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“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THE TEST OF APPLICATION

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MANY are the lessons to be learnt from an intelligent study of the history of the Theosophical Movement of the 19th-20th century. There is one particular aspect of that vast study which needs to be impressed upon all of us who are students of the Esoteric Philosophy in these last decades before 1975. An examination of the balance between Study, Application and Promulgation reveals some lessons vitally important for the earnest learner of today.

The formal inauguration of the Movement by H.P.B., assisted by W. Q. Judge and Col. H. S. Olcott and supported by over a score of persons, took place under circumstances fully recorded. The impetus was provided by the stir which was caused by the supernormal phenomena performed by H.P.B. and the provoking explanations she offered about them and the laws governing them.

From 1874 to 1877 there was great controversy about the existence and influence of the denizens and intelligences of the nether world of spooks, ghosts, elementals and elementaries—the dark aspect of the subnormal and the sub-mundane world. *Isis Unveiled* brought about the culmination of the period. It offered true explanations of Spiritualism and Spiritism (which offended Spiritists not only of the U.S.A. but also of Europe); showed where the science of the day was erring (which made the scientists scornful); exposed the falsity of the exclusive theological claims of every religious creed (which angered the popes and padres, the bishops and their bigoted followers, whatever their faith); and showed where the Light of Truth was to be discovered. It had a tremendous sale and edition after edition was published; but its two volumes were specifically meant for the members of the Theosophical

Society and the dedication indicated this: "To study the subjects on which they treat." The earnest and reverent study of the two volumes of *Isis Unveiled* was made by only a few individuals of the Theosophical fold. For many years its study was superficial and the important volumes were given a back place by the wiseacres who saw it supplanted by *The Secret Doctrine*. The two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* supplement *Isis Unveiled*; they do not supplant it.

Leaving New York in 1878 and arriving in Bombay in 1879, H.P.B. continued her mission of teaching and instructing the general public, and also a few intimate and earnest minds who grasped the real and inner significance of the Movement.

That study implied application was not at all clear to the bulk of the members of the Society; only intimates like W. Q. Judge and Damodar K. Mavalankar studied not merely to learn but also to mark and inwardly digest. It should be duly and properly noted that it was the application aspect of the study which W. Q. Judge practised in his solitary endeavour to keep the Light of Theosophy burning in the U.S.A. from 1878 to 1884. It was this endeavour which brought the magnificent harvest through his active propaganda from 1886 to 1896 when he passed through the shining gate of the temple of mighty and majestic death — a controller of life, and so of death.

Meanwhile in India, from 1879 to 1885, tons of nuggets of knowledge were offered by the Mahatmas in their answers to Mr. A. P. Sinnett, Mr. A. O. Hume, and others. They and Their Chelas, but chiefly Their Messenger, H.P.B., were responsible for this great outpouring. The intellectual, philosophical, and scientific principles and propositions of the Esoteric Philosophy were avidly consumed. But the advice to apply, to practise and so to digest and assimilate Knowledge was not taken to heart. A dozen passages may be quoted giving this advice, but hardly any heeded it. All were eager to learn and understand, but the great majority would not develop the insight to appraise the Knowledge. There was much talk of chelas and chelaship, teachers and disciples, the Path to be walked, but the true import and significance of all this was understood by hardly a handful. Like *Isis Unveiled*, the teachings of the Indian cycle of 1879–1885 remained to perform their miracles in the years to come. Because the Masters and H.P.B. pointed to the Path of Service, true Altruism and Universal Brotherhood, some good effort was made to educate the public mind. The Masters and H.P.B. wished not only to educate the public mind but also to enlighten a portion of

it; this involved the personal transmutation of the sincere students of "the Arhat Esoteric Philosophy" as Theosophy was called. Study and promulgation — they were to the fore; but the leading of the life necessary for the acquirement of the wisdom and power of the Embodied Spirit was sadly lacking. Mental learning and expounding outran the development of moral insight, of the humility to hear and repeat, of the inner voice of virtue. The life of service in the outer world ever demands the life of silence and secrecy, of penance and prayer, of meditation on the deathless Man within.

By 1885, when H.P.B. left India, there were very few practitioners of her Teachings; Indian members of the Theosophical Society were not able to evaluate Theosophy as nobler than any religious creed, including Brahmanism. Theosophy, the Universal Wisdom-Religion of the entire ancient world, threw a clear light on the true meaning of Universal Brotherhood; revealed the happy prospect of a world in which brotherliness among the many would prevail because an appreciable number of earnest devotees were living their lives according to the teachings of Theosophy. The Masters and H.P.B. signalled — "Who will come out from among the orthodox ranks of rigid creeds and religions to follow the Path we show? How many will walk the Way of Duty to Soul and Spirit?" Who answered? Very few, privately and secretly; only W. Q. Judge read the signal aright and, returning from India to the U.S.A., emphasized the value of living the life so that the students may truly know the doctrine. He focused his attention on the Buddhi of the race.

From 1887 to 1891, in London, H.P.B. laboured as ever, assiduously, to complete her mission. The most magnificent instalment of Knowledge in the shape of the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* was given. Round her leonine personality gathered the learned to learn more, and to learn differently. Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy, the Inner Religion of Mysticism, the Profound Occultism of the Heart Doctrine — through each of these H.P.B. emphasized: Theosophist is who Theosophy does. Do Theosophy, Be Theosophists. Lead the life of noble thinking, of intelligent sacrificing, of meekness to resist evil, of service of all souls. Mr. Judge's work had created by 1888, when *The Secret Doctrine* was published, a band of students all eager and ready to answer that call of H.P.B. In London itself arose the scholarly G. R. S. Mead, the devoted Bertram Keightley, the faithful Archibald Keightley and others, and in June-July 1889 — less than two years before H.P.B.'s passing

— arrived on the scene the soldier-soul, Annie Besant. The era of study grew into the era of application, and many were the earnest persons who saw the importance and the pressing necessity of practice and application. Surrounding H.P.B. was a strong group of earnest Esotericists in London, and there were a few also on the Continent. Round W.Q.J. in New York and spread all over the U.S.A. and even Canada was another group, and among them were Jasper Niemand, the helping hand, and Robert Crosbie, the faithful learner. From 1888 to 1892, study, application, promulgation manifested in a grand way in the Theosophical Movement which was kept unbroken and intact by the wisdom, patience, forbearance and statesmanship of H.P.B.

The future depended on W. Q. Judge and his pupils and on the London Esotericists who accepted the lead of Annie Besant when H.P.B. passed away. Mrs. Besant was sincere and earnest, not only in study and propaganda, both natural to her (because of the previous experiences of this incarnation), but also in application of the teachings to her own personality, which H.P.B. described as “not psychic or spiritual in the least — all intellect.” In the process of application of the tenets of the Esoteric Philosophy, Mrs. Besant developed a strong desire for psychic powers — safely natural only to adeptship. Unfortunate Karma, her own as of the Movement, precipitated a grave crisis among all students and especially Esotericists. It was a testing time for all. The crisis revolved round the figure of W. Q. Judge and the test of all, including Annie Besant, was of their fidelity to the Teachings of H.P.B., the Teachings which constituted her whole recorded Message, complete and finished. To be true to the Higher Self, to the Lines laid down by the Masters and to Their programme — such was the test for each and all. Mr. Judge himself proclaimed the test in his own outlook, behaviour and work. There might be, there were, many paths, but who would follow strictly “the Path I show, the Masters that are behind,” that H.P.B. had proclaimed?

This mighty Test of Application split the Society, and the winds of Karma winnowed the grain from the chaff. Annie Besant took a curve of the Path which was not H.P.B.’s — the greatest of the tragedies of our Movement, not only for her who was earnest and sincere and assiduous in the holy task of self-improvement, but for literally thousands who looked to her for light and guidance.

