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# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THE TRUE FRIENDS OF HUMANITY

[Perhaps the most important purpose of H.P.B.'s Mission was to revive the ancient teaching of the existence of Living Mahatmas, Perfected Men of Wisdom who, possessing the knowledge of the Law of Karma and Cycles, worked with it to help the race of men to a nobler standard of living. She also made it known, first to her own intimate circle of friends and students and then to the general public, that those Masters had shouldered the grave responsibility of teaching Their sacred and secret Science to such persons as would pledge themselves to a life of correct performance of duty, of personal sacrifice, of study of Their Wisdom-Religion, its Esoteric Philosophy and its Occult Science, so that they might serve their fellow-souls.

Since 1877, when H.P.B.'s first book, *Isis Unveiled*, was published, much abuse and many absurdities have gathered round the grand ideal of Living Mahatmas of the Snowy Range. Even earnest students of Theosophy have gone astray, more than once in the history of the Theosophical Movement, because they allowed themselves to be misled by claims made, by fanciful notions put forward in serious-looking publications and the like. Others have asked why, if the Masters exist, They do not come out to help openly, to restore order in this chaotic world where false knowledge and selfish actions prevail. All such little understand the real nature of Their work, Their far-reaching influence, Their method of helping mankind.

Who the Masters are, what They are doing for humanity, how They may be reached, are questions on which much light has been thrown in authentic Theosophical literature. H.P.B.'s and Mr. Judge's books and articles are available to all who desire to profit by them. The extracts collected here are, therefore, from the less known Theosophical writings in the old magazines

— H.P.B.'s *Theosophist* and *Lucifer*, and Mr. Judge's *Path*. Further extracts on the same subject will be printed in our next issue. — EDS.]

## I

IN EVERY COUNTRY and in every age there were and there will be people, pure of heart, who, conquering their earthly thoughts and the passions of the flesh, raise their spiritual faculties to such a pitch that the mysteries of being and the laws governing Nature and hidden from the uninitiated are revealed to them. Let blind men persecute them; let them be burned and hunted from "societies acknowledged by law"; let them be called Magi, Wise Men, Raj Yogis or saints — they have lived and they still live everywhere, recognized or unrecognized. For these people who have illumined themselves during their lifetime, there are no obstacles, there are no bodily ties. They do not know either distance or time. They are alive and active in the body as well as out of it. They *are*, wherever their thought and their will carries them. They are not tied down by anything, either by a place, or by their temporary mortal covering. (*The Path*, X. 107-8, July 1895: "Letters of H. P. Blavatsky")

The Mahatmas, or literally great souls, from two words — *maha*, great, and *atma*, soul — are those mysterious adepts whom the popular fancy views as "magicians," and of whom every child knows in India, but who are met with so rarely, especially in this age of degeneration. With the exception of some Swamis and ascetics of a perfectly holy life, there are few who know positively that they *do* exist, and are no myths created by superstitious fancy. (*The Theosophist*, I. 67, December 1879: Unsigned footnote to "The Autobiography of Dayanand Saraswati, Swami")

Translating the rules of that most celebrated and holy school and sect in China founded by Chin-che-K'hae, called Che-Chay (the Wise One), in the year 575 of our era, when coming to the sentence which reads: "That which relates to the one garment (seamless) worn by the GREAT TEACHERS OF THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS, the school of the Himavatas" (p. 256), the European translator places after the last sentence a sign of interrogation, as well he may. The statistics of the school of the "Himavatas," or of our Himalayan Brotherhood, are not to be found in the General Census Records of India. Further, Mr. Beal translates a Rule relating to "the great professors of the higher order who live in mountain depths remote from men," the *Aranyakas*, or hermits. (*The*

*Theosophist*, III. 98, January 1882: Editorial Appendix to T. Subba Row's "Aryan-Arhat Esoteric Tenets on the Sevenfold Principle in Man")

European and even Hindu students of Occultism are often deploring and even wondering why all the "Initiates" or "adepts" seem to have died out in India. They have not "died" out, nor is their absence due to "Kali Yug" as popularly yet erroneously supposed. The "adepts" have simply and gradually, if not altogether forsaken India, at least retired from its public populated portions, keeping their knowledge and often their very existence as secret as they can. Many of them are gone beyond the Himalayas. Some yet remain — especially in Southern India, but few are the privileged ones who know of them; still fewer those who could point out their places of retreat. (*The Theosophist*, III. 135, February 1882: Footnote signed "Ed." to "A Flash of Light upon Occult Freemasonry")

It highly gratified our Delegates to Ceylon to find that not only every educated priest and layman, but the uneducated people of that Island also, knew the possibility of man's acquiring the exalted psychical powers of adeptship, and the fact that they had often been acquired. At Bentota we were taken to a temple where a community of 500 of these *Rahats* or adepts had formerly resided. Nay, we even met those who had quite recently encountered such holy men; and a certain eminent priest who joined our Society was shortly after permitted to see and exchange some of our signs of recognition with one. It is true that, as in India and Egypt, there is a prevalent idea that the term for the manifestation of the highest grades of *rahatship* (*Rahat* or *Arhat* is the Pali equivalent for the Sanskrit *Rishi* — one who has developed his psychical powers to their fullest extent) has expired, but this comes from a mistaken notion that Buddha himself had limited the period of such development to one millennium after his death. (*The Theosophist*, I. 289, August 1880: "Rahatship" signed "Ed.")

By the term *Rahat* we meant an adept, or one who "has developed his psychical powers to their fullest extent." Such a person is known in India as a *Rishi* or a *Yogi*, and there are many stages and degrees of development before the pinnacle of spiritual perfectibility is reached. Thus a *Rahat* may be of a lower or higher degree of development. The four degrees or stages are *Suska Widarsaka* (lowest), *Tividhya* (third), *Shat Abhigna* (second), and *Siwupilidimbiapat* (first), the highest. We

affirmed and repeat that neither in India, Egypt, nor Ceylon has this ancient wisdom died out, and if we believe that there still survive its adepts and initiates, it is because we speak from personal knowledge and not by hearsay. . . . Whether the priest did or did not see and exchange signs with a stranger who is acquainted with the occult sciences, and hence what the Buddhists call a *rahat* of some one of the degrees, is immaterial: we believe he did, inasmuch as two of our party of Delegates also had a similar experience at two different places on the Island — to say nothing of the experience of the Editor of this magazine, or that of a certain other person, not of our society, who both saw and conversed with such an individual. If the priest did see him, he saw a living man, not a ghost, or a god, or a spirit. A few weeks after landing in India, and when none but half a dozen of Bombay gentlemen knew our Society signals, Colonel Olcott, being at the Karli Caves, in the mofussil, was accosted by a Hindu *sanyasi* who first gave him the most important of our signs and then all the rest. When asked where he had learnt them, he answered that his *guru* (teacher) had sent him from ————— to Karli, ordering him to arrive there at precisely that hour and meet a white man to whom he should give these signs and a message, which he then delivered. The point for both enemies and friends to realize is that Buddha declares that the state of *Rahat*, or adept, may always be attained by those who will follow his precepts. (*The Theosophist*, II. 19, October 1880: Unsigned Note)

It is quite right if by "Yogi" is meant *Atma*, the highest Spiritual Soul. But the writer uses an incorrect expression when saying that the Founders of the Theosophical Society claim communion with *Yogis*; *Yogis* can be but Hindus, and in the Fraternity — with which we claim to have some acquaintance — the Hindus are in a minority. Even these cannot be strictly called "Yogis" since their modes of life, habits, religious worship and form of Initiation differ entirely from those of the Hindu *Yogis* as known to the general public. In one respect only are the adepts we know like *Yogis*: namely, in their great purity of life, self-abnegation, and the practice of *Dhyan* and *Samadhi*. (Supplement to *The Theosophist*, Vol. III, No. 1, October 1881: Editor's Note to the article "Who Are the Aryas and the Buddhists?")

The process and growth of the Adepts is the secret of Occultism. Were adeptship easy of attainment many would achieve it, but it is the hardest task in nature, and volumes would be required even to

give an outline of the philosophy of this development. (*Lucifer*, II. 156, April 1888: "Editors' Reply" to the question: "Have the Adepts grown or developed to their present state and powers by their own inherent capacities, and if so, how far can the steps of the process be described?")

There are very few persons in this country, who, being in search of the ancient Aryan Philosophy, have obtained control over the bodily passions which trouble ordinary men beyond measure. Fewer still who, like one now living in India, whom I dare not mention, are known. Almost all who have thoroughly studied or are studying that ennobling philosophy, keep themselves out of the public view in compliance with wise and inexorable rules. It is not through selfishness, as too many imagine. Though unseen, they none the less are continually working for the good of humanity. In thousands of cases what they effect is ascribed to Providence. And whenever they find anyone who, like themselves, has an ambition above the mere pleasures of this world, and is in search of that Vidya which alone can make man wise in this as well as happy in the next, they stand ready by his side, take him up in their hands as soon as he shows his worthiness, and put in his way the opportunities to learn that philosophy, the study of which has made them masters of themselves, of nature's forces, and of this world. (*The Theosophist*, I. 91, January 1880: "The Swami of Akalkot" by D.K.M.)

