse of the *Gita* should be studied very carefully:

The respective duties of the four castes, of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras, are also determined by the qualities which predominate in the disposition of each....The natural duty of a Brahmana compriseth tranquility, purity, self-mastery, patience, rectitude, learning, spiritual discernment, and belief in the existence of another world. Those of the Kshatriya sprung from his nature, are valour, glory, strength, firmness, not to flee from the field of battle, liberality and a lordly character. The natural duties of the Vaishya are to till the land, tend cattle and to buy and sell; and that of the Shudra is to serve, as is his natural disposition. Men being contented and devoted to their own proper duties attain perfection....

Making a practical application of this, we shall find that many Brahmanas are only Brahmanas in name; most of them are Vaishyas making money, and poor Vaishyas at that, for they hoard wealth and their charity itself is a bargain. According to one's own inner property of the Soul is one a Brahmana, a Vaishya, a Kshatriya, or a Shudra. And there is no fifth caste! All are Hindus, all are Harijans, the people of the Great God Hari, and each belongs to one of the four castes in terms of his inner character and his outward behavior and service. The *Gita* teaching on caste, as also what is said on the subject in the other *true* Shastras, needs to be popularized and practised.

These words of Yudhishtira in the *Vanaparva* of the *Mahabharata* should be noted:

Truth, charity, forgiveness, good conduct, gentleness, austerity, and mercy, where these are seen, O King of the Serpents, there is a Brahmana. If these marks exist in a Shudra and are not in a Dvija, the Shudra is not a Shudra, nor the Brahmana a Brahmana.

In the *Vishnu-Bhagavata* we read:

What is said as to the marks of conduct indicative of a man's caste, if those marks are found in another, designate him by the caste of his marks (*i.e.*, not of his body and birth).

And this is what *Manu Smriti* has to say:

As a wooden elephant, as a leathern deer, such is an unlearned Brahmana; these three bear only names. The Brahmana who not having studied the Vedas labours elsewhere becomes a Shudra in that very life together with his descendants.

So that is the first principle. True caste-marks are marks of conduct. From this fundamental principle most naturally follows the second—by changing one's own character one automatically changes one's own Soul caste. It is possible by the performance of right *dharma* to grow and evolve from glory to glory. All of us have this solemn duty, and at least a few of us can begin to practise it.

What is that *dhanna*? Each one of us is an untouchable, because who among us is free from disobedience to Nature's laws, from impurity of heart or mind, from fears of a hundred kinds, from selfishness and greed of one sort or another? Let us remove the untouchability in us. We are each one of us a Shudra, and a Vaishya, and a Kshatriya, as well as a Brahmana. We are not perfect, but through right *dharma*, by eliminating our vices and by strengthening our virtues, we move towards perfection. As Shudras, each one of us must remove the sin of disobedience to the voice of conscience, and not only the blemish of negligence. As Vaishyas, each one of us must learn not only to guard against the blemish of speculation and loss, but also to remove the sin of dishonesty. As Kshatriyas, each one of us

must kill the sin of cowardice even though many fears possess us. As Brahmanas, each one of us should remove the blemish of ignorance, but not neglect to eradicate the vice of impurity. Let us develop the virtue of efficiency and skill and become true Shudras; the virtue of charity and become true Vaishyas; the virtue of courage and become true Kshatriyas; the virtue of sacrifice and become true Brahmanas. Thus will we make ourselves in the copy of the Great Purusha, the radiant, blazing Divinity of whom the *Purusha-Sukta* hymn sings.

Let us willingly give up what we regard as our caste rights and privileges, and joyfully take up our duties and responsibilities. Let us begin to practise true charity of mind and of heart in our own sphere. Let us treat all we come in contact with, with soul-understanding, looking upon all men as our brothers, all women as our sisters. Let the children at school learn to regard all other children as co-pupils, comrades and friends. Let those who have servants in their homes treat them with understanding, trying to educate them and to teach them better modes of living, thus raising them to better conditions. Let the men in their offices and clubs judge merit in terms of honesty, of efficiency and capacity, and not in terms of caste or wealth distinctions. And let all who are happy remember the unhappy! The more we know and the more we have, the greater our responsibility to those who know less and have less. The true Brahmana is he who devotes himself to the truly disinterested service of others, who consecrates his life to teach and help his fellow men. All of us must prepare ourselves for that service in the future, and the best preparation lies in opening our hearts to the misery of the depressed, the submerged, the poor and the ignorant. Their problem, their degradation, are *our* problem and *our* degradation.