A very barren period followed the passing of W. Q. Judge in 1896 when propaganda out of the line of the Masters and of H.P.B. flourished;

there was application of questionable doctrines and methods and the real study of H.P.B.'s Message was conspicuous by its rarity.

Robert Crosbie's cycle, beginning in 1909, stressed the triple aspect of the Movement. Study was revived, application was stressed, promulgation was undertaken in an exemplary, impersonal and real esoteric way. Many of the present-day Associates of the U.L.T. are keen about study, learn the Esoteric Philosophy in an admirable way, and try to teach what is learnt. But we must be on our guard in the coming years not to be affected by the shadow of that cycle in which the test of application came. Let us remember Mr. Robert Crosbie's words: "Apply, apply, apply Their teachings. There is no time limit to effort."

We must be careful about our promulgation also. It is Theosophy, the doctrines of the Esoteric Philosophy, of which the world is in need — the Divine nature of the Universe and of Man; the development of the human Soul according to the Law of Harmony; Reincarnation and the Law of Moral Compensation; the influence of the dark and the light sides of Nature on Knowledge, and therefore on Human Life. These grand teachings have to be presented to our civilization which is now looking out for the Light of Truth. In this, Associates of the U.L.T., and especially Indian Associates, have to play a responsible part. For this we shall need right Application rooted in assimilated Knowledge which depends upon sustained and correct study of our Theosophical textbooks. We are indebted to Mr. Crosbie for pointing to the sure way of putting to best use their beautiful jewels. By true application we will set these jewels for ourselves and that setting must be such that they sparkle their radiance to light the way of men, who in their "wretched desolation sit starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation."

There is one difficulty which we must mention. There are students who do not like the "metaphysical jargon," as they call the grand philosophical and even psychological principles of the Esoteric Philosophy. They desire to practise ethics. This is good, but they have to understand that metaphysical and philosophical principles are highly valued by the Master himself who has said: "*Outside* of metaphysics no occult philosophy, no esotericism is possible."

On the other hand, there are those who have long ago read *Light on the Path* and *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Gita* and the *Dhammapada*, and have little use for these "goody-goody sermons"! They com-

mit even a greater error than the former class.

Both philosophical knowledge and right morality are necessary. The true devotee must learn the art of perceiving ethical truths in metaphysical propositions, and also the profundity enshrined in simple-looking moral principles. "The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real," but it is also through the mind and its organ in the brain that the cosmos and its mysteries are to be fathomed. In our lower and tarnished consciousness lies buried the seed which can grow like the lotus plant out of the scum; by right effort will bloom the Flower whose Heart alone is capable of drinking the Light of the Spiritual Sun.

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IT IS SUPPOSED by some that initiation is always and in every case a set and solemn occasion for which the candidate is prepared and notified of in advance. While there are some initiations surrounded by such solemnities as these, the daily one, without success in which no aspirant will ever have the chance to try for those that are higher, comes to the disciple with almost each moment. It is met in our relations with our fellows, and in the effects upon us of all the circumstances of life. And if we fail in these, we never get to the point where greater ones are offered. If we cannot bear momentary defeat, or if a chance word that strikes our self-love finds us unprepared, or if we give way to the desire to harshly judge others, or if we remain in ignorance of some of our most apparent faults, we do not build up that knowledge and strength imperatively demanded from whoever is to be master of nature.

It is in the life of every one to have a moment of choice, but that moment is not set for any particular day. It is the sum total of all days; and it may be put off until the day of death, and then it is beyond our power, for the choice has then been fixed by all the acts and thoughts of the lifetime. We are self-doomed at that hour to just the sort of life, body, environment, and tendencies which will best carry out our karma.

Do you think that if a Master accepted you He would put you to some strange test? No, He would not, but simply permitting the small events of your life to have their course, the result would determine your standing. *It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it.*

# THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

## ITS ORIGIN, PLAN AND AIMS

[The text of this important document, printed in the early days of the Theosophical Movement for the information of correspondents, may be found in Vol. I of H. P. Blavatsky's *Collected Writings*. A Note by the Compiler of this series states:

“This is the New York Circular drafted mainly by Colonel H. S. Olcott and which was ready for distribution on May 3rd, 1878. . . . As Col. Olcott points out himself: ‘In drafting the New York circular it occurred to me that the membership of, and supervising entities behind, the Society would be naturally grouped in three divisions, *viz.*, new members not detached from worldly interests; pupils, like myself, who had withdrawn from the same or were ready to do so; and the adepts themselves, who, without being actually members, were at least connected with us and concerned in our work as a potential agency for the doing of spiritual good to the world. With H.P.B.’s concurrence I defined these three groups, calling them sections, and sub-dividing each into three degrees. This, of course, was in the hope and expectation that we should have more practical guidance in adjusting the several grades of members than we had had — or have since had, I may add’.

“Col Olcott specifically states that the passage beginning: ‘As the highest development . . .’ and ending with: ‘unseen universes’ was written by H.P.B. . . .

“There can be very little doubt of the fact that the inspiring guidance of the Adepts was back of the actual wording of this Circular. It is a document of primary importance in the history of the Theosophical Movement.”

—Eds.]

I. The Society was founded at the City of New York, in the year 1875.

II. Its officers are a President; two Vice-Presidents; a Corresponding Secretary; a Recording Secretary; a Treasurer; a Librarian; and Councillors.

III. At first it was an open body, but, later, it was reorganized on the principle of secrecy, experience having demonstrated the advisability of such a change.

IV. Its Fellows are known as Active, Corresponding and Honorary. Only those are admitted who are in sympathy with its objects, and sincerely desire to aid in the promotion of the same.

V. Its Fellowship is divided into three Sections, and each Section into three Degrees. All candidates for active fellowship are required to enter as probationers, in the Third Degree of the Third Section, and no fixed time is specified in which the new Fellow can advance from any lower to a higher degree; all depends upon merit. To be admitted into the highest degree of the first section, the Theosophist must have become freed of every leaning toward any one form of religion in preference to another. He must be free from all exacting obligations to society, politics and family. He must be ready to lay down his life, if necessary, for the good of Humanity, and of a brother Fellow of whatever race, colour or ostensible creed. He must renounce wine and every other description of intoxicating beverages, and adopt a life of strict chastity. Those who have not yet wholly disenthralled themselves from religious prejudice and other forms of selfishness, but have made a certain progress towards self-mastery and enlightenment, belong in the Second Section. The Third Section is probationary: its members can leave the Society at will, although the obligation assumed at entrance will continually bind them to absolute secrecy as to what may have been communicated under restrictions.

VI. The objects of the Society are various. It influences its fellows to acquire an intimate knowledge of natural law, especially its occult manifestations. As the highest development, physically and spiritually, on earth, of the Creative Cause, man should aim to solve the mystery of his being. He is the procreator of his species, physically, and having inherited the nature of the unknown but palpable Cause of his own creation, must possess in his inner, psychical self, this creative power in lesser degree. He should, therefore, study to develop his latent powers, and inform himself respecting the laws of magnetism, electricity, and all other forms of force, whether of the seen or unseen universes. The Society teaches and expects its fellows to personally exemplify the highest morality and religious aspiration; to oppose the materialism of science and every form of dogmatic theology, especially the Christian, which the Chiefs of the Society regard as particularly pernicious; to make known among Western nations the long-suppressed *facts* about Oriental religious philosophies, their ethics, chronology, esoterism, symbolism; to counteract, as far as possible, the efforts of missionaries to delude the so-called "Heathen" and "Pagans" as to the real origin and dogmas of Christianity and the practical effects of the latter upon public and private character in so-called civilized countries; to disseminate a

knowledge of the sublime teachings of that pure esoteric system of the archaic period, which are mirrored in the oldest Vedas, and in the philosophy of Gautama Buddha, Zoroaster and Confucius; finally, and chiefly, to aid in the institution of a Brotherhood of Humanity, wherein all good and pure men, of every race, shall recognize each other as the equal effects (upon this planet) of one Uncreate, Universal, Infinite, and Everlasting Cause.