Those whom sober Occultists call "Masters," though so vastly superior to average humanity, are not Genii or Enchanters out of the "Arabian Nights," but mortal men with abnormal powers. (*Lucifer*, IV. 160, April 1889: Footnote signed "Ed." to "The Talking Image of Urur")

The greatest adepts living are but mortal men, after all, and sooner or later have to die. No adept is proof against accident, unless he uses selfishly his acquired powers. For, unless he is constantly watching over his own personality, and cares little for the rest of mankind, he is as liable to fall a victim to disease and death as any other man. The childish, not to say absurd, ideas about Yogis, and their *supernatural* powers — whereas they are at best but *superhuman* — that we often find current among our own Theosophists, and the superstitious and grotesque tales narrated of these holy personages among that class of Hindus which, being more orthodox than educated, derives all its ideas from the dead-letter traditions of the *Puranas* and *Shastras*, have very little to do with

sober truth. An adept, or Raj Yogi (we now speak of the real, not the fictitious ones of idle rumour) is simply the custodian of the secrets of the hidden possibilities of nature; the master and guide of her undiscovered potentialities, one who awakens and arouses them into activity by abnormal yet natural powers, and by furnishing them with the requisite group of conditions which lie dormant and can rarely, if ever, be brought together if left alone. (*The Theosophist*, V. 105, December 1883: Unsigned article, "The Death of a Great Man — Pundit Dayananda Saraswati")

Suppose our senses could be made to undergo some change, while the universe remained all along the same, it is evident quite a new world would arise before us, though objectively and materially the world would be exactly the same as it was before. . . . And this is precisely the change claimed by the initiated adepts of Occultism; and that alone is sufficient to account for their great opposition to many a scientific axiom of modern science and the greater trustworthiness of the teachings of the former. Once that we admit the possibility of such a "change," and as a result therefrom, the greater acuteness and perfection of all their senses — granting even that the sixth and seventh sense do not exist for anyone outside those who claim either of them or both, and thus cannot be proved scientifically — we have to admit at any rate that they see, hear, taste, feel, and smell more acutely than the rest of humanity, untrained and uninitiated, how can we then avoid trusting more in *their* than in our senses? And yet the same traveller who will unhesitatingly trust to the acuteness of the eye or ear of his Red-Indian guide in preference to his own — will deny the existence and even the possibility of a series of such faculties being developed in an Asiatic adept! (*The Theosophist*, V. 123, February 1884: Footnote signed "Ed." to reviews of two books by Baron Karl du Prel)

Apart and quite distinct from the variety in the subjective perceptions of the one and same object — by mankind in general — stands the *unvarying* perception of the trained Occultist. Perceiving the *actuality*, for him the modes of the presentation of an object cannot vary; for the initiated adept perceives and discerns the ultimate and actual state of things in nature by means of his spiritual perception, trammelled by none of his physical senses, and only when the former have been called forth from their latent into their active state and developed sufficiently to stand the final tests of initiation. Therefore, this abnormal (in our

present race only) faculty has nought to do with the common perceptions and their various modes, and if the materialist is sceptical as to the latter, how can he be made to believe in the existence of the former — a faculty of which he knows less than of the man in the moon! (*Ibid.*, p. 124: Footnote to same reviews, signed also “Ed.”)

[Could *Mahatmas* speak any language that they please?] Yes, by putting themselves *en rapport* with the fifth principle of a man, who speaks that language, or by other means well known to eastern adepts.

[Is it possible for a Mahatma to transport his physical body to any place at his option?] He can travel to any place he pleases if he is advanced enough to have a thorough control over Akasa. *Sukshma-sarira* can penetrate solid matter, while the *sthulasarira* cannot. (*The Theosophist*, V. 246, July 1884: Notes signed “Editor” to letter headed “Various Questions”)

There is a great difference between the two [Adept and Initiate]. An Adept is one versed in some and *any* special Art or Science. An “Initiate” is one who is initiated into the mysteries of the Esoteric or Occult philosophy — a Hierophant. (*Lucifer*, IV. 101, April 1889: Footnote signed “Ed.” to article on “Varieties of Magic”)

The “Masters” in question belong to no “sect”; and even a regular Chela has to rise above every sectarian prejudice before he can become one. (*The Theosophist*, V. 169, April 1884: Footnote signed “Ed.” to letter headed “Transcendental Occultism”)

From times immemorial every initiate before entering on his supreme trial of initiation, in antiquity as at the present time, pronounces these sacramental words . . . “And I swear to give up my life for the salvation of my brothers, which constitute the whole mankind, if called upon, and to die in the defence of truth. . . .” (*Lucifer*, IV. 235, May 1889: Footnote to “Roots of Ritualism in Church and Masonry” by H.P.B.)

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## THE DRINK EVIL

[This is the first part of an article which appeared originally in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT* for January 1946. The second part, presenting the viewpoint of modern science, will appear in our next issue.—EDS.]

### I.—MORAL CONSIDERATIONS

FREE and long-continued sense-indulgence brings about many an undesirable reaction of mind and body. Over-indulgence in any direction is bad, both materially and spiritually. So it becomes necessary to see that the proportion of indulgence, moderation and abstinence is well maintained in the spheres in which each is desirable. There are certain things which are beneficial if rightly indulged in, there are others which may be harmlessly indulged in moderately, and there are still others which must be totally abstained from. In the first category fall right thought, word and deed. In the second can be mentioned items of sense satisfaction such as hearing, seeing, smelling, eating and touching. In the third come certain items which form an exception to the second group and which should be completely abandoned. Drinking alcohol is one of these. Here we are mainly concerned with abstinence — total abstinence — from strong alcoholic drinks, as indulgence in them is a cause of much of the trouble in the world.

Alcohol has a bad effect on physical health and an exciting or deadening effect on the mind and nervous system. This disturbance of the controlling and disciplining force of the physical system ultimately demonstrates itself as psychic disturbance. Then the man is not himself and acts and speaks quite out of character. The effect of alcohol is that the mind gets out of control and, together with it, the body, which the mind then is unable to govern. The tongue speaks at random, the legs go their own way and so with the other organs.

This distressing effect is obvious in habitual drunkards, so often found lying in gutters and by-lanes near drinking houses. A habitual drinker feels that he cannot resist the temptation, so strong is the lure of drink, though in the beginning he may have abhorred drink for its nasty smell. An addict will seize any opportunity to satisfy his thirst for alcohol. He will think of nothing else. Alcohol makes a man forget all the good things of life and makes him a slave till he is utterly ruined and lost. Anybody who tries to persuade a man who is drinking as to its ill effects invites nothing but hatred and abuse. There is no

hope for a drunkard unless he can be persuaded in his sober moments and be brought on the right path.

A man strongly under the effects of alcohol loses his sense and acts in very pitiable ways. He loses knowledge of mother and sister, of himself and others. He rolls on the road, many times not even properly dressed. He tells all his secrets under the influence of alcohol. He trembles and shouts as if he were in the depths of woe. Alcohol affects his mind like a high fever. The poison of strong alcoholic drinks makes body and limbs weak, enervates the organs and lulls the victim at last into the stupor of oblivion, which is not restful and restorative like ordinary sleep.

As a heap of dry grass is destroyed by a spark, in the same way discrimination, restraint, knowledge, truth, courtesy and kindness are destroyed by the drink habit. An addict creates hell for himself and for his family. The drink habit is very easily acquired by persons who are not properly educated or who are off their guard. The invitation to this habit is open to all, and alcoholic beverages are easily accessible. The habit may seem pleasant in the beginning and therefore it ensnares the unwary. But afterwards it reduces its victim to utter misery and misfortune. Then, too late, he realizes what a hold it has on him. He becomes an outcast and his position still deteriorates. He goes from bad to worse till he eventually succumbs to the ill effects of alcohol. Like a person who has lost his way in the darkness, he gets deeper and deeper into the bog, with no way out. Many go this way and lose themselves in absolute hopelessness.

So far, we have considered only the material or physical aspect of the subject, but there is the spiritual aspect too. The scriptures speak against the drink evil. According to Hindu and Muslim religious tenets, wine and other strong alcoholic drinks are forbidden. The Jain scriptures name drinking alcohol as one of the seven great vices which every religious man must renounce. Other religions also prohibit strong alcoholic drink. This the scriptures do because drink brings ruin spiritual as well as physical to its addicts.

The problem of drinking, moreover, is not an isolated social vice. It brings in its train gambling and prostitution. These three great social evils — involving tremendous loss of precious time, money and energy — have been curses upon society from times immemorial. The evil of drink is not the least antisocial of the three, for it has repercussions on both body and mind. A drink addict has no normal social existence.

His world is the world of whims and dreams. Reformers must find a way to stop this vice to raise the level of society.

The drink evil has ruined kings and dynasties, families and individuals. It is a special curse to villagers and labourers, who often spend almost the whole of their small income upon drink and leave but little for their family. Their children malnourished, not educated, uncared for, their family is ruined. Interest in drink rules out interest in family duties and obligations. The labouring class, if properly instructed, can save the money that it spends on drink to utilize for family requirements — food, clothing, education and the like. If this ideology were but brought home to the labouring class, then one of the chief obstacles to the welfare and progress of society and nation would be removed.

Recently, with the advent of Westerners and their civilization, it has become with many a point of etiquette to drink. Drinking is too readily accepted as a social obligation. Such a false notion of etiquette must be repudiated for the betterment of society.

It may be mentioned also that the preparation of alcoholic drinks involves violence to countless minute forms of life in the fermentation process, another argument against the drink evil for the conscientious man.

In short, the moral value of prohibition is so deep and abiding that it will ultimately assert itself as surely as day follows night. So, total abstinence for the individual becomes imperative from both the physical and the spiritual points of view. But we have an obligation to society as well as to ourselves. Abstaining personally from the use of such drinks is not enough. We have a duty to protect the weak and especially the younger generation. We must do what we can to discourage the preparation, sale and use of alcoholic beverages.