A NEW MEANING TO LIFE

THEOSOPHY being a synthesis of religion, science and philosophy has a power of its own, dynamic and vibrant, which can be applied in daily life, to all spheres of activities. Theosophy is not a mere speculative system, but is essentially practical. It is meant for all, high and low, scholarly and illiterate. It is based on the fundamental principles of the eternal verities, the divine wisdom preached by all the great teachers down the ages. It is sometimes taken to be dry philosophy, meant only for the learned who can grasp metaphysical principles and cosmic ultimates, but this is not so. Many a time simpler minds and purer hearts show forth a better capacity for grasping the ideas that Theosophy presents. Mr. Judge begins *The Ocean of Theosophy* by stating that "Theosophy is that ocean of knowledge which spreads from shore to shore of the evolution of sentient beings; unfathomable in its deepest parts, it gives the greatest minds their fullest scope, yet, shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child." This is very evident in Theosophy School groups, where we see children responding from within themselves to the great ideas presented to them. Yet, Theosophy, like the ocean, "gives the greatest minds their fullest scope"; the higher one rises and the deeper one penetrates, vistas upon vistas open up, not from outside, but from within oneself.

In our modern civilization, religion and science conflict with each other on all points, from an atom to god, because they have entirely different lines of approach. In ancient times, true religion was meant to be a unifying force binding all together in a harmonious whole. It taught that divine life and light was the root and source of all, the guiding spirit. And true science began its search on that invisible, universal plane, coming down to the human and the terrestrial and objective. In those days, different branches of knowledge were not divorced from one another but all followed the same pattern, from the universal to the particular, from the immortal to the mortal, from the subjective to the objective.

The living power of Theosophy is gradually perceived and expressed as its worth and value become known. *The Voice of the Silence* states: "O fearless Aspirant, look deep within the well of thine own heart, and answer. Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver of external shadows?" The power of Theosophy is the power of the great Self, the supreme Spirit; it is within each one of us, but we perceive it not, occupied as we are with chasing external shadows, impermanent and perishable. So the first step is to look within and recognize that power within us. This implies the assuming of a firm position. Next, we have to recognize the difference between the real Self and the fleeting shadows, perceive that true life is in the spirit and its approach is only through the avenue of the higher mind. "Give up thy life, if thou would'st live," we are told. And the life we have to give up is the life of physical personality, in order to live in spirit. It is necessary to give up all personal desires and sense inclinations and make of the personality a fit and useful instrument for the work of the spirit in us. This living power of Theosophy is constantly in motion; it is dynamic, uplifting, elevating and inspiring, and it takes the individual from the *tamasic* plane of laziness and indifference, as also from the restlessness and turbulence of *rajas*, to the *sattvic* plane of light and truth.

It is not a different kind of life but rather a different attitude to life that is needed. *Light on the Path* instructs in the very beginning: "Kill out ambition. Kill out desire of life. Kill out desire of comfort. Work as those work who are ambitious. Respect life as those do who desire it. Be happy as those are who live for happiness." These injunctions need to be reflected upon carefully. It is a dual task: we are asked to give up all ambitions along worldly lines—for the gaining of possessions, popularity, power and position in life, and, at the same time, we are not to be passive and blank, dull and gloomy, but have to work with real zest. Thus, we are centred no longer in the petty personal self, but in the great Self of all creatures. Krishna instructs Arjuna in the Ninth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Whatever thou doest, O son of Kunti, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrifices, whatever thou givest, whatever

mortification thou performest, commit each unto me." There remains no room for personal ambition; everything is dedicated to the supreme Self, without any self-interest.

Then, we are asked to "kill out desire of life"; and yet—"respect life as those do who desire it." To respect life means to understand its sanctity—how sacred it is and what an opportunity it affords to live usefully and harmoniously. People cling to life for sensuous gratification. That kind of life is an obstacle on the spiritual path. When life is looked upon as a teacher, yielding important lessons, bringing useful experiences, it breeds in us true gratitude and respect. What a wonderful opportunity life has afforded us by bringing us in contact with Theosophy! We are not to fritter away our life, not to dissipate its wonderful energy in ceaseless chase after ephemeral things, but are to regard it as a wonderful, melodious song that always instructs and inspires us towards truth, goodness and beauty. The living power of Theosophy can enable us to fulfil the aim of life and reach the goal.