VII. Persons of either sex are eligible.

VIII. There are branches of the Parent Society in several countries of the East and West.

IX. No fees are exacted, but those who choose may contribute towards the Society's expenses. No applicant is received because of his wealth or influence, nor rejected because of his poverty or obscurity.

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IN *The Theosophist* for April 1880, the general plans of the Theosophical Society were declared to be as follows:

(a) To keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions.

(b) To oppose and counteract — after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature — bigotry in every form, whether as an intolerant religious sectarianism or belief in miracles or anything supernatural.

(c) To promote a feeling of brotherhood among nations; and assist in the international exchange of useful arts and products, by advice, information, and co-operation with all worthy individuals and associations. . . .

(d) To seek to obtain knowledge of all the laws of Nature, and aid in diffusing it; and especially to encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people, and so termed the Occult Sciences . . . in the hope to widen the field of scientific and philosophic observation.

(e) To gather for the Society's library and put into written form correct information upon the various ancient philosophies, traditions, and legends, and disseminate the same in practicable ways. . . .

(f) To promote in every practical way, in countries where needed, the spread of non-sectarian education.

(g) Finally, and chiefly, to encourage and assist individual Fellows in self-improvement, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. . . .

## STORED-UP MEMORIES

Why let people dictate to you: "Do not handle this, do not taste that, do not touch the other" — all of them things that must perish as soon as they are used? That is to follow merely human injunctions and teaching. True, it has an air of wisdom, with its forced piety, its self-mortification, and its severity to the body; but it is of no use at all in combating sensuality.

—*Colossians*, II. 20–23

OF LATE, reincarnation is being investigated, probed into, questioned. This marks a definite advance over the bigoted thought of centuries when church dogmas dominated the minds of men. But at present when science obsesses the minds of men this inquiry must of necessity restrict itself to the limited functions of reasoning and to the testimony of senses supplemented by instruments which merely extend the perception of these senses. The West thus remains in doubt yet willing to be convinced. In the East, reincarnation is being accepted blindly, instinctively, or as an article of faith; but the lure of wealth and ease is turning the intelligentsia away from a deeper probe into the implications that follow upon a survival through and beyond death.

If we carry with us the immortal spark from one life to another, we were perchance in Greece and Babylon, participated in the glory of Egypt and helped to make China ancient and honourable. We must have witnessed the shifting of continents and served our human apprenticeship in Atlantis and Lemuria. We may have witnessed the dawn of humanity which had but one tongue and one rallying cry. We, the deathless, went through it all and in one or another ledger of our journeys through life have left our record of reactions to the men, matters and things we encountered. Can we, perchance through strong search, perchance through persistent strivings, find the ledger and learn to read its transcript? What will it reveal? Will it be a Pandora's box which were better left unopened, its key thrown away; or will it be the box which holds the charmed talisman that will transform us to planes where the Soul speaks its own language and reads the words which are written there for its instruction and edification?

The importance of recognizing this doctrine of incarnation lies in the fact that if a man has lived before and will hereafter live again, then the entity which spans the gulf of death must somewhere have built up a storehouse of memories, of lessons learnt in pain, of data

laboriously gathered from experiments with life. Why then is it that nature denies him access and shuts him off from his past as effectively as it does from his future? The answer must of course be found in the working of the evolutionary programmes and in the working of the laws of cycles. If our births can stretch back and farther back, we cannot with any degree of certitude say that man never did possess the power to look into the picture-galleries of the past. May it not be possible that preoccupation with things material atrophied his inner vision, made the power less familiar and certainly set it aside in favour of the less arduous efforts at the acquisition of power over the material things of life? Even legend asserts that man lost his third eye. This happened millennia back as gradually spirituality waned, and man now remains that strange being which has eyes but is incapable of sight. To the 20th-century individual this would be mere speculation, and since the proof which can convince him lies in the opening of his third eye, it were well-nigh impossible to convince him. But for those who have faith, the proofs always come from and to the inner planes of being.

Against reincarnation there is posed the oft-repeated question: "If I have lived before, why do I not remember my past lives?" The answer is not difficult—you cannot bring the old memories to your present brain consciousness for the reason that the present brain was not your possession in prior lives and therefore has no record of the impressions. The present brain may retain—though that too to a limited extent—the memories of this life. And yet, how poor must our powers of recall be that we misplace things, hunt for words or try to capture the mood of only a few hours back! The tablet of the brain, and shall we as an aside say, of the organs also, is one type of storehouse available to the man. These tablets anon bless us and anon damn us. In and around man there are several storehouses where memory is hoarded; the innate moral and motivating quality being the factor which makes the living record gravitate to one or another of the recording media. When the man has forgotten something and desires to recall the memory, what part of his goes a-searching? Where does he go to make the search and that too with the consciousness in *Jagrat*? That he does succeed in retrieving the forgotten word or the experience misplaced in the plethora of a full life goes to prove that he does exercise an unfamiliar sense, a vibration rarely used, to pluck the particular fruit which he wants from a particular tree.

That memories can be the undoing of many a sincere effort finds ready

proof in the life of the aspirant. In *The Theosophical Glossary*, referring to “the step of memory” (*Tchitta Riddhi Pada*), we are told that it is “the third condition of the mystic series which leads to the acquirement of adeptship, *i.e.*, the renunciation of physical memory, and of all thoughts connected with worldly or personal events in one’s life — benefit, personal pleasures or associations. Physical memory has to be sacrificed and recalled by *will power* only when absolutely needed.” It would therefore be dangerous in the extreme if the memory tablets of man’s iniquities are thrown open to the gaze of the beast in him. Rumination over the escapades of yester-years are grist to the man’s mill. The animal in him wallows in such memories and perpetuates them by repetition. To the aspirant, these memories are explosives acquired during bouts of animalism which have the strength to force him back to haunts where the Soul is not.

It were useless for a man to remember his past life — the house in which he resided and the names of his friends and family members. In our age such a discovery may be sensational, but it does not take the man even a tiny step forward. Will it make him embrace morals or crucify himself for the alleviation of the condition of the race? He will only be the wonder of a day whom a few will believe and the others stone. If instances of chance recovery of snatches of memory prove that something does survive death, then it would be right to infer that the memory of the plan set for any incarnation exists; that the memory of moments when a man feels exalted are never erased but eternally reside in the immortal part of the man; that the storehouse must of necessity be accessible and await the producing of the right sign and the correct password.

If it is true that the principles of economics and political science, for instance, cannot be discovered by the use of the telescope or the cyclotron, it is more profoundly true that the principles which govern the inner animating life of the man and the atom are not fathomable by the tools of modern science that deal with matter in its gross forms. Science does not have the instruments which can produce or measure, much less register, vibrations of sound and colour in their higher spectra. In order to tune oneself with the frequencies in which resides the Wisdom of the Ages — the *Sanatana dharma* — one has first to understand how the strings that vibrate on the human sounding-board have to be tuned to concert pitch. The hot and burning passions of lust and covetousness, the dullness of intellect, the lethargy of old age, the de-

jection which numbs the Soul — all these make it impossible for the creation of harmonious vibrations. The lyre of an undisciplined life can produce only discords. Discipleship requires a virile touch, a dauntlessness that borders on the fanatical. For, the man before he can master the higher vibrations or even reach to them has to plough his way through oppositions that are to be met from the outside environment of family, friends and enemies alike as also the more terrible opposition that automatically arises and bursts into open rebellion — the resistance of well-entrenched desires, deep-rooted habits, attractions and affinities for ignoble cravings, the pull of the grossly material and the hankering after the tinsel show of things.