Persons will no doubt come forward to claim that to drink is their right and to insist upon that right at any cost. Now, there are limits to a person's right to do a thing injurious not only to himself but also to society in the long run. In a country having compulsory education, for example, to claim the right to remain ignorant and illiterate would be regarded as preposterous and so harmful to the country in the end that the "right" could not be allowed. There are so many things against the drink evil and there is so undeniably not a single one in its favour, that the "right" to drink is open to grave question. The individual's "right" to poison himself with habit-forming drugs like heroin, cocaine and morphine products generally is no longer claimed. The menace of

these and of alcohol differs in degree rather than in kind.

Another aspect of the alcohol problem is found in the attitude of vested interests and of the State. Dealers in alcoholic drinks are primarily interested in increasing their highly profitable, if soul-killing, trade, however detrimental to the individual and to society. They think in terms of money and not in terms of the welfare of the people and the nation. The State in its turn gets a big revenue from the alcohol trade and would not like to disturb its finances by raising delicate scruples. The result is that the burden of taxation falls heavily on the poor, among whom are so many drink addicts, and they and their dependants are ruined. Due, therefore, to the interests of the State and the trade as well as to the lure of drink, the evil continues in spite of objections that should be conclusive.

Thus, though drink is a proven evil to society, bad for health both mental and physical, a curse to family life and worse than useless from every point of view, the path of practical reform is not so easy as that of theory. Complete prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages and general total abstinence are good in theory but how can they be brought about? Society could be educated as to the bad effects of drink more easily than the liquor interests and the State could be brought to sacrifice their income. The social reformer will have to fight this callous readiness to perpetuate the drink evil and turn it to financial advantage.

For, nationwide prohibition could be brought about only by the State. Once sincerely convinced of the advisability of complete prohibition of the manufacture and sale of strong drink except for medicinal use, a State genuinely concerned for the public good could with a rigorous and honest policy enforce such prohibition. People would have to be educated and attractive alternatives offered. Healthy and wholesome beverages should be made available to the public in plenty, to reduce the temptation of alcoholic beverages. In the beginning there might be a certain amount of smuggling, and illicit distillation might go on for some time. But it would not be difficult to detect and punish such law-breakers, if prohibition had the support of public opinion and were put in the hands of able and honest executive officers. With whole-hearted State support and no corruption the scheme could be a great success.

Then, if the whole thing were rightly managed and sincerely followed, what a beautiful land it would be — a happy, prosperous, peaceful and progressive country. This may seem a far hope, a difficult and

distant consummation. But every student can begin today to lay the foundations for it by his work upon himself, controlling and subduing his evil desires and unfolding and developing healthy and wholesome ones, after eliminating his weaknesses. So let us have right habits and right thoughts, and the correct inner attitude that will put our life on the true path and enable us to radiate its pure beneficence for the upliftment of humanity.

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### THE SACRIFICE

THE golden moon was still lingering in the horizon when the morning star rode upon the sky. A cool breeze stirred the waters. The East unfurled the crimson banner of sunrise.

From the sacrificial altar rose the burning flames — red flames, golden flames. I stood by the blazing fire, ready to perform the grand sacrifice. When I looked round, I found that the Priest was myself. The Assembly was myself. The Brahmins were myself. Within the fire I saw myself. The Sacrificial Victim was myself. The Mantrams rose from myself. The echoes resounded in myself. The Chanter and the Chant were myself.

I took up the sword and stared at the victim. It was an ugly, distorted, crooked and dark portion of myself, while the figure that lifted up the sword was the blazing light of myself. I was sacrificing myself to myself. The flames leaped and danced. The skies were awakened.

I plunged the sword in the victim. He laughed and looked stronger. I stood aghast. How could the sacrifice continue without the victim being killed? I plunged in again. He hung down his head, but was still alive. I attacked a third time. He lost consciousness and fell. But I was not sure if he had died.

The Assembly waited. The Priest chanted. The echoes moaned, "Repeat, repeat."

The sun rose in the sky and the moon disappeared. The flames still burned bright at the altar.

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## SEEKING HAPPINESS IN ACTION

ABSENCE of philosophical principles always leads people to wrong action. Mental confusion results in deeds which produce pain, sooner or later. Philosophical principles cleanse our minds of confusion and enable us to decide on a course of action which, however unpleasant in the beginning, produces bliss in the end. In times of stress, the absence of such philosophical principles precipitates wrong action.

Men and women live so much in their passing moods of feelings and emotions that most of them evaluate events in the light of the pleasure or pain they experience hour by hour. We do not need a philosopher to tell us that emotional moods of pleasure and repose or of pain and confusion are in themselves a great symbol of restlessness. A person in glee at high noon is down in the depths of despair at sunset, for men and masses of men ever move between light and darkness which are the world's eternal ways. But we certainly *do* need a philosopher to stress for us the fact that feelings of enthusiasm and depression provide a false gauge, and a dangerous one because utterly unreliable.

Sometimes the same action brings joy to one and despair to another. The victor and the vanquished react differently to the same event. Changing moods are fancied by people to be misery and happiness. Enveloped by emotional glamour, they shed tears or shout cheers. The action which produces these opposite moods is one and the same action; and had it been true in the scientific sense or righteous in the philosophic, then there would have been *Ananda*-Bliss everywhere; bliss born of mental equanimity and of heart satisfaction would have been followed by a spirit of thankfulness everywhere.

Let us seek for the philosophical principles which would enable us to evaluate actions and their effects on us as pleasure and pain. In the Eighteenth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna describes three kinds of happiness. All people who are seeking happiness have a direct and a valuable piece of instruction in this classification.

The first type of pleasure, the lowest, is rooted in mental laziness which makes a man inattentive and heedless. No one should allow his mind to remain for ever in the torpor of sleep. But there *are* people who enjoy their mental torpor, enjoy not doing anything. That pleasure is negative in quality; it is a feeling of dullness, arising from the neglect of duties, which the *Gita* describes as improper.

The second kind of happiness is that which is rooted in actions impelled by the senses and by the appetites and the desires. The *Gita* describes it as sweet in the beginning, but bitter in the long run. The beguiling sweetness tastes like *Amrita*, heavenly nectar, while the senses and the organs are enjoying it; but it proves to be poison in the process of time. Shankara in his commentary on this *Gita* verse uses strong language: this kind of happiness brings "deterioration in strength, vigour, wisdom, intellect, wealth and energy; it leads to *adharma*, unrighteousness, and ultimately to *naraka*, hell." Human actions which are related to this type of happiness fall into two divisions: (a) avoidance of actions which look painful or troublesome though they are duties to be attended to; and (b) indulgence in actions which look pleasurable, which are easy to perform, but which, not being duties, are not necessary to undertake. For temporary and sensuous satisfaction in the present, men and women act, thoughtless of the future; those who try to avoid pain or who run after pleasures are shortsighted.

The third kind of pleasure is defined as arising from a purified understanding and from clear knowledge belonging to the Soul. When our mind is cleansed and the knowledge of *Atma-Buddhi* flows into and through it, we enjoy the supreme satisfaction of the third type of happiness. The cleansing of the mind is a painful process and therefore this type of pleasure is described in the *Gita* as poison-like in the beginning; but when, as a result of that cleansing, the Wisdom of the Higher Self — *Atma-Buddhi* — flows into the mind, we enjoy the happiness of Nectar — the beverage of the immortal Gods. The cleansing of the mind destroys whatever conflict of duties we may have been troubled about, for the inflowing wisdom reveals to us what our duties really are, and more — that wisdom brings the strength to perform those duties without self-interest and without a desire for reward. Self-interest implies desire for a particular kind of result; if it comes about we are happy; if not, we become unhappy, but in that feeling we lose sight of the truth and the righteousness of our actions. Therefore, real happiness follows when self-interest is put away and desire for the fruits of our deeds is eradicated.

An action does not become right or righteous because it is pleasurable and profitable to us; nor must it be rejected as wrong or unrighteous because its effects on us are painful. Such profit and loss, pain and pleasure, are ephemeral and in the whirligig of time the

enduring aspect of any action has to be faced by each one of us. Virtue brings its own reward, and guilt its punishment — tomorrow or after many days.

Each one of us has to learn to seek the principles to be applied in performing actions. The *Bhagavad-Gita* has been called the Book of *Karma-Yoga*; but *Karma-Yoga* is not the performance of ordinary actions. W. Q. Judge explains that *Karma-Yoga* means “concentration and contemplation while engaged in action.” He writes:

We must therefore seek for concentration in order that we may be able to do those actions which the All-Wise presents to us to be done, remaining the while unaffected.

But the All-Wise cannot and does not present any plan to the lower desire-self, with its wandering mind. Only to the purified mind which is concentrated does the true vision come, which vision enables a man to act rightly and righteously.

Each one of us, then, has the solemn duty of finding out the truths and principles ere we act; nay more, of determining what our duties are in verity. The responsibility of political leaders whose acts involve nations is a thousand times greater. Pure actions result only from pure thinking. The present world confusion would lessen if politicians gave themselves time to study philosophy and to reflect upon philosophical propositions. If they would make the *Bhagavad-Gita* their daily companion they would derive both strength and vision; without strength of Soul and vision of Spirit not only men, but also nations, perish.