Next, we are asked to "kill out desire of comfort"; and yet, "be happy as those are who live for happiness." People seek happiness according to their ideas and ideals, but it always eludes them; it never brings them soul-satisfaction. Soul happiness alone is permanent. The more happiness is pursued, the more it recedes. Lord Buddha teaches in the *Dhammapada*: "Victory breeds hatred; the vanquished dwell in suffering; but the tranquil man disregarding both victory and defeat lives happily." Only when we rise above victory and defeat and all other pairs of opposites does true happiness result. Otherwise the pendulum swings from the one to the other side, without any lasting benefit.

For an altruistic life, the cultivation of virtues is absolutely essential. Whether things go right or wrong, under easy or difficult circumstances, for joyous or sorrowful occasions, divine virtues have to be built into the very fabric of our being, so that at any moment, in any circumstance, one or another of the divine *Paramitas* can be used. The moral nature has to be enriched and trained to lead, more than anything else, an altruistic life. This can be achieved by daily

reflection upon the *Paramitas*, which, if practised, would transform a man into a superman. The living power of Theosophy gives a new meaning to all our daily affairs, our small, plain duties, which many look upon as drudgery. It is our attitude to our tasks that makes drudgery divine.

All have their own individual duties to perform, the so-called mundane duties, but their value is enhanced when they are performed with mind, heart and understanding, in the true spirit, with the help of the living power of Theosophy. Theosophy being godlike wisdom, or the wisdom of the gods, it alone can give us the godlike power to do deeds of charity and love, of nobility and generosity, of service and sacrifice. That power cannot be extinguished as long as there is true *shraddha-faith* in the heart and equanimity of mind to fulfil our duties at all times and to carry on the task of the spiritual elevation of the race through steadfast study, application and promulgation of the immortal, eternal ideas of Theosophy. The mind has to be given another bent, in the upward direction, towards its owner, the human soul, which should ever be under the guidance of its divine parent, Atma-Buddhi. Buddhi and higher Manas have to be in close proximity. This is well explained by Madame Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy*:

The Spirit (or *Buddhi*) is the centrifugal and the soul (*Manas*) the centripetal spiritual energy; and to produce one result they have to be in perfect union and harmony. Break or damage the centripetal motion of the earthly soul tending toward the centre which attracts it; arrest its progress by clogging it with a heavier weight of matter than it can bear, or than is fit for the Devachanic state, and the harmony of the whole will be destroyed.

The whole responsibility lies with Manas to take steps deliberately in the direction of Buddhi, and be guided by the living power of Theosophy. We must always remember not to break or damage the motion of the human soul tending towards Buddhi; nor must we arrest its progress by clogging it with a heavier weight of material attractions and temptations, but must lead the life necessary so that the living power of Theosophy may shine through it and spread its beneficence everywhere. Heroic

deeds of valour and glory seldom come our way, but humble deeds are ours always and it is through them that we can cross the ocean of *sansara* and reach the other shore where peace and joy abide.

THE idea of life appears to man in the beginning as a most simple and self-evident business. First of all, it seems to him that life is in himself, in his own body. No sooner, however, does one commence his search after that life, in any one given spot of the said body, than one meets with difficulties. Life is not in the hair, nor in the nails; neither is it in the foot nor the arm, which may both be amputated; it is not in the blood, it is not in the heart, and it is not in the brain. It is everywhere and it is nowhere. It comes to this: Life cannot be found in any of its dwelling-places. Then man begins to look for life in Time; and that, too, appears at first a very easy matter....Now, I have *lived* fifty-eight years, so says my baptismal church record. But I know that out of these fifty-eight years I slept over twenty.. ..Again, out of the remaining thirty-eight years, I know that a good half of that time I slept while moving about; and thus, I could no more say in this case, whether I lived during that time or not. I may have lived a little, and vegetated a little. Here again, one finds that in time, as in the body, life is everywhere, yet nowhere. And now the question naturally arises, whence, then, that life which I can trace to nowhere?... Once we have to go in search of the whereabouts of life—if search we have to—then it should be neither in space nor in time, neither as cause nor effect, but as a something which I cognize within myself as quite independent from Space, Time and Causality.