In man there are seven planes or states on which his consciousness can function. It must therefore follow that the man must have faculties to function on each of these planes. There would thus be memories of actions done on a plane for which recording tablets must perforce exist. It must also follow that for each plane the tablets form a library of all the thoughts, aspirations and feelings consubstantial with that plane. Since these memories are not mere words and pictures but are recorded on a congeries of lives, they may get attracted by any mind that vibrates in unison. The drunkard attracts and is in turn hypnotized by one set of living pictures. The saint vibrates on quite another plane and draws his solace and sustenance from other and superior planes. The aspirant to renunciation in rare moments of ecstasy gets his strength and comfort from planes reached only through the region of the Higher Mind.

If history has aught to teach us, there exist and have always existed those who in the words of Saint Paul have dedicated their lives to such works as make men give glory to their Father who is in Heaven.

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THERE is in all created beings an inconceivable light by which all good acts are performed; and in it as in an immortal essence is comprised whatever has been past, is present, or will be hereafter.

—EASTERN WISDOM

# FOR EVER FRESH, THOSE VERNAL BLOOMS!

## LETTER 1

DEAR VIJAY,

What a joy to receive your letter! So you have not forgotten your old class-fellow in his sequestered rustic hermitage, far from the great city in which you are now a rising man, as I learn from frequent mention of you in the newspapers. No, believe me, I never suspected you of forgetfulness, only of necessary preoccupation with the family business into which you went dutifully at your father's desire. And if I felt regret that, so absorbed in it, your philosophic bent must needs take second place, well, I asked myself, would my own have fared better but for that crippling accident the summer after I graduated? I had meant, as you know, to go to England to study medicine, not to live remote in our old family home in this hill village, developing my meagre literary gifts instead — upon which, fortunately, I don't depend for livelihood! Yet that accident, I can say in all honesty, has proved a blessing to me in the long run. It turned my attention to research — I have a little book in preparation on the relationship between ancient Greek and Indian medicine — and this in turn fed my love of *Theosophia* (you haven't forgotten that word, my friend?), Divine Wisdom, the one thing that really matters. Such a love, Vijay, dies not. Rather is it nourished even by life's seemingly adverse circumstances. You yourself are a proof of that. Busy, popular, successful, and *harassed*, you suddenly bethink you of those old truths and sense a power in them as fresh and fruitful as the vernal blooms surrounding our college compound where we discussed them with all the eagerness of youth.

Vernal blooms! I stop short with those words. For I have a little volume at hand here bearing that title which will answer your questions a hundred times better than I can, since its author was one of those who come to us, under Karma, in the unfailing line of teachers of Theosophy. Some day you must read about him, Vijay. His name was William Quan Judge. Yes, a Westerner, an Irishman, which means that the deep mystic nature of the Celt was already his before he contacted trans-Himalayan wisdom through its chosen exponent for our age, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, who came to birth in 1831. That, however, can wait. At the moment, some words of his have just caught my eye which might well be framed and hung up conspicuously in a modern office such as yours. "In this civilization especially we are inclined to look outside

instead of inside ourselves. Nearly all our progress is material and thus superficial. Spirit is neglected or forgotten, while that which is not spirit is enshrined as such."

I grant that in your own case this doesn't quite apply, for the troubled inquiries in your long letter would satisfy W.Q.J. that you have at least reached the right starting-point, since "one of the questions which a Theosophist is apt to ask, and to ask with some earnestness and intensity, is, How can I make progress in the higher life?" You disclaim being a Theosophist? Never mind! You have asked the fundamental question. And W.Q.J. would quickly brush aside your lamentation that it is too late in the day to attempt self-improvement. I can sympathize, though, with your mood of despondency. None of us enjoy giving up our earlier self-illusions. Yet how "much better is it to be conscious of our defects and weaknesses, always ready to acknowledge the truth that, being human, we are not able to always or quickly reach the goal of effort"!

Certainly the goal that now beckons you afresh, my friend, namely, the spiritual life that allured us in our youth, lies far off at the moment for both of us and can only be attained by slow degrees. "Few, if any, of us," says Mr. Judge, "are at all fitted for a 'forcing' process. We must be content to wait and work; to grow and develop; line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, till, ages hence perhaps, we come to the full stature of the perfect man. If, however, wisely recognizing our limitations, we strive instead after what may be termed the ordinary manifestations of the spirit," then, if not in this birth, then in another, the fruits of good Karma will ripen upon our Tree of Life.

What, you may ask, are "ordinary manifestations of the spirit"? Ever practical, Mr. Judge states them clearly. "Unselfishness, altruism in theory and practice, desire to do the will of the Higher Self which is the 'Father in Heaven,' devotion to the human race. Subsidiary to these, discipline, correct thinking, and good education."

This last you and I have both had. But it does not necessarily ensure right thought and self-control. These are vital and to achieve them needs unflagging persistence. "If we start out to reach the goal of wisdom, the mind and heart must not be permitted to wander, for the path is narrow and the wanderings of a day may cause us years of effort to find the road again." Note that linking of mind and *heart*. It indicates a fact "which is an accepted one by all true students of occultism,

that the true heart of a man — which is visibly represented by the muscular heart — is the focus point for spirit, for knowledge, for power; and that from that point the converged rays begin to spread out fan-like, until they embrace the Universe.”

Such a “true heart” is ever outgoing. Its action is that Altruism which Theosophy enjoins upon us. And remembering old days and many kindnesses, I can believe that to you, Vijay, Altruism comes readily, for you have a warm and feeling nature. From all that I hear of you, you are well fitted to deal with your fellow-men in the busy world. But even so, that is only the starting-point, for however willingly “one accepts the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, which is based on the essential unity of all human beings, there is a long distance yet intervening between that acceptation and its realization, in those who have adopted the doctrine. It is just the difference between intellectual assent to a moral, philosophical, or occult law, and its perfect development in one’s being so that it has become an actual part of ourselves.”

I am sure you are glad to see the word “doctrine” coming in! You have been looking for it, haven’t you? Here have I, or rather W.Q.J., been dwelling on the humble drill of checking faults and weaknesses, of patient amendment in daily living and a right attitude to other people, while all the time you have been eagerly anticipating the statement of some lofty philosophic system which would set all that in its wider context. And you are quite right! For “the inner man” — the man we are concerned with, you and I — “is a thinking being who feeds upon a right or wrong philosophy. If he is given one that is wrong, then, becoming warped and diseased, he leads his instrument, the outer man, into bewilderment and sorrow.”

Well, you will find no nobler philosophy than that which W.Q.J. had from his *guru* H.P.B., but underlying all his promulgations of it there is an abiding plain common sense which is precisely one of the qualities that most commend him as a teacher. None knew better that philosophy, however grand, is futile if it has no immediate influence on our everyday existence, which is why he regrets that “we often find Theosophists among themselves debating complicated doctrines that have no present application to practical life . . . and inquirers breathing a sigh of relief when anyone directs the inquiries into such a channel as shall cause all the doctrines to be extended to daily life and there applied.” In fact, he goes so far as to say that even “the fundamental doctrines of Theosophy are of no value unless they are applied to daily life. To

the extent to which this application goes they become living truths, quite different from intellectual expressions of doctrine. The mere intellectual grasp may result in spiritual pride, while the living doctrine becomes an entity through the mystic power of the human soul. Many great minds have dwelt on this."