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IT is not from space that I must seek my dignity, but in the regulation of my thought. The possession of worlds would not give me more than this; with space the universe encloses me and engulfs me like an atom, but with thought I enclose the universe.

—BLAISE PASCAL

## “PURUSH VISHESH ISHWARA”

### III

The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

—*I. John, iv. 20*

Having obtained this finite, joyless world, worship me. Serve me, fix heart and mind on me, be my servant, my adorer, prostrate thyself before me, and thus, united unto me, at rest, thou shalt go unto me.

—*Bhagavad-Gita, ix. 33-34*

SINCE Ishwara resides in each human heart, the first act of devotion to him is the search of him. The realizing of the fullness and the immanence of him in all contacts and under all circumstances comes later. Once this omnipresence is accepted, obeisance to Ishwara cannot be partial or divided. It has to be complete. It is in this context primarily that Brotherhood becomes a vital factor in human behaviour. The turning away from another; the coveting of another's possessions; the putting of obstacles in another's path are but a denial of the presence of Ishwara in particular persons and on special occasions. These patterns of human behaviour are nothing less than the turning away from the light in order to satisfy urges which can be succumbed to only in gloom or total darkness. It therefore follows that even during the preliminary stages the devotee is making his choices of the goal to which he either consciously or unconsciously aspires. If he considers the religion of his fathers to be the only true one and himself to be one of God's chosen few, then the *Gupta Vidya* is not for him. By the very act of separating himself and his co-religionists from the rest of humanity, he tries to erect a partition in the Universal. In spite of tall claims of being close to Ishwara, such a person has not seen him and does not know him.

The earth is full of men who have created small brotherhoods leaving out vast majorities. They may be good men, they may even be charitable and kind, but they cannot be servants to Ishwara for the simple reason

that their obeisance is not to the Universal. These men have to be left to the joy of their creeds. Their separatist tendencies will sooner than later turn into psychic energy and expend themselves in harmful effects on the physical plane. Charity restricted to communities or aid given to some to the exclusion of others has always failed because it infringes and violates a fundamental law in Life. It is thus by his own small choices of a day that the man takes the higher or the lower road.

The separation of the chaff from the corn is being hourly accomplished by Nature unobtrusively and unseen by the earthly eyes of men. Out of the teeming millions of the world, but few there are who elect for a Universal Brotherhood *in actu*. These few can enter in earnest upon the quest of Ishwara, provided they are prepared to let go of all that is personal and selfish. Once that this ideal of Universal Brotherhood is accepted, even though it be by the intellect alone, then in time that ideal penetrates the man's being and becomes a part of his conscience.

Then may it be safe for him to study further in the Secret Science. Before this first stage is reached, even the preliminary knowledge does not somehow become available; and even though that knowledge is extant in the world in printed words upon a page, a veil of secrecy effectively shrouds it from those who are not ready for it. Nature does this in its mercy, for were this knowledge to be reviled or misused, the consequences would be disastrous on the reviler and on him who made the reviling possible. When the spiritual is misused to serve earthly ends an act of desecration takes place, and the power for good which resides in the spiritual knowledge is lost as soon as it encounters the stench of earthly desires. Does the student remember that beautiful passage in *The Voice of Silence* which says:

Heaven's dew-drop glittering in the morn's first sunbeam  
within the bosom of the lotus, when dropped on earth becomes  
a piece of clay; behold, the pearl is now a speck of mire.

The Karma of him who turns the dew into mire is indeed a heavy one.

The transformation of the ordinary man into a seeker after truth is a long and arduous process; but once he decides to seek the Truth even though the heavens fall, then one more chapter from the Book of Life becomes available for his study. It is now that he comes within the grip of an iron law. In the measure that he tries to apply the new norms of behaviour, he finds that the opposition to him increases. The higher he aspires, the more he feels the resistance. His past habits,

which through memories have found a lodgement in his bodily organs, stage a revolt against the new austere régime. These now threaten, now cajole him to return to the past patterns of living. The outer world drowns him in scorn, calls him names, mimics his actions and heaps ridicule on him. Even from his co-students he may face criticism, injustice, aloofness. It may be his ordeal to be stripped of all honour, to be pauperized and be flung to the wolves. Has he the power to stand the strain and to fight the fever out of his being? These are moments and years of stress when all the accumulated vileness is being burnt out of the system. The student who feels the heat of this burning and endures it despite the severe scorchings, succeeds. For, it is when the man is surrounded by such adverse circumstances that the Will gets developed — the pure Will that harms no one, yet is adamant enough to plough through adversity and reach the goal.

In the din and confusion of the ordeal when his endurance is being sorely tried, the student may lose sight of the fact that in each such circumstance is wrapped up the one important question which he, alone and unaided, has to answer: Does he take his stand by the impersonal as against the personal, the eternal as against the perishable? Those who are going through this phase of learning know how anguish and despair, fear and torture, dog their footsteps through life. But, however bitter the struggle, however long-drawn the fight, there is always the promise of success if the correct attitude is maintained. Since it is the personal that is the aggressor, no weapon fashioned in the armoury of the personal man is of the least use to fight and subdue the personality. The personal can be tamed into submission only by something which is higher than the personal. Therefore is it that the lower self has to be restrained by the divine. In no other way is it capable of being mastered. For this purpose, the Divine has to be known and invoked. Says *Light on the Path*:

Look for the warrior and let him fight in thee.

Take his orders for battle and obey them.

Obey him not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires. . . . Look for him, else in the fever and hurry of the fight thou mayest pass him; and he will not know thee unless thou knowest him. . . . He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth.

To the disciple Arjuna, the Guru Krishna is even more explicit:

Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, the same to thee and then prepare for battle, for thus and thus alone shalt thou in action still be free from sin.

Once that the Great Journey towards Ishwar is decided upon, the preparations for it have to be undertaken with diligence. The equipment which the Soul will need is completely different from that which it was wont to gather when chained to a sense-ridden mind. Much of the possessions which men treasure on earth have now to be left behind or jettisoned on the way. On the other hand, no pilgrim can expect to complete his journey to the other shore without the special equipment that the journey requires. Long before the journey is undertaken, the devotee must have left behind that sensitiveness which has the tendency to burst into emotion. The equanimity which comes of dispassion has to be maintained in peril as in safety, amid the frenzy of mass hysteria as amid the awe-inspiring silence of an absolute stillness. But even this establishment of an inner equilibrium and the finding of a place of refuge for the Soul is not enough. To each aspirant, the progress thus far achieved is indeed great; but it does not promise indemnity against failure. The strength gathered through past sufferings is merely an index that the preliminary steps have been taken and that the devotee may enter upon his pilgrimage towards that bourne where the Soul can touch the higher Wisdom.

But caution cannot be abandoned. The knowledge which is power and produces peace is inaccessible to man until he proves that he can be trusted to keep that knowledge safe from degradation. Further, no neophyte, however eager, can be entrusted with the Secret Science until there has sprung within him the desire to use "its pure fresh waters . . . to sweeter make the Ocean's bitter waves — that mighty sea of sorrow formed of the tears of men." The disciple who undertakes the journey secretly hoping for fame or success in appearing as a teacher and apostle before the world, fails even before the task is attempted, and his hidden hypocrisy poisons his soul and the souls of those whom he touches. He is secretly worshipping himself, and his idolatrous practice must bring its own result. How then can he be taken to have touched Ishwara?

From the time that the Soul begins to hunger for the eternal knowledge, the man's efforts are known and he receives encouragement when he expects it the least. He seems to chance upon a book or a pamphlet that fires him. He meets people who think as he thinks and who sympathize with his yearnings. By the very force of his awakened inspira-

tions he gravitates towards others who share his inmost hopes and are eager to join the quest. Unconsciously to himself, he is being borne into a new strata of human consciousness. For a time, he feels the strangeness of the atmosphere while the urge to go back to the shady side of his familiar fields does not utterly desert him till years of discipline have purged it out of his system. He is in that critical state when he is too unaccustomed to the new to realize that he is pulling himself out of the circle of influence of family and friends, of coteries and cabals. He is being introduced as a member into a new and now a real family — the family of the humble pupils. Amongst them he has to pursue his quest for Ishwara, helped or hindered by their successes and failures. Amongst them he has to find his bearings and his own particular avenues of service.

In surroundings such as these, the ancient institution of the Guru is revived and the pupil is required to transfer to his immediate Guru the awe and the reverence which belong to the highest and which have now to flow in continuous and unimpeded streams from the chela to the Teacher. One more chapter of the knowledge which is Ishwara's is opened; one more willing sacrificer is ready to the Master's hand.