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

—COUNT LEO TOLSTOI

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Scientists now accept the phenomenon that one type of sensory input (such as hearing music) evokes an additional one (such as seeing colours). The phenomenon is termed *synesthesia*, from the Greek roots *syn* (together) and *aesthesia* (perception). "Almost any two senses can be combined. Sights can have sounds, sounds can have tastes and, more commonly, black-and-white numbers and letters can appear coloured," writes Anne Underwood (*Newsweek*, December 1, 2003). Some synesthetes have reported that for them violins appear as a rich burgundy, pianos a deep royal purple and cellos "the mellow gold of liquid honey." Scientists are puzzled as to why people develop synesthesia. They are of the view that it cannot be attributed to the formation of new neural connections. Hence, it is possible that most of us not only have these connections but also use them regularly, though unconsciously. For instance, we describe extreme cold weather as "bitter" cold, or a garish pink or red colour as "loud," etc.

H.P.B. describes this phenomenon in the article "Occult or Exact Science?" (*The Theosophist*, April 1886). She gives the instance of a person who associated sound with colour. The vowels appeared to him variously coloured, whereas the consonants appeared dark grey. Thus, human speech appeared to him "in the shape of many-coloured, or variegated ribbons coming out of persons' mouths, the colours of which are determined by those of the vowels in the sentences, separated one from the other by the greyish stripes of the consonants....The sounds of the instruments have also their distinct and special colours; the piano and flute suggest tints of blue; the violin—black; and the guitar—silver grey, etc." There are sensitives in whom a triple phenomenon is produced by one special sense generating two other senses. For instance, a certain sensitive saw dark golden clouds and experienced a taste "like copper in the mouth" whenever he heard a brass band.

H.P.B. explains the phenomenon as "*a cyclic return of human organisms to their primitive form during the 3rd and even the 4th Root Races of what is known as the Antediluvian periods....That which is now considered as an abnormal phenomenon, was in every probability*

the normal state of the antediluvian Humanity." We are told that in the absence of the sense of hearing—which was developed only in the third sub-race of the Atlantean Race—human speech was more like a mental articulation of sounds, "something like the systems we now see worked out for the deaf and dumb." In those days, "speech" was associated with sight, and "people could understand each other and *talk* with the help of only *sight* and *touch*. 'Sound is seen before it is heard'

Many a time we are tempted to judge others and reform them. "Have you ever found yourself wanting to 'fix' people?" When you find everything wrong with them and want to reorganize them, it is time to look within and see, writes Marie T. Russell (*Dignity Dialogue*, March 2004). Often, on introspection we detect the same faults within us for which we criticize others. Russel writes:

The next time you find yourself blaming, judging, or criticizing someone, ask yourself: "How do I exhibit this behaviour also? How does this apply to my actions and thoughts?"...

If people around you are acting out anger, look within yourself and find out what you are angry about. If you find yourself in conversations where the "other" is judging and criticizing, ask yourself how you are being judgmental and critical....

Remember that the "other" is always a reflection of you. So rather than expend energy trying to "fix" the other, use that energy where it can really make a difference..."fix" yourself. Look at yourself and see what needs clearing....

Not only is judging and blaming harmful to yourself, to your inner peace and joy, but it is futile....unless you turn it around and apply it to yourself!

We must learn to use the situations and people that make us react in an unbrotherly way, as a means to acquire peace and harmony.

All the great teachers down the ages have taught us to abstain from faultfinding. Mr. Judge suggests that seldom is it our duty to judge others. Whenever we are tempted to judge another we must ask ourselves, "Am I any better in my way? Do I, or do I not offend in some other way just as much as they do in this?" In *An Epitome of Theosophy*, Mr. Judge explains the rationale of how we attract to ourselves the fault from the person we condemn. Thus:

Each human being has his own elementals that partake of his nature and his thoughts. If you fix your thoughts upon a person in anger, or in critical, uncharitable judgment, you attract to yourself a number of those elementals that belong to, generate and are generated by this particular fault or failing, and they precipitate themselves upon you. Hence, through the injustice of your merely human condemnation, which cannot know the source and cause of the action of another, you at once become a sharer of his fault or failing by your own act, and the spirit expelled returns "with seven devils worse than himself."