Note: you will find the phrase "applied to daily life," or some variation of it, running like a refrain through all that W.Q.J. wrote. We may say it was his touchstone for genuine devotion to Theosophy.

What those fundamental doctrines are, of course you know — Karma, Reincarnation, Unity. Beyond them we need not seek. For what more could a myriad Sages tell us? "The first shows that we must reap what we sow, and the second that we come back in the company of those with whom we lived and acted in other lives." Incidentally, lest you hear talk of "good" or "bad" Karma, let me give you W.Q.J.'s definition of these terms. "The all embracing and sufficient answer is this: good Karma is that kind which the Ego desires and requires; bad, that which the Ego neither desires nor requires." Either condition, he goes on to explain, could only be rightly appraised if we knew the tendencies which the Ego has drawn about itself in a former life and which cannot be eliminated in any other way. Yet this does not always quite apply. He reveals to us a rare and wonderful exception. When shocked by the sight of poverty, misery, injustice, "we should not forget that sometimes, often in the grand total, a pure, powerful Ego incarnates in just such awful surroundings, remaining good and pure all the time, and staying there for the purpose of uplifting and helping others."

But, this apart, the first of those three "fundamental doctrines" gives the inspiring assurance that "the Ego, being guided and controlled by law, by justice, by the necessities of upward evolution, and not by fancy or selfishness or revenge or ambition, is sure to choose the earthly habitation that is most likely, out of all possible of selection, to give a Karma for the real advantage in the end." The second teaches us that "that which men call death is but a change of location for the Ego, a mere transformation, a forsaking for a time of the mortal frame, a short period of rest before one reassumes another human frame in the world of mortals. . . . Dwelling in numerous tenements of clay, it (the Ego) appears to come and go; but neither death nor time can claim it, for it is deathless, unchangeable and pure, beyond Time itself, and not to be measured." "And the next doctrine is that all these spiritual beings in these bodies are united together in fact, not in theory; that you are

all made of one substance; that our souls vibrate together, feel for each other, suffer for each other, and enjoy for each other. . . . We are all bound together with a bond we cannot break, and that is the essential unity of the human family; it is the basis of universal brotherhood."

Surely your own experience of the first two doctrines should suffice to convince you of their truth, Vijay, for would you, but for them, have been led away from parental orthodoxy into the theosophic liberty of your youthful speculations, and but for them would you be seeking now in later life to regain it and rejoin your fellow-students? With what deep insight speaks Mr. Judge! "Karmic tendency is an unswerving law. It compels us to go on in this movement of thought and doctrine; it will bring back to reincarnation all in it now. . . . It was the aim of the founders of the Society to arouse tendency to future friendship; it ought to be the object of all our members." And he concludes by reminding us that whatever our present disadvantages may seem to be, "we are encouraged by the thought that the laws of karma and reincarnation show us that in other lives and new bodies we may do better work."

You and I, friend, are "in this movement" now. For that great blessing we should be thankful. Dogma does not bind us, nor bigotry limit our horizon; racialism, crass materialism, irreverence towards Nature, ignorance as to our origin, fear and superstition as to our earthly end and future state — from all these we have been delivered by the noble teachings of Theosophy, transmitted down the ages by the Servants of the Light.

From one such I have quoted freely, and if you have time and inclination (as I hope you have) to continue our correspondence, I shall gladly maintain my part in it, deeming it a privilege to discuss so great a subject, especially under the aegis of Mr. Judge, our "guide, philosopher and friend." It is like old days come again to talk with you even on paper — nay, rather, through "those living messengers called words," in his own happier phrase.

As long ago when we were class-mates, let "the imponderables" be our theme. They are for ever fresh, those vernal blooms!

Your friend and fellow-student,

NARAHARI

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## MAGIC

[This article by H. P. Blavatsky appeared originally in *The Deccan Star*, March 30, 1879, and was reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for July 1959.—EDS.]

IN *The Indian Tribune* of March 15 appears a letter upon the relations of the Theosophical Society with the Arya Samaj. The writer seems neither an enemy of our cause, nor hostile to the Society; therefore I will try in a gentle spirit to correct certain misapprehensions under which he labours.

As he signs himself "A Member," he must, therefore, be regarded by us as a *Brother*. And yet he seems moved by an unwarranted fear to a hasty repudiation of too close a connection between our Society and his Samaj, lest the fair name of the latter be compromised before the public by some strange notions of ours. He says:

I have been surprised to hear that the Society embraces people who believe in magic. Should this, however, be the belief of the Theosophical Society, I could only assure your readers that the Arya Samaj is not in common with them in this respect. . . . Only as far as Vedic *learning* and Vedic *philosophy* is concerned, their objects may be said to be similar.

It is these very points I now mean to answer.

The gist of the whole question is as to the correct definition of the word "Magic," and understanding of what Vedic "learning and philosophy" are. If by Magic is meant the popular superstitious belief in sorcery, witchcraft and ghosts in general; if it involves the admission that *supernatural* feats may be performed; if it requires faith in *miracles*, that is to say, phenomena outside natural law; then, on behalf of every Theosophist, whether a sceptic yet unconverted, a believer in and student of phenomena pure and simple, or even a modern Spiritualist so-called — *i.e.*, one who believes mediumistic phenomena to be necessarily caused by returning human spirits — we emphatically repudiate the accusation.

We did not see *The Civil and Military Gazette*, which seems so well acquainted with our doctrines; but if it meant to accuse any Theosophists of any such belief, then, like many other *Gazettes* and *Reviews*, it talked of that which it knew nothing about.

Our Society believes in *no* miracle, divine, diabolical or human, nor in

anything which eludes the grasp of either philosophical and logical induction, or the syllogistic method of deduction. But if the corrupted and comparatively modern term of "Magic" is understood to mean the higher study and knowledge of Nature and deep research into her hidden powers — those Occult and mysterious laws which constitute the ultimate essence of every element — whether with the ancients we recognize but four or five, or with the moderns over sixty; or, again, if by Magic is meant that ancient study within the sanctuaries, known as the "worship of the Light," or divine and spiritual wisdom as distinct from the worship of darkness or ignorance which led the initiated High-priests of antiquity among the Aryans, Chaldaeans, Medes and Egyptians to be called *Maha*, Magi or *Maginsi*, and by the Zoroastrians *Meghistam* (from the root *Meh'ab*, great, learned, wise) — then, we Theosophists "plead guilty."

We do study that "Science of sciences," extolled by the Eclectics and Platonists of the Alexandrian Schools, and *practised* by the theurgists and the mystics of every age. If Magic gradually fell into disrepute, it was not because of its intrinsic worthlessness, but through misconception and ignorance of its primitive meaning, and especially the cunning policy of Christian theologians, who feared lest many of the phenomena produced *by* and *through* natural (though Occult) law should give the direct lie to, and thus cheapen, "Divine biblical miracle," and so forced the people to attribute every manifestation that they could not comprehend, or explain, to the direct agency of a personal devil. As well accuse the renowned Magi of old of having had no better knowledge of divine truth and the hidden powers and possibilities of physical law than their successors, the uneducated Parsi *Mobeds*, or the Hindu Maharajas of that shameless sect known as the Vallabhacharyas, both of whom yet derive their appellation from the Persian word *Mog* or *Mag*, and the Sanskrit *Maha*. More than one glorious truth has thus tumbled down through human ignorance from the sublime into the ridiculous.