The eyes that shall perceive Ishwara, the mind that shall cognize Ishwara, are not the earthly eyes and the earthly mind. To take but an illustration: The myriads of lives that throng a drop of water would never have been perceptible to earthly eyes except with the discovery of the lenses and especially of their complex arrangements which make a microscope possible. The human faculties of instinct and intelligence are powerless to sense Ishwara. For this, man has to develop the faculty of intuition. But to arrive at intuition, the man has to pass through fiery ordeals. One does not adorn oneself by moulding lumps of gold ore into necklaces. The adornment requires that the lustre of gold be visible. Therefore, the ore has to be heat-treated to separate the gold. To achieve this, we have furnaces where under heat the separation of the gold takes place. An analogous process has to be endured by the man to remove the baser elements from the pure metal of his Soul. A heat by friction is generated within him by the rubbing of his aspirations against his lower inclinations. The more vigorous the friction, the greater the heat. This ordeal by fire is encountered at every stage of the journey towards Ishwara. It has to be regarded as something that the soul has desired and which is necessary for its progress. That which is burnt out is the dross of the personal and the non-eternal. The discomfort and the pain are

intense and sometimes so overpowering that the gaze of the pilgrim wavers and shifts from its goal. Arjuna on the battlefield felt it so acutely that he wanted to give up the fight to return and subjugate himself to the suzerainty of those very brothers whose pernicious power he had wished to destroy. *Light on the Path* describes this state in more telling manner:

... in the early state in which man is entering upon the silence he loses knowledge of his friends, of his lovers, of all who have been near and dear to him; and also loses sight of his teachers and of those who have preceded him on his way. I explain this because scarce one passes through without bitter complaint. Could but the mind grasp beforehand that the silence must be complete, surely this complaint need not arise as a hindrance on the path. Your teacher or your predecessor may hold your hand in his, and give you the utmost sympathy the human heart is capable of. But when the silence and the darkness comes, you lose all knowledge of him; you are alone and he cannot help you, not because his power is gone, but because you have invoked your great enemy. ... it is left to the individual to make the great effort; to refuse to be terrified by his greater nature, to refuse to be drawn back by his lesser or more material self.

During this fever-ravaged period, the student may lose his hold on the sutras of sacrifice and renunciation, and removing his gaze from the impersonal, focus it solely on his pain. The personal in him has triumphed with the weapon of pain which is essentially a personal emotion. The channel of communication with the Guru is blocked and the man falls back on expedients which will relieve him of his pain but which, on the other hand, revive his personality which otherwise would have died of starvation and neglect. Many a promising aspirant thus turns his back to the light and abandons his journey towards Ishwara. He may find his ease and even affluence, but the sense of betrayal will never utterly leave him, and in the midst of his laughter will mock him into moods of depression and despair.

Those who have dared to dream bold dreams even through this ordeal by fire, pass on. Yet are they vulnerable still. A sense of pride at the great feat achieved, a shrinking away from fellow disciples who fought and failed, may yet precipitate a downfall. Exultation at great achievements and the shunning of the fallen are indications that the snake of self is alive and has the ability to bite his poison into the system of the victorious disciple and paralyse his functions.

With the dawning of victory, another chapter has begun in hope and may end in success only if the craving for the impersonal is so vast that the personal sinks beyond vision. This distant goal can be envisaged and sought after even at the early stages of the journey. Even though for years the actions of the man may remain tinged with personality, his ideation and the bent of his thoughts may in great and greater measure seek for the impersonal even in the discharge of the small plain duties of life. Karma and service assume a different import even as the pilgrim progresses. The personal in Karma and the personal in service have now to be crowded out by the impersonal. Bulwer-Lytton in his *Zanoni* uttered a truism when he said: "The mirror of the soul cannot reflect both earth and heaven; the one vanishes from its surface as the other is glassed upon the deep."

Each day's plans, each moment's thoughts, have now to be turned to the Universal alone. In the Universal, pain and pleasure vanish as do friends and enemies. In each form of life there exists the Universal, and exists pre-eminently so as Ishwara in each human being. In all forms, under all conditions, the homage to Ishwara is offered in the love of Ishwara, the reverence of Ishwara, the faith that is Ishwara. The twice-born are fit to be merged into and partake of Ishwara's omniscience at the culmination of the journey. This merging may come at the end of centuries of striving during which the soul takes one quick birth after another; but the roots of the Universal self-consciousness have grown in the human soil, and no delay in time can loosen their hold. "Many are the grains of incense destined for one and the same altar; one falls sooner into the fire, the other later — the difference of time is nothing," remarked a great man when he was refused admission and supreme initiation into the mysteries.

The Dew is on the lotus! — Rise, Great Sun!  
And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave.

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ONLY the greatest obstacle that can be contemplated without despair, rouses the will to full intensity.

—W. B. YEATS

## HUMANITY'S INHERITANCE

WHAT can man's heritage be except the sum total of all that has been known and experienced by him from time immemorial — *i.e.*, the accumulated Wisdom of the ages?

But man is born into a civilization which, though heir to that accumulated Wisdom, has forgotten it or covered it over with dross, and he does not know his real heritage. Therefore it is that throughout history and legend we read of great teachers, philosophers, leaders of men and others who reiterate the old knowledge which percolates through the dross, so that those who will can avail themselves of their inheritance.

Every man has, therefore, two types of inheritance: one pertaining to the time and the clime in which he is born, and the other pertaining to the accumulated Wisdom of the ages.

But he has also a third inheritance: "He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed." That is, each one comes to reap the effects of what he has done in past births. His character is such an effect, his knowledge and experience are such effects. As life follows life, he builds in the present for the future.

If we can understand these inheritances in our lives we shall have made considerable progress in understanding life and ourselves. This is one of the purposes of Theosophy, to awaken in each one the knowledge of these aspects of our heritage, to point to the knowledge gained in our own day, to refer to the greater heritage embodied for us in the sacred books of the past, the essence of which has been and still is being reiterated by those great of soul who have made that knowledge their own.

One important point comes out as we think on these things, namely, that though Humanity seems an "orphan," it has "never been without a friend." What are such characters as Krishna, the Buddha, the Christ, and other extraordinary men of power and compassion who have worked openly or secretly, but such "friends"? Though we may and do miss the vitality of their physical presence, we can benefit by the vitality of their teachings if we will. These teachers and benefactors of mankind but taught the same "exhaustless doctrine" of which Krishna speaks in the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

The fundamental question asked by each thinking man at some time or other is, What is the meaning of life? This leads to the query, Why do we take birth? What is the prime source or mover of it all? The answers to these questions are to be found in our day and generation in

the writings of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, for it is the same "exhaustless doctrine" that she was taught and has recorded for our benefit. Known as Theosophy today, it gives us what we need for our time and era, but, as with other precepts down the ages, it has been covered over with dross, so that much going under that name is not the Theosophy taught by her.

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### THE COMMON TASK

Less of personal desire;  
More of the will to accomplish real things.

Less of following the path of least resistance;  
More of intelligent control in this business of living.

Less of taking pains to make the time pass pleasantly;  
More of striving to use time for right thinking and purposeful action.

Less of seeking pleasure as an anæsthetic to the mind;  
More of brave thinking out of things.

Less of prejudice;  
More of tolerance for the other fellow's opinion and convictions.

Less of fear;  
More of courage — "The coward dies a thousand deaths; the brave man but one."

Less of the silver of unnecessary speech;  
More of the silence of thought which is golden.

Less of suspicion and doubt;  
More of trust and love for others.

Less of belief;  
More of knowledge gained through our experience;  
Eventually, less of knowledge and  
More of wisdom distilled from knowledge.

Less of frittering;  
More of assuming our birthright as thinking beings — pure, poised, purposeful — advancing along the highway of Eternity, captains of our souls and brothers to all.

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## REPLIES TO AN ENGLISH F.T.S.

[The following is reprinted from *The Theosophist*, November 1883.—EDS.]

### SAKYA MUNI'S PLACE IN HISTORY

(Concluded)

NOW THAT we have seen Professor Max Müller's opinions in general about this, so to say, the Prologue to the Buddhist *Drama* with Vijaya as the hero — what has he to say as to the details of its plot? What weapon does he use to weaken this foundation-stone of a chronology upon which are built and on which depend all other Buddhist dates? What is the fulcrum for the critical lever he uses against the Asiatic records? Three of his main points may be stated *seriatim* with answers appended. He begins by premising that—

1st—"If the starting point of the Northern Buddhist chronology turns out to be merely hypothetical, based as it is on a prophecy of Buddha, it will be difficult to avoid the same conclusion with regard to the date assigned to Buddha's death by the Buddhists of Ceylon and of Burmah" (p. 266). "The *Mahavansa* begins with relating three miraculous visits which Buddha paid to Ceylon." *Vijaya*, the name of the founder of the first dynasty (in Ceylon), means *conquest*, "and, therefore, such a person *most likely* never existed" (p. 268). This he believes invalidates the whole Buddhist chronology.

To which the following pendant may be offered:

William I, King of England, is commonly called the *Conqueror*; he was, moreover, the illegitimate son of Robert, Duke of Normandy, surnamed *le Diable*. An opera, we hear, was invented on this subject, and full of miraculous events, called "Robert the Devil," showing its traditional character. Therefore shall we be also justified in saying that Edward the Confessor, Saxons and all, up to the time of the union of the houses of York and Lancaster under Henry VII — the new historical period in English history — are all "fabulous tradition" and "such a person as William the Conqueror *most likely* never existed"?

2nd—In the Chinese chronology — continues the dissecting critic — "the list of the thirty-three Buddhist patriarchs . . . is of a doubtful character. For Western history the exact Ceylonese chronology begins with 161 B.C." Extending beyond that date there exists but "a tradi-

tional native chronology. Therefore... what goes before... is but fabulous tradition."

The chronology of the Apostles and their existence has never been proved historically. The history of the Papacy is confessedly "obscure." Ennodius of Pavia (fifth century) was the first one to address the Roman Bishop (Symmachus), who comes fifty-first in the Apostolic succession, as "Pope." Thus, if we were to write the history of Christianity, and indulge in remarks upon its chronology, we might say that since there were no antecedent Popes, and since the Apostolic line began with Symmachus (498 A.D.); all Christian records beginning with the Nativity and up to the sixth century are *therefore* "fabulous traditions," and all Christian chronology is "purely hypothetical."