This is the origin of the popular saying, that "curses, like chickens, come home to roost," and has its root in the laws governing magnetic affinity.

In case we find others in error, the course of action advised by Mr. Judge is:

What concerns you and what is your duty is to discover wherein you have been at fault. If, on finding friction of any sort, you will look back over your past thoughts and words and deeds, you will surely find you have erred either directly or indirectly, by leaving something undone or unsaid. By living that way you will learn a good deal about yourself, while by looking for and noting the possible faults of others—no matter how greatly they have sinned, in your opinion—you will learn nothing.. *...(Letters That Have Helped Me)*

Positive thoughts and positive emotions are the key to success in all our endeavours. "It may be hard to believe, but we pave the way for our success or failure with our thoughts....if the mind is full of doubts or fear about the task we are performing, it undermines our chances of success" (*Purity*, March 2004). A psychic performing feats such as bending spoons and stopping clocks by thought power has reported that he is most successful in front of children, who expect him to succeed, and thus their thoughts support his efforts. On the other hand, negative thoughts of skeptics and cynics in the audience stalled his success. "We can either create or maintain a powerful state of mind with positive affirmations or use them to counter our negative self-talk." Positive thoughts must be accompanied by positive emotions for better results. "To make the effect even stronger, we can visualize our affirmations, *i.e.*, make a mental picture of ourselves as we would like to be, and we would soon achieve that target."

The power of resolution or positive thinking is based on the foundation of will, desire and imagination. "Behind will stands desire." H.P.B. has this to say:

Paracelsus....adds in the same strain: "...Determined will is a beginning of all magical operations... .Because men do not perfectly imagine and believe the result, is that the arts are uncertain, while they might be perfectly certain."...

The opposing power alone of unbelief and skepticism, if projected in a current of equal force, can check the other, and sometimes completely neutralize it. Why should spiritualists wonder that the presence of some strong skeptics, or of those who, feeling bitterly opposed to the phenomenon, unconsciously exercise their will-power in opposition, hinders and often stops altogether the manifestations? (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 57)

Mr. Crosbie gives the example of a student trying to follow spiritual discipline. After having resolved to control the personal nature, when he fails, the student decides that in the future, he will not oscillate *so much*. But this, says Mr. Crosbie, is not the correct position because it shows, he expects to oscillate *some*. Of course if he expects to oscillate,

he *will* oscillate. It would be better to expect to hit the mark, instead of expecting to miss it. There is a great difference in the psychological position, as well as in the quality of the energy aroused. We should cease doubting our power to accomplish. If we doubt, it will be like trying to shoot an arrow with a loose bow-string—no force, and no certainty of direction. When the bow-string is pulled taut, and let go, there is *no hesitation* in the arrow. It goes where pointed and with the strength in the pull. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 116)

We must use this power of thought to improve not only our own life by getting rid of wrong habits and wrong emotions, but also the lives of people around us. H.P.B. writes that "every person who draws the breath of life affects the mental and moral atmosphere of the world, and helps to colour the day for those about him. Those who do not help to elevate the thoughts and lives of others must of necessity either paralyse them by indifference, or actively drag them down."

Scientists are seeking to answer the question, "Does 'race' exist?" People are classified into different groups based on physical characteristics, area of geographic origin and shared culture. "But how valid is the concept of race from a biological standpoint? Do physical features reliably say anything informative about a person's genetic makeup beyond indicating that the individual has genes for blue eyes or curly hair?," ask Michael J. Bamshad and Steve E. Olson (*Scientific American*, December 2003). It appears that genetic information and analyses are inadequate for racial classification. For instance, a person might belong to one group based on skin-colour gene, but a different group based on hair-colour gene. "The outward signs on which most definitions of race are based—such as skin colour and hair texture—are dictated by a handful of genes. But the other genes of two people of the same 'race' can be very different. Conversely, two people of different 'races' can share more genetic similarity than two individuals of the same race." Traits such as skin colour and other physical characteristics

that are influenced by natural selection may tend to exaggerate genetic relatedness. For instance, "individuals from sub-Saharan Africa and Australian Aborigines might have similar skin pigmentation (because of adapting to strong sun), but genetically they are quite dissimilar."