Plato, and even the sceptical Lucian, both recognized the high wisdom and profound learning of the Magi; and Cicero, speaking of those who inhabited Persia in his times, calls them "*sapientium et doctorum genus majorum*." And if so, we must evidently believe that these *Magi* or "Magicians" stood somewhat higher than the modern Maskelyns and Cooks — the style of *magicians* that were not such as London sees at a shilling a seat — nor yet certain fraudulent spiritual mediums. The

science of such theurgists and philosophers as Pythagoras, Plotinus, Porphyry, Proclus, Bruno, Paracelsus, and a host of other great men, has now fallen into disrepute. But had our Brother Theosophist, Thomas Alva Edison, the inventor of the telephone and the phonograph, lived in the days of Galileo, he would have surely expiated on the rack or at the stake his sin of having found the means to fix on a soft surface of metal, and preserve for long years, the sounds of the human voice, for his talent would have been pronounced the gift of Hell. And yet, such an abuse of brute power to suppress truth would not have changed a scientific discovery into a foolish and disreputable superstition.

But our friend "A Member," consenting to descend to our level in one point at least, admits himself that in "Vedic learning and philosophy" the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society are upon a common ground. Then, I have something to appeal to as an authority which will be better still than the so-much-derided Magic, Theurgy and Alchemy. It is the *Vedas* themselves, for "Magic" is brought into every line of the sacred books of the Aryans. Magic is indispensable for the comprehension of either of the six great schools of Aryan philosophy. And it is precisely to understand them, and thus enable ourselves to bring to light the hidden *summum bonum* of that mother of all Eastern philosophies known as the *Vedas*, and the later Brahmanical literature, that we study it. Neglect this study, and we, in common with all Europe, would have to set Max Müller's interpretations of the *Vedas* far above those of Svami Dayanand Sarasvati, as given in his *Veda-Bhashya*. And we would have to let the Anglo-German Sanskritist go uncontradicted, when he says that with the exception of the *Rig*, none other of the four sacred books is deserving of the name of *Veda*, especially the *Atharva Veda* which is absurd magical nonsense, composed of sacrificial formulas, charms and incantations (see his "Lecture on the Vedas"). This is, therefore, why, disregarding every misconception, we humbly beg to be allowed to follow the analytical method of such students and practitioners of "Magic" as Kapila — mentioned in the *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* as "the Rishi nourished with knowledge by the God himself"; Patanjali, the great authority of the Yogis, Shankaracharya of theurgic memory, and even Zoroaster, who certainly learned his wisdom from the initiated Brahmans of Aryavarta. And we do not see why, for that, we should be held up to the world's scorn, as either superstitious fools or hallucinated enthusiasts, by our own brother of the Arya Samaj. I will say more. While the latter is, perhaps, in common with other "mem-

bers” of the same Samaj, unable and perfectly helpless to defend Svami Dayanand against the sophistry of such partial scoffers as a certain Pandit Mahesa Chandra Nyayaratna, of Calcutta, who would have us believe the *Veda-Bhashya* a futile attempt at interpretation, we, Theosophists, do not shrink from assuming the burden. When the Svami affirms that Agni and Ishvara are identical, the Calcutta Pandit calls it “stuff.” To him Agni means the coarse, visible fire, with which one melts his ghee and cooks his rice cakes. Apparently he does not know, as he might, if he had studied “Magic” — that is to say, had familiarized himself with the views about the divine Fire or Light, “whose external body is Flame,” held by the mediaeval Rosicrucians (the Fire-Philosophers) and all their initiated predecessors and successors — that the Vedic Agni is in fact Ishvara and nothing else. The Svami makes no mistake when he says:

For Agni is all the deities and Vishnu is all the deities. For these two (divine) bodies, Agni and Vishnu, are the two ends of the sacrifice.

At one end of the ladder which stretches from heaven to earth is Ishvara — Spirit, Supreme Being, subjective, invisible and incomprehensible; at the other his visible manifestation, “sacrificial fire.”

So well has this been comprehended by every religious philosophy of antiquity that the enlightened Parsi worships not gross flame, but the divine Spirit within, of which it is the visible type; and even in the Jewish *Bible* there is the unapproachable Jehovah and his downrushing fire which consumes the wood upon the altar and licks up the water in the trench about it (*I Kings*, xviii. 38). There is also the visible manifestation of God in the burning bush of Moses, and the Holy Ghost in the Gospels of the Christians, descending like tongues of flame upon the heads of the assembled disciples on the day of Pentecost. There is not an Esoteric Philosophy or rather Theosophy, which did not apprehend this deep spiritual idea, and each and all are traceable to the Vedic sacred books, says the author of *The Rosicrucians* in his chapter on “The Nature of Fire,” and quoting R. Fludd, the mediaeval Theosophist and Alchemist:

Wonder no longer then, if [in the religions of the Aryans, Medes and Zoroastrians], rejected so long as an idolatry, the ancient Persians and their masters, the Magi — concluding that they saw “All” in this supernaturally magnificent Element [fire] — fell down and worshipped it; making of it the visible representa-

tion of the truest, but yet, in man's speculation, in his philosophies, nay, in his commonest reason, impossible God; God being everywhere and in us, and, indeed, *us*, in the God-lighted man, and impossible to be contemplated or known outside, being *All!*

This is the teaching of the mediaeval Fire-Philosophers known as the Brothers of the Rosie-Cross, such as Paracelsus, Kunrath, Van Helmont, and that of all the Illuminati and Alchemists who succeeded these, and who claimed to have discovered the eternal Fire, or to have "found out God in the Immortal Light" — that light whose radiance shone through the Yogis. The same author remarks of them:

Already, in their determined climbing unto the heights of thought, had these Titans of mind achieved, past the cosmical, through the shadowy borders of the Real and Unreal, into Magic. For is Magic wholly false?

— he goes on to ask. No; certainly not, when by Magic is understood the higher study of divine, and yet *not* supernatural law, though the latter be, as yet, undiscovered by exact and materialistic science.

No more are the so-called Spiritualistic phenomena, which are believed in by nearly twenty millions of well-educated, often highly enlightened and learned persons in Europe and America, but mere hallucinations of a diseased brain. They are as real, and as well authenticated by the testimony of thousands of unimpeached witnesses, and as scientifically and mathematically proved as the latest discoveries of our Brother T. A. Edison. If the term "fool" is applicable to such men of science and giants of intellect of the two hemispheres, as W. Crookes, F.R.S., Alfred Russel Wallace, the greatest naturalist of Europe and a successful rival of Darwin, and as Flammarion, the French astronomer, Member of the Academy of Sciences of France, Professor Zöllner, the celebrated Leipzig astronomer and physicist, Professor Hare, the great chemist of America, and many another no less eminent scientist, unquestioned authorities *upon any other question* but the so-called spiritual phenomena, and all firm Spiritualists themselves often converted only after years of careful investigation — then, indeed, we Theosophists would not find ourselves in bad company, and would deem it an honour to be called "fools" were we even firm orthodox Spiritualists ourselves — *i.e.*, believers in perambulating ghosts and materialized *bhuts* — which we are not. But we are believers in the phenomena of the Spiritualists (even if we do doubt their "spirits"), for we happen to know them to be actual facts. It is one thing to reject unproved theory, and quite