3rd—Two discrepant dates in Buddhist chronology are scornfully pointed out by the Oxford Professor. If the landing of Vijaya, in Lanka—he says—on the same day that Buddha reached Nirvana (died) is in fulfilment of Buddha's prophecy, then "if Buddha *was a true prophet*, the Ceylonese argue quite rightly that *he must have died in the year of the conquest, or 543 B.C.*" (p. 270). On the other hand, the Chinese have a Buddhist chronology of their own; and it does not agree with the Ceylonese. "The lifetime of Buddha from 1029 to 950 rests on his own prophecy that a millennium would elapse from his death to the conversion of China. If, therefore, Buddha *was a true prophet*, he must have lived about 1000 B.C." (p. 266). But the date does not agree with the Ceylonese chronology; *ergo*, Buddha *was a false prophet*. As to that other "the first and most important link" in the Ceylonese as well as in the Chinese chronology, "it is extremely weak."... In the Ceylonese "a *miraculous genealogy had to be provided for Vijaya*," and, "a prophecy was, *therefore, invented*." (p. 269)

On these same lines of argument it may be argued that—

Since no genealogy of Jesus, "exact or inexact," is found in any of the world's records save those entitled the Gospels of SS. Matthew (i. 1-17), and Luke (iii. 23-38); and, since these radically disagree—although this personage is the most conspicuous in Western history, and the nicest accuracy might have been expected in his case; therefore, agreeably with Professor Max Müller's sarcastic logic, if Jesus "*was a true prophet*, he must have descended from David through Joseph (Matthew's Gospel); and "if he was *a true prophet*," again, then the Christians "argue quite rightly that he must have" descended

from David through Mary (Luke's Gospel). Furthermore, since the two genealogies are obviously discrepant and prophecies were truly "invented" by the post-apostolic theologians [or, if preferred, old prophecies of Isaiah and other Old Testament prophets, irrelevant to Jesus, were *adapted* to suit his case — as recent English commentators (in Holy Orders), the Bible revisers, now concede]; and since, moreover — always following the Professor's argument, in the cases of Buddhist and Brahmanical chronologies — Biblical chronology and genealogy are found to be "traditional and full of absurdities . . . every attempt to bring them into harmony having proved a failure" (p. 266): have we or have we not a certain right to retort, that if Gautama Buddha is shown on these lines *a false prophet*, then Jesus must be likewise "a false prophet"? And if Jesus was a true prophet despite existing confusion of authorities, why on the same lines may not Buddha have been one? Discredit the Buddhist prophecies and the Christian ones must go along with them.

The utterances of the ancient pythoress now but provoke the scientific smile: but no tripod ever mounted by the prophetess of old was so shaky as the chronological trinity of points upon which this Orientalist stands to deliver his oracles. Moreover, his arguments are double-edged, as shown. If the citadel of Buddhism can be undermined by Professor Max Müller's critical engineering, then *pari passu* that of Christianity must crumble in the same ruins. Or have the Christians alone the monopoly of *absurd* religious "inventions" and the right of being jealous of any infringement of their patent rights?

To conclude, we say, that the year of Buddha's death is correctly stated by Mr. Sinnett, *Esoteric Buddhism* having to give its chronological dates according to *esoteric* reckoning. And this reckoning would alone, if explained, make away with every objection urged, from Professor Max Müller's *Sanskrit Literature* down to the latest "evidence" — *the proofs* in the *Reports of the Archæological Survey of India*. The Ceylonese era, as given in *Mahavansa*, is correct in everything, withholding but the above-given fact of Nirvana, the great mystery of *Samma-Sambuddha* and *Abhijñā* remaining to this day unknown to the outsider; and though certainly known to Bhikshu Mahanama — King Dhatusena's uncle — it could not be explained in a work like the *Mahavansa*. Moreover, the Singhalese chronology agrees in every particular with the Burmese chronology. Independent of the religious era dating from Buddha's death, called "*Nirvanic Era*," there existed,

as now shown by Bishop Bigandet (*Life of Gaudama*), two historical eras. One lasted 1362 years, its last year corresponding with 1156 of the Christian era; the other, broken in two small eras, the last succeeding immediately the other, exists to the present day. The beginning of the first, which lasted 562 years, coincides with the year 79 A.D. and the Indian Saka era. Consequently, the learned Bishop, who surely can never be suspected of partiality to Buddhism, accepts the year 543 of Buddha's Nirvana. So do Mr. Turnour, Professor Lassen, and others.

The alleged discrepancies between the 14 various dates of Nirvana collected by Csoma de Körös, do not relate to the *Nyr-Nyang* in the least. They are calculations concerning the Nirvana of the precursors, the Bodhisattvas and previous incarnations of Sanggyas that the Hungarian found in various works and wrongly applied to the last Buddha. Europeans must not forget that this enthusiast acted under protest of the Lamas during the time of his stay with them; and that, moreover, he had learned more about the doctrines of the heretical Dugpas than of the orthodox Gelugpas. The statement of this "great authority (!) on Tibetan Buddhism," as he is called, to the effect that Gautama had *three* wives whom he names — and then contradicts himself by showing (*Tibetan Grammar*, p. 162, see note) that the first two wives "are one and the same," shows how little he can be regarded as an "authority." He had not even learned that "Gopa, Yasodhara and Utpala Varna" are the three names for three mystical powers. So with the "discrepancies" of the dates. Out of the 64 mentioned by him but two relate to Sakya Muni — namely, the years 576 and 546 — and these two err in their transcription: for when corrected they must stand 564 and 543. As for the rest they concern the seven *ku-sum*, or triple form of the Nirvanic state and their respective duration, and relate to doctrines of which Orientalists know absolutely nothing.

Consequently from the Northern Buddhists, who, as confessed by Professor Weber, "alone possess these (Buddhist) Scriptures *complete*," and have "preserved more authentic information regarding the circumstances of their redaction" — the Orientalists have up to this time learned next to nothing. The Tibetans say that Tathagata became a full Buddha — *i.e.*, reached *absolute* Nirvana — in 2544 of the Kali era (according to Souramana), and thus *lived* indeed but *eighty* years, as no *Nirvance* of *the seventh degree* can be reckoned among the

*living* (i.e., existing) men. It is no better than loose conjecture to argue that it would have entered as little into the thoughts of the Brahmans to note the day of Buddha's birth "as the Romans or even the Jews would have thought of preserving the date of the birth of Jesus before he had become the founder of a religion" (Max Müller's *Hist. A. S. L.*). For, while the Jews had been from the first rejecting the claim of Messiahship set up by the Chelas of the Jewish prophet and were not expecting their Messiah at that time, the Brahmans (the initiates, at any rate) knew of the coming of him whom they regarded as an incarnation of divine wisdom, and therefore were well aware of the astrological date of his birth. If, in after times, in their impotent rage, they destroyed every accessible vestige of the birth, life and death of Him, who in his boundless mercy to all creatures had revealed their carefully concealed mysteries and doctrines in order to check the ecclesiastical torrent of ever-growing superstitions, yet there had been a time when he was met by them as an Avatar. And, *though they destroyed, others preserved.*

The thousand and one speculations and the torturing of exoteric texts by Archæologist or Palæographer will ill repay the time lost in their study.

The Indian annals specify King Ajatasatru as a contemporary of Buddha, and another Ajatasatru helped to prepare the council 100 years after his death. These princes were sovereigns of Magadha and have naught to do with Ajatasatru of the *Brihad-Aranyaka* and the *Kaushitaki-Upanishad*, who was a sovereign of the Kasis; though Bhadrasena, "the son of Ajatasatru" cursed by Aruni, may have more to do with his namesake the "heir of Chandragupta" than is generally known, Professor Max Müller objects to two Asokas. He rejects Kalasoka and accepts but Dharmasoka — in accordance with "Greek" and in utter conflict with Buddhist chronology. He knows not — or perchance prefers ignoring — that besides the two Asokas there were several personages named Chandragupta and Chandramasa. Plutarch is set aside as conflicting with the more welcome theory, and the evidence of Justin alone is accepted. There was Kalasoka, called by some Chandramasa and by others Chandragupta, whose son Nanda was succeeded by his cousin the Chandragupta of Seleucus, and under whom the Council of Vaisali took place "supported by King Nanda" as correctly stated by Taranatha. [None of them were Sudras, and this is a pure invention of the Brahmans.] Then there was the last of the

Chandraguptas who assumed the name of *Vikrama*; he commenced the new era called the *Vikramaditya* or *Samvat* and began the new dynasty at Pataliputra, 318 (B.C.) — according to some *European "authorities"*; after him his son Bindusara or Bhadrasena — also Chandragupta, who was followed by Dharmasoka Chandragupta.