Using genetic analyses, researchers were able to distinguish five different groups of people according to their geographic origin: sub-Saharan Africans; Europeans and Asians west of the Himalayas; East Asians; inhabitants of New Guinea and Melanesia; and Native Americans. They could also identify subgroups within each region. This approach was successful when people were widely separated from one another geographically, but it was difficult to group people into a unique cluster where people of a geographic region had interbred with multiple populations—as was the case with India.

Similarly, researchers experienced difficulty in categorizing populations in the U.S. "Most people who described themselves as African-American have relatively recent ancestors from West Africa." According to Mark D. Shriver of Pennsylvania State University, "approximately 30 per cent of Americans who consider themselves 'white' have less than 90 per cent European ancestry."

The concept of "race" is a complex one and even learned ethnologists have confessed that they were unable to account for varieties in human race. Esoteric philosophy traces human (Root) Races and sub-races right from the infancy of humanity. Each Root-Race has seven sub-races. Each sub-race has seven Branch or "Family" races. Each Family-race can be further subdivided into countless tribes, shoots and offshoots, depending on Karmic action. We are in the Fifth Root-Race and fifth Sub-race. Our Fifth Root-Race has been in existence for 1,000,000 years (*S.D.*, II, 434-35). Further:

The evolution of these races, their formation and development, went *pah passu* and on parallel lines with the evolution, formation, and development of three geological strata, from which the human complexion was as much derived as it was determined by the climates of those zones. It names three great divisions, namely, the RED-YELLOW, the BLACK, and the BROWN-

WHITE. The Aryan races, for instance, now varying from dark brown, almost black, red-brown-yellow, down to the whitest creamy colour, are yet all of one and the same stock—the Fifth Root-Race—and spring from one single progenitor, called in Hindu *exotehcism* by the generic name of Vaivasvata Manu: the latter, remember, being that generic personage, the Sage, who is said to have lived over 18,000,000 years ago, and also 850,000 years ago—at the time of the sinking of the last remnants of the great continent of Atlantis.... (*S.D.*, II, 249-50)

We are also told that Earth and men were both in an ethereal state and reached the consolidated state only in the middle of the Third Root Race. "The light yellow is the colour of the first SOLID human race," which gave birth to *red-yellow* and brown-white races.

They "of the yellow hue" are the forefathers of those whom Ethnology now classes as the Turanians, the Mongols, Chinese and other ancient nations; and the land they fled to was no other than Central Asia. There entire new races were born; there they lived and died until the separation of the nations.. ..Nearly two-thirds of one million years have elapsed since that period. The yellow-faced giants of the post-Atlantean day, had ample time, throughout this forced confinement to one part of the world, and with the same racial blood and without any fresh infusion or admixture in it, to branch off during a period of nearly 700,000 years into the most heterogeneous and diversified types. The same is shown in Africa... (*S.D.*, II, 425)

Regarding the formation of the races, H.R.B. writes: "The human races are born one from the other," and "there is enormous overlapping of one race over the race which succeeds it, though in characters and external type the elder loses its characteristics, and assumes the new features of the younger race.. .." (*S.Z.*, II, 444)

H.P.B. writes about America: "Pure Anglo-Saxons hardly three hundred years ago, the Americans of the United States have already become a nation apart, and, owing to strong admixture of various nationalities and inter-marriage, almost a race *sui generis*, not only mentally, but also physically." Americans have become in only three hundred years a "primary race," and they are the germs of the *Sixth* subrace

VIRTUE and wisdom are sublime things; but if they create pride and a consciousness of separateness from the rest of humanity in the mind of a man, then they are only the snake of self reappearing in a finer form. At any moment he may put on his grosser shape and sting as fiercely....

In fact, to have lost the power to wound, implies that the snake is not only scotched, but killed. When it is merely stupefied or lulled to sleep it awakes again and the disciple uses his knowledge and his power for his own ends, and is a pupil of the many masters of the black art, for the road to destruction is very broad and easy, and the way can be found blindfold. That it is the way to destruction is evident, for when a man begins to live for self he narrows his horizon steadily till at last the fierce driving inwards leaves him but the space of a pin's head to dwell in. We have all seen this phenomenon occur in ordinary life. A man who becomes selfish isolates himself, grows less interesting and less agreeable to others. The sight is an awful one, and people shrink from a very selfish person at last, as from a beast of prey. How much more awful is it when it occurs on the more advanced plane of life, with the added powers of knowledge, and through the greater sweep of successive incarnations!

—*Light on the Path*