another to battle against well-established facts. Everyone has a right to doubt, until further and stronger evidence, whether these modern phenomena which are inundating the Western countries, are *all* produced by disembodied “spirits” — for it happens to be hitherto a mere speculative doctrine raised up by enthusiasts; but no one is authorized — unless he can bring to contradict the fact, something better and weightier than the mere negations of sceptics — to deny that such phenomena do occur. If we, Theosophists (and a very small minority of us), disclaim the agency of “spirits” in such manifestations, it is because we can prove in most instances to the Spiritualists, that many of their phenomena, whether of physical or psychological nature, can be reproduced by some of our Adepts at will, and without any aid of “spirits” or resort to either divine or diabolical miracle, but simply by developing the Occult powers of the man’s *Inner Self* and studying the mysteries of Nature. That European and American sceptics should deny such interference by spirits, and, as a consequence discredit the phenomena themselves, is no cause for wonder. Scarcely liberated from the clutches of the Church, whose terrible policy, barely a century ago, was to torture and put to death every person who either doubted biblical “divine” miracle, or endorsed one which theology declared diabolical, it is but the natural force of reaction which makes them revel in their new-found liberty of thought and action. One who denies the Supreme and the existence of his own Soul, is not likely to believe in either spirits or phenomena, without abundant proof. But that Eastern people, Hindus especially, of any sect, should disbelieve, is indeed an anomaly, considering that they all are taught the transmigration of Souls, and spiritual as well as physical evolution. The sixteenth chapter of the *Mahabharata, Harivansha Parva*, is full of spiritual phenomena and the raising of spirits. And if, ashamed of the now termed “superstitions” of their forefathers, young India turns, sunflower-like, but to the great luminaries of the West, this is what one of the most renowned men of science of England, A. R. Wallace — a Fellow of the Royal as well as a member of the Theosophical Society — says of the phenomena in his *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection*, and *On Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, thus confirming the belief of old India:

Up to the time when I first became acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, I was a confirmed philosophical sceptic. I was so thorough and confirmed a materialist, that I could not at that time find a place in my mind for the conception of spiritual ex-

istence, or for any other agencies in the universe than matter and force. Facts, however, are stubborn things.

Having explained how he came to become a Spiritualist, he considers the spiritual theory and shows its compatibility with natural selection. Having, he says,

been led, by a strict induction from facts, to a belief — firstly, in the existence of a number of preter-human intelligences of various grades; and secondly, that some of these intelligences, although usually invisible and intangible to us, can and do act on matter, and do influence our minds — I am surely following a strictly logical and scientific course, in seeing how far this doctrine will enable us to account for some of those residual phenomena which Natural Selection alone will not explain. In the tenth chapter of my *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* I have pointed out what I consider to be some of these residual phenomena; and I have suggested that they may be due to the action of *some of the various intelligences above referred to*. I maintained, and still maintain, that this view is logically tenable, and is in no way inconsistent with a thorough acceptance of the grand doctrine of evolution through Natural Selection.

Would not one think he hears in the above the voices of Manu, Kapila and many other Philosophers of old India, in their teachings about the creation, evolution and growth of our planet and its living world of animal as well as human species? Does the great modern scientist speak less of “spirits” and spiritual beings than Manu, the antediluvian scientist and prehistoric legislator? Let young and sceptical India read and compare the old Aryan ideas with those of modern Mystics, Theosophists, Spiritualists, and a few great Scientists, and then laugh at the *superstitious* theories of both.

For four years we have been fighting out our great battle against tremendous odds. We have been abused and called traitors by the Spiritualists, for believing in other beings in the invisible world besides their departed spirits; we were cursed and sentenced to eternal damnation, with free passports to hell, by the Christians and their clergy; ridiculed by sceptics, looked upon as audacious lunatics by society, and tabooed by the conservative press. We thought we had drunk to the dregs the bitter cup of gall. We had hoped that at least in India, the country *par excellence* of psychological and metaphysical science, we would find firm ground for our weary feet. But lo! here comes a brother of ours who, without even taking the trouble to as-

certain whether or not the rumours about us are true, makes haste to repudiate us in case we do believe in either Magic or Spiritualism — Well! We impose ourselves upon no one. For more than four years we lived and waxed in power if not in wisdom — which latter our humble deputation of Theosophists was sent to search for here, so that we might impart “Vedic learning and philosophy” to the millions of famished souls in the West, who are familiar with phenomena, but wrongly suffer themselves to be misled through their mistaken notions about ghosts and *bhuts*. But if we are to be repulsed at the outset by any considerable party of Arya Samajists, who share the views of “A Member,” then will the Theosophical Society, with its 45,000 or so of Western Spiritualists, have to become again a distinct and independent body, and do as well as it can without a single “member” to enlighten it on the absurdity of Spiritualism and Magic.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

*Bombay, March 1879.*

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No true theosophist . . . believes in *miracles*, though every true theosophist ought to believe in the existence of abnormal powers in man; “abnormal” because, so far, either misunderstood or denied. All such objective physical phenomena, however, are simply psychological “glamour,” *i.e.*, if not witchery, at least “a charm on the eyes and senses.” This, people may call brutally “trick,” but since they are *psychic*, they cannot be *physical*; hence, no conjuring or “sleight of hand.” As well call “tricksters” the grave medical celebrities, who hypnotize their subjects to see things which have no reality! “Theosophical phenomena” differ from these in this: that while hypnotic hallucinations are suggested by the operator’s idle fancy, occult manifestations are produced by the will of the Occultist, that one or a hundred men should see *realities*, generally hidden from the profane, *e.g.*, certain things and persons thousands of miles away, whose astral images are brought within the view of the audience. Thus a cup may never have been *broken in reality*, and yet people are made to see it shattered in atoms and then made whole. Is this a *juggler’s* trick? Occult phenomena are then simply a hundredfold intensified hypnotism, and between the hypnotic hallucinations at the *Salpêtrière* and the *magic* of the East there is chiefly a question of degree.

—*Lucifer*, October 1888

## SELF-HELP AND RESPONSIBILITY

IN THE WORLD today, we have had it demonstrated to us that the mass mind *can* be educated; a new point of view can be presented to it and a new attitude engendered. If this can be done, then what are the ideas and principles which our leaders should themselves accept and offer to the public to change the minds of millions?

Adult franchise is a mark of political privilege obtained by the people in a democracy; but it is *not* necessarily the mark of a sense of responsibility. Nor is free education always serviceable to the people. The balance between privilege and responsibility has to be maintained. What is needed is such education as will train the people in the responsibility which the vote, free speech, and all the rest, bring.

The virtue of self-help and self-reliance cannot be overstressed. No outside grace can save us unless we help ourselves. The implication of this is far-reaching. Not only has it a political implication; it has a philosophical implication also. And unless that basic philosophical implication is grasped, the social, economic and political implications will not be clearly understood. People everywhere should be taught to rely *not* on political leaders and parties, but on principles. On what principles?

Man is a self-conscious intelligence with the power to choose between right and wrong. All human privileges are most intimately connected with this basic power to choose, to decide, to will freely. Because this power is not used, the corresponding privileges do not accrue to man. And the power of choice and determination is not used because such a use entails responsibility. Men want privileges without responsibility; but Nature speaks most emphatically and clearly, pointing to the fact that privilege and responsibility are coeval, inseparable, the two sides of the same coin. Rights cannot be enjoyed without execution of duties; duties properly performed never fail to bring in their train privileges.

The Religion of Responsibility is what all people need; it cannot be brought to the hearts of men and women through dictatorship and autocracy which enslave human minds, enchain human hearts and degrade human morals; but on the other hand neither can it be brought to our hearts by the power of the vote, of free speech, and the like, which so-called democracies offer to their citizens through the machinery of party politics.

The Religion of Responsibility comes through a perception of the place of man in the scheme of things, of the purpose of human evolu-

tion, of the fundamental which the Laws of Manu put forward — “Other-dependence is misery; Self-dependence is happiness.” The pivotal doctrine of the Religion of Responsibility is that Man grows by self-induced and self-devised efforts; it admits of no privileges or special gifts, save those won by man’s own Soul or Ego through personal effort; hence, whatever merits a man possesses have been acquired by that Soul throughout a long series of reincarnations.