And there were two Piyadasis — the "Sandracottus" Chandragupta and Asoka. And if controverted, the Orientalists will have to account for this strange inconsistency. If Asoka was the only "Piyadasi" and the builder of the monuments, and maker of the rock-inscriptions of this name; and if his inauguration occurred as conjectured by Professor Max Müller about 259 B.C., in other words, if he reigned 60 or 70 years later than any of the Greek kings named on the Piyadasi monuments, what had he to do with their vassalage or non-vassalage, or how was he concerned with them at all? Their dealings had been with his grandfather some 70 years earlier — if he became a Buddhist only after ten years' occupancy of the throne. And finally, three well-known Bhadrasenas can be proved, whose names spelt loosely and phonetically, according to each writer's dialect and nationality, now yield a variety of names, from Bindusara, Bimbisara, and Vindusara, down to Bhadrasena and Bhadrasara, as he is called in the *Vayu Purana*. These are all synonymous. However easy, at first sight, it may seem to be to brush out of history a real personage, it becomes more difficult to prove the non-existence of Kalasoka by calling him "false," while the second Asoka is termed "the real," in the face of the evidence of the Puranas, written by the bitterest enemies of the Buddhists, the Brahmans of the period. The *Vayu* and *Matsya Puranas* mention both in their lists of the reigning sovereigns of the Nanda and the Morya dynasties. And, though they connect Chandragupta with a *Sudra* Nanda, they do not deny existence to Kalasoka — for the sake of invalidating Buddhist chronology. However falsified the now extant texts of both the *Vayu* and *Matsya Puranas*, even accepted as they at present stand "in their true meaning," which Professor Max Müller (notwithstanding his confidence) fails to seize, they are *not* "at variance with Buddhist chronology before Chandragupta." Not, at any rate, when the *real* Chandragupta instead of the false Sandracottus of the Greeks is recognized and introduced. Quite independently of the Buddhist version, there exists the historical fact recorded in the Brahmanical as well as in the Burmese and Tibetan versions, that in the year 63 of Buddha, Sisunaga of Benares was chosen king by the people of Pataliputra, who made away with Ajatasatru's dynasty.

Sisunaga removed the capital of Magadha from Rajagriha to Vaisali, while his successor Kalasoka removed it in his turn to Pataliputra. It was during the reign of the latter that the prophecy of Buddha concerning Patalibat or Pataliputra — a small village during His time — was realized. (See *Mahaparinibbana Sutta*)

It will be easy enough, when the time comes, to answer all denying Orientalists and face them with proof and document in hand. They speak of the extravagant, wild exaggerations of the Buddhists and Brahmans. The latter answer: "The wildest theorists of all are they who, to evade a self-evident fact, assume moral, anti-national impossibilities, entirely opposed to the most conspicuous traits of the Brahmanical Indian character — namely, borrowing from, or imitating in anything, other nations. From their comments on *Rig Veda*, down to the annals of Ceylon, from Panini to Matouan-lin, every page of their learned scholia appears, to one acquainted with the subject, like a monstrous jumble of unwarranted and insane speculations. Therefore, notwithstanding Greek chronology and Chandragupta — whose date is represented as "the sheet-anchor of Indian chronology" that "nothing will ever shake" — it is to be feared that as regards India, the chronological ship of the Sanskritists has already broken from her moorings and gone adrift with all her precious freight of conjectures and hypotheses. She is drifting into danger. We are at the end of a cycle — geological and other — and at the beginning of another. Cataclysm is to follow cataclysm. The pent-up forces are bursting out in many quarters; and not only will men be swallowed up or slain by thousands, "new" land appear and "old" subside, volcanic eruptions and tidal waves appal; but secrets of an unsuspected past will be uncovered to the dismay of Western theorists and the humiliation of an imperious science. This drifting ship, if watched, may be seen to ground upon the upheaved vestiges of ancient civilizations, and fall to pieces. We are not emulous of the prophet's honours: but still, let this stand as a prophecy.

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## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

NINETY-TWO years ago, in a small room in New York, a mere handful of people came together and formed a Society for the benefit of humanity. Only three of those present are still remembered — Madame H. P. Blavatsky, Mr. William Q. Judge and Colonel Henry S. Olcott. The constitution, organization and policy of the Society underwent some change in the years that followed, until permanency was given to it when its main object — the formation of the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without any distinctions as to race, colour, creed, sex, etc. — was formally adopted. The second object was to promote the study of Aryan and other scriptures, of the world's religions and sciences; and the third, pursued by a portion only of the members of the Society, to investigate the unexplained laws and hidden mysteries of Nature and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially.

The Parent United Lodge of Theosophists was formed in 1909, primarily for the resuscitation of the study of Theosophy as given out by Madame Blavatsky, and restated by Mr. Judge, and without the organizational aspect which had become an incubus in the carrying on of the work of the Theosophical Society.

When did the Theosophical Movement, as distinct from the Theosophical Society, originate?

We are told by H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine* that a little over 18,000,000 years ago man became, on this globe, for the first time a thinking being, and was no longer a human animal. What is called the "lighting up of Manas" took place when man got the gift of mind from the Manasaputras, the Sons of Wisdom, who during previous cycles of incarnation had reached that degree of intellect which enabled them to become independent and self-conscious entities on this plane of matter. They were entities seeking to become still more conscious by uniting with more developed matter. At the same time, we are told, other already perfected Entities from the far past gave up the rest to which they were entitled and descended on to this earth in order to take charge of the early evolutionary progress of infant humanity, to teach, help and train it; and, further still, to keep open the Path or the School in which advancing human souls could acquire further training so that they might become the Buddhas and Christs of the future.

It is necessary to keep these teachings in mind, for they show

us, as Mr. Judge puts it, that "mankind has never been without a friend." And the statements in *The Secret Doctrine* about the Solitary Watcher who will remain at his post till the end of this life-cycle, so that not one pilgrim may lose his way, become clearer. These ideas must not become materialized, but should be kept in mind as spiritual facts. We would do well to remember the allegory of the cave in Plato's *Republic*: the prisoners chained in the underground cave mistake the shadows for realities, and, when dragged upwards, they are so dazzled by excess of light that they fancy that the shadows they formerly saw were truer than the objects which are now shown to them.

The Great Spiritual Beings who from the beginning made it their business to help mankind belong to what is known as the Lodge of Adepts, and Their work is to keep on lighting up the mind of humanity. Century by century, age by age, They work, injecting into that mind the ideas that keep alive and feed the developing spiritual intelligence of men.

But there is also another aspect of Their work which it was one of the prime objects of H.P.B.'s mission to make known, for the time was ripe. This was to draw the attention of the world to the existence of this Lodge, and to create an embassy, so to say, in our world through which the work of the Lodge could be carried on. Their philosophy was given out to mankind in the hope that it would inspire some, at least, to become Their pupils, and, through self-education and self-advancement in the spiritual sciences, to become Servers of humanity in their turn. Now was the time, in fact, when man, with the aid of the God within, had reached that point in his journey when he would benefit by this knowledge.

H.P.B.'s books bear out this point. Her first book, *Isis Unveiled*, published in 1877, informed the readers at the very outset that she had met and learned from some of these Wise Men. And she pointed to the ancient philosophy or the Wisdom-Religion which she resuscitated for our benefit. She dedicated the two volumes of this work to the Theosophical Society, which was founded "only two years earlier to study the subjects on which they treat."

*The Secret Doctrine*, her second great work, published in 1888, was dedicated "to all true Theosophists, in every country, and of every race, for they called it forth, and for them it was recorded." Its aim, she wrote in the Preface, was

to show that Nature is not "a fortuitous concurrence of atoms,"

and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring; finally, to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization.

If we underline the phrase "to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe," we have the key to the synthesis of all her writings.

*The Key to Theosophy*, published in 1889, is dedicated "to all her pupils that they may learn and teach in their turn." And *The Voice of the Silence*, published in 1889, "for the daily use of Lanoos (disciples)" was dedicated "to the Few."

So we have the first book dedicated to the Society; the second, to those members (or otherwise) who deserved the name of Theosophists; the third, to those who wished to learn as well as teach; and the fourth to those who had definitely started on the Path which leads to the Goal and from which there is no turning back.

Other writings of hers fill in details, or give danger signals about the pitfalls on life's journey.

Throughout we get the impression that she was, though great in her own right, the ambassador from the world of Masters to the world of men. Her writings, therefore, bridge the gulf between the knowledge of today and the trans-Himalayan esoteric knowledge, secret as far as we are concerned, but known to that world of Masters.

Her life was an embodiment of what is necessary for us to attain; it had a strength of purpose, of devotion and sacrifice that is hard for us to grasp in its full depth. The Movement for our century had and has H.P.B. at its heart; it rises or falls in proportion to the attitude of students and workers to her, for without the right attitude to her, how can we get the right attitude to Those who sent her, whose Hand is over all who help Them in Their work and study the knowledge and philosophy They know and live by?

But just as the law of Karma works through our lives, so does it with respect to the life of an organism. The organism succeeds or fails in proportion as its component parts work in harmony with one another. By the natural processes of law some drop away; the whole organism may die of inanition as it must live by its own efforts. Even

the Great Ones cannot keep it alive, since it has its own life once it is in a form. No one can live another's life for him.

We tend to emphasize the fact that as far as numbers go there are comparatively very few who have become students of Theosophy, and fail to see that H.P.B.'s writings have made a tremendous mark on the mind of the race. The ideas she inculcated in the barren field of thought have taken root and become commonplace today in many fields of life. Take, for instance, the ideas of God, of the multiplicity of worlds, of the age of the earth, of the evolution of life, and see how far these have altered since her day and how they are still altering, so that we see the truth of her statement at the end of the Preface to her *magnum opus*, *The Secret Doctrine*, which, she said, was "written in the service of humanity, and by humanity and the future generations it must be judged."

It is true that she has been and is being "let down" because of the lack of "heart-sacrifice" on the part of her students. But we have the example of William Q. Judge, Damodar K. Mavalankar and Robert Crosbie to sustain us in the hope that the Movement founded by her will continue to bear good fruit, and that the new Messenger will have companions to help him in his task. The heart side must be developed first; knowledge follows, and the willingness to help is the fruition of heart-knowledge.

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THE nature of man being complex, that part of him which is composed of soul, of consciousness, of mind and of reason is divine, and from the superior elements seems able to mount to heaven; while his cosmic and mundane part, formed of fire, water, earth and air, is mortal and remains upon the earth; so that what is borrowed from the world may be restored to it.

It is thus that mankind is composed of a divine part and of a mortal part, to wit, the body. The law of this dual being, man, is religion, whose effect is goodness. Perfection is attained when the virtue of man preserves him from desire, and causes him to despise all that is foreign to himself.

—ÆSCULAPIUS

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

A seminar on Education for One World was held at Pondicherry from August 12 to 16, 1967, under the Presidentship of Dr. C. D. Deshmukh. A summary of the proceedings appears in *Bhavan's Journal* for September 24.

The seminar held the bringing forth of the "essential universality secret in the depths of the soul of the individual" to be the obvious object of education for one world. The logic of the recent educational methodology itself points to the need for a revolution in education towards the above aim.

The seminar concluded that

the inner spirit of man does not grow in isolation from the development of the outer faculties and powers of consciousness. Education has therefore to be a process with two intertwining operations: It must be the development of the faculties and powers of the outer being pressing towards the inner truths culminating in the awakening of the secret soul and of the essential universality that is deep in the individual; it must be at the same time the pressure of the soul and essential universality in the individual for the growth under their secret guidance of the outer faculties and powers of the being.

The perfection of body, life and mind, their governance and control and suffusion by the soul whose breath is universality — such would seem to be the substance of integral education, the education of the whole man.

Education for One World should mean a synthesis of the contributions of the East and the West. There should also be a true synthesis of Humanities and the Sciences. . . .

Love or intuitive perceptions, truth or the reasoning processes of deduction and induction and analysis and synthesis, beauty or the refinement of emotions and tastes and power or the creativity which produces a new thing of value — these are the aspects of human personality which every academic subject has to stimulate and cultivate. . . .

Education for one world must be a living process, and must proceed by illumination and by the kindling of lights by lights. This would mean the dynamic presence of living examples, the influence of teachers who in their own consciousness comprehend and live the unity of knowledge, synthesis of cultures and oneness of mankind. . . .

There are golden universal reaches of our consciousness, and from there and from the reaches intermediate between them and our ordinary mental consciousness have descended throughout history forces and forms which have become embodied in literature, philosophy, science, in music, dance, art, architecture, sculpture, in great and heroic deeds, and all that is wonderful and precious in the different organized or as yet unorganized aspects of life.

To put students in contact with these, Eastern or Western, ancient or modern, would be to provide them with the air and atmosphere in which they can breathe an aspiration to reach again to those peaks of consciousness and to create still newer forms which would bring the golden day nearer for humanity.

The establishment of an intimate relation between the East and the West is the special task which students of Theosophy can make themselves capable of performing. Assimilation of each other's points of view by even a few creates that "nucleus of a universal Brotherhood of Humanity" spoken of in the first and primary object of our Theosophical Movement. H.P.B. wrote:

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

The task of creating intellectual brotherhood can be performed by practising Theosophists who have to sink the separative, exoteric, racial, communal, creedal and national points of view and habits into the unifying humanitarian ideation and way of living. But prides and prejudices, petty conceits and shallow patriotisms die hard, and even the student of Theosophy has to continue to educate himself in the perception that Wisdom is neither Eastern nor Western but Universal, that Sages and Seers and Occultists have arisen not only in the East but also in the West, and that the redemption of humanity depends on its realization of the universal nature of the One Spirit which lights the East and the West alike.

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Early in August, a seminar was organized by the Demographic Training and Research Centre in Bombay to discuss the social, economic, medical and demographic aspects of the measures to check population growth in the light of the Shantilal Shah Committee report.

The consensus at the seminar was that liberalization of abortion will not reduce the birth rate as the conditions are not suitable for its adoption on a mass scale. Leading city gynæcologists Dr. V. N. Shirodkar and Dr. B. N. Purandare warned that abortion even in "very experienced hands" was not free from dangers, and its induction on a mass scale might result in an increased mortality rate.

Demographers pointed out that to bring about a 12 per cent reduction in the birth rate annually 3.7 million abortions would need to be performed. Attention was drawn to the fact, however, that 72 to 83 per cent of the population was opposed to this measure on ethical grounds. The social climate in the country was such as to reject abortion as a means of population control.

In America, no less than in India, the question of liberalizing abortion laws is being hotly debated, and is arousing antagonism from many quarters. Opponents view it as a dangerous leap backward toward infanticide. Recently, Harvard Divinity School invited 73 international scholars from the fields of medicine, law, social science, philosophy and religion to a three-day conference on abortion in Washington, D.C. According to *Newsweek* (September 18), "the most surprising aspect of the entire conference was the wide-spread antipathy against abortion itself." Among theologians and several lawyer-delegates especially there was an "unspoken consensus" that the foetus has a certain dignity and rights.

Answering the question, "Is foeticide a crime?" H.P.B. printed the following "Editor's Note" in *The Theosophist* for August 1883:

... it is neither from the standpoint of law, nor from any argument drawn from one or another orthodox *ism* that the warning voice is sent forth against the immoral and dangerous practice, but rather because in occult philosophy both physiology and psychology show its disastrous consequence. In the present case, the argument does not deal with the causes but with the effects produced. Our philosophy goes so far as to say that, if the Penal Code of most countries punishes attempts at suicide, it ought, if at all consistent with itself, to doubly punish foeticide as an attempt to *double suicide*. For, indeed, when even successful and the mother does not die just then, *it still shortens her life on earth to prolong it with dreary percentage in Kamaloka*, the intermediate sphere between the earth and the region of rest, a place which is no "St. Patrick's purgatory," but a fact, and a necessary halting place in the evolution of the degree of life.

The crime committed lies precisely in the wilful and sinful destruction of life, and interference with the operations of nature, hence — with KARMA — that of the mother and the would-be future human being. The sin is not regarded by the occultists as one of a *religious* character — for, indeed, there is no more of spirit and soul, for the matter of that, in a fœtus or even a child before it arrives at self-consciousness, than there is in any other small animal — for we deny the absence of soul in either mineral, plant or beast, and believe but in the difference of degree. But fœticide is a crime against nature. Of course the sceptic of whatever class will sneer at our notions and call them absurd superstitions and “unscientific twaddle.” But we do not write for sceptics. We have been asked to give the views of Theosophy (or rather of occult philosophy) upon the subject, and we answer the query as far as we know.

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Evidence continues to pile up against household insect-killers, so commonly used these days. Dr. William B. Deichmann of the Miami University told the Occupational Health Congress held in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A., late in September, that high levels of pesticides had been found in the tissues of people who died from cirrhosis of the liver, cancer and hypertension. Preliminary evidence indicated, he said, that the inhalation of household pesticides “is of greater significance than is generally recognized.” The pesticides in question are organo-chlorine compounds, which are retained in the body for long periods of time.

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There has been considerable concern lately over the growing threat of air and water pollution. The developed countries are now becoming aware of another related danger, namely, noise pollution. Scientists have carried out experiments which show that rising noise levels could seriously impair the health of a large number of urban dwellers.

That city noises injure the auditory nerves, the brain, and in fact the whole nervous system has been known for some time. It has been found also that a certain intensity of noise produces changes in the circulation of the blood and in the action of the heart. Thus workers in a boiler factory tend to suffer from insensitive skins because of a lack of circulation in the epidermis. Sounds of 150 to 160 decibels (a decibel is a unit of sound) are fatal, for instance, to certain animals. (*The Times of India*, September 19)

Not merely industrial workers, but the whole of the population in many urban areas is exposed to unnatural noises and faces the prospect of becoming impaired in health, physically, emotionally and mentally. Moreover, it is inevitable that the most sensitively organized, and thus the most valuable members of the community, should be the first to suffer, and the most seriously injured thereby.

The assumption that traffic and industrial noises cannot be abated is a fallacy. Some governments have already taken measures to reduce noise levels. In Geneva, Switzerland, a person can be prosecuted if he slams a car door too loudly. New York City has a law whereby walls must be sufficiently sound-proof to prevent air-borne noise, exceeding 45 decibels, from passing through; in France the authorities are empowered to confiscate cars which break noise regulations more than once.

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This ghost story was printed lately in the *Times of Zambia*. The ghost of a locomotive driver is being blamed for an unmanned 17-mile run-away trip taken by a railway engine in Kumasi, Ghana. Reports say that the engine suddenly left its shed in Kumasi early one morning after being serviced. Startled shedmen gave a chase in a taxi, but were unable to stop the driverless train. They called ahead to the next station 17 miles away, where a barrier was erected to derail the train. A spokesman for the Kumasi branch of the Railway Locomotive Drivers' Association said that the incident was caused by the ghost of an engine driver who died in a rail disaster in Kumasi in December last.

It is quite conceivable that the victim of an accident, suddenly deprived of his physical body but still alive and conscious, would try to attract the attention of the living, even in ways so disturbing to others. In *Isis Unveiled* (I. 69) H.P.B. refers to "well-attested" apparitions of "unrestful 'souls,'" hovering about the spot where they met with an unnatural death, or coming back for some other mysterious reasons of their own. And of one apparition in particular she wrote:

It was *luminous* and *vapory*; for aught we can tell it might have been the real personal umbra of the "spirit," persecuted, and earth-bound. . . . The mysteries of after-death are many, and modern "materializations" only make them cheap and ridiculous in the eyes of the indifferent.

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