The greatest difficulty in man’s way in practising the Religion of Responsibility is rooted in the wrong education which he has been receiving for several centuries. The education of the public everywhere has stressed the importance of a falsehood, which in the language of the Buddhistic philosophy is the Heresy of Separateness. Organized creeds teach the false doctrine of religions — one true, others false. Organized social groups also teach the same false idea that differences in social status mean superiority and inferiority — the Eastern castes are different one from the other, but not superior and inferior; the Western classes are different, but capitalists are not superior to the labourers any more than the proletarians are superior to the bourgeois. Organized political parties offer different programmes, but mere affiliation to a particular party does not confer superiority or inferiority; a man is not superior or inferior from the mere fact of belonging to a political party. Organized nations with different cultures and different historical backgrounds are different one from the other, but no nation is superior to the others. The Heresy of Separateness has to be destroyed ere the true education of the public can really make progress in the Religion of Responsibility.

A Culture with a universal outlook which broadens human sympathies and deepens human insight is what we need. It may be worth our while to consider some of the principles of the Religion of Responsibility appropriate to the mind of the race which is unfolding now.

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How should you be a lamp when you yield no light to what is close beside you?

—AKHLAQUI JALALI

## THE GREAT PARADOX

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PARADOX would seem to be the natural language of occultism. Nay more, it would seem to penetrate deep into the heart of things, and thus to be inseparable from any attempt to put into words the truth, the reality which underlies the outward shows of life.

And the paradox is one not in words only, but in action, in the very conduct of life. The paradoxes of occultism must be lived, not uttered only. Herein lies a great danger, for it is only too easy to become lost in the intellectual contemplation of the path, and so to forget that the road can only be known by treading it.

One startling paradox meets the student at the very outset and confronts him in ever new and strange shapes at each turn of the road. Such an one, perchance, has sought the path desiring a guide, a rule of right for the conduct of his life. He learns that the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end of *life* is selflessness; and he feels the truth of the saying that only in the profound unconsciousness of self-forgetfulness can the truth and reality of being reveal itself to his eager heart.

The student learns that this is the one law of occultism, at once the science and the art of living, the guide to the goal he desires to attain. He is fired with enthusiasm and enters bravely on the mountain track. He then finds that his teachers do not encourage his ardent flights of sentiment, his all-forgetting yearning for the Infinite — on the outer plane of his actual life and consciousness. At least, if they do not actually damp his enthusiasm, they set him, as the first and indispensable task, *to conquer and control his body*. The student finds that far from being encouraged to live in the soaring thoughts of his brain and to fancy he has reached that ether where is true freedom — to the forgetting of his body and his external actions and personality — he is set down to tasks much nearer earth. All his attention and watchfulness are required on the outer plane; he must never forget himself, never lose hold over his body, his mind, his brain. He must even learn to control the expression of every feature, to check the action of each muscle, to be master of every slightest involuntary movement. The daily life around and within him is pointed out as the object of his study and observation. Instead of forgetting what are usually called the petty trifles, the little forgetfulness, the accidental slips of tongue or memory, he is forced to

become each day more conscious of these lapses, till at last they seem to poison the air he breathes and stifle him, till he seems to lose sight and touch of the great world of freedom towards which he is struggling, till every hour of every day seems full of the bitter taste of self and his heart grows sick with pain and the struggle of despair. And the darkness is rendered yet deeper by the voice within him crying ceaselessly, "Forget thyself. Beware, lest thou becomest self-concentrated — and the giant weed of spiritual selfishness take firm root in thy heart; beware, beware, beware!"

The voice stirs his heart to its depths, for he feels that the words are true. His daily and hourly battle is teaching him that self-centredness is the root of misery, the cause of pain, and his soul is full of longing to be free.

Thus the disciple is torn by doubt. He trusts his teachers, for he knows that through them speaks the same voice he hears in the silence of his own heart. But now they utter contradictory words; the one, the inner voice, bidding him forget himself utterly in the service of humanity; the other, the spoken word of those from whom he seeks guidance in his service, bidding him *first* to conquer his body, his outer self. And he knows better with every hour how badly he acquits himself in that battle with the Hydra, and he sees seven heads grow afresh in place of each one that he has lopped off.

At first he oscillates between the two, now obeying the one, now the other. But soon he learns that this is fruitless. For the sense of freedom and lightness, which comes at first when he leaves his outer self unwatched that he may seek the inner air, soon loses its keenness, and some sudden shock reveals to him that he has slipped and fallen on the uphill path. Then, in desperation, he flings himself upon the treacherous snake of self, and strives to choke it to death; but its ever-moving coils elude his grasp, the insidious temptations of its glittering scales blind his vision, and again he becomes involved in the turmoil of the battle, which gains on him from day to day and which at last seems to fill the whole world and blot out all else beside from his consciousness. He is face to face with a crushing paradox, the solution of which must be lived before it can be really understood.

In his hours of silent meditation the student will find that there is one space of silence within him where he can find refuge from thoughts and desires, from the turmoil of the senses and the delusions of the mind. By sinking his consciousness deep into his heart he can reach this place

— at first only when he is alone in silence and darkness. But when the need for the silence has grown great enough, he will turn to seek it even in the midst of the struggle with self, and he will find it. Only he must not let go of his outer self, or his body; he must learn to retire into this citadel when the battle grows fierce, but to do so without losing sight of the battle, without allowing himself to fancy that by so doing he has won the victory. That victory is won only when all is silence without as within the inner citadel. Fighting thus, from within that silence, the student will find that he has solved the first great paradox.

But paradox still follows him. When first he thus succeeds in retreating into himself, he seeks there only for refuge from the storm in his heart. And as he struggles to control the gusts of passion and desire, he realizes more fully what mighty powers he has vowed himself to conquer. He still feels himself nearer akin to the forces of the storm. How can his puny strength cope with these tyrants of animal nature?

This question is hard to answer in direct words; if, indeed, such an answer can be given. But analogy may point the way where the solution may be sought.

In breathing we take a certain quantity of air into the lungs, and with this we can imitate in miniature the mighty wind of heaven. We can produce a feeble semblance of nature: a tempest in a teacup, a gale to blow and even swamp a paper boat. And we can say: "I do this; it is *my* breath." But we cannot blow our breath against a hurricane, still less hold the trade winds in our lungs. Yet the powers of heaven are within us; the nature of the intelligences which guide the world-force is blended with our own, and could we realize this and forget our outer selves, the very winds would be our instruments.

So it is in life. While a man clings to his outer self — aye, and even to any one of the forms he assumes when this "mortal coil" is cast aside — so long is he trying to blow aside a hurricane with the breath of his lungs. It is useless and idle such an endeavour; for the great winds of life must, sooner or later, sweep him away. But if he changes his altitude *in himself*, if he acts on the faith that his body, his desires, his passions, his brain, are not himself, though he has charge of them and is responsible for them; if he tries to deal with them as parts of nature, then he may hope to become one with the great tides of being, and reach the peaceful place of safe self-forgetfulness at last.

—"FAUST"

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## THE ANCIENT SOURCE OF THEOSOPHY

WITH the return of the cycle of the founding of the Theosophical Movement of the 19th-20th century on November 17, 1875, it is good to refresh our memory as to the aims and purposes of this great Movement, and also to ask ourselves what the philosophy of Theosophy which the Movement promulgates really stands for.

Throughout her writings, H.P.B. stressed the idea of continuity. Without realizing, to some extent at least, that Truth is continually kept alive in the world, that life is continuous and knows no gaps or stoppages, we shall fail to grasp that we too are continuous, *i.e.*, immortal. Without this idea, life loses its meaning, for it reaches a dead end with the stopping of the breath in the body.

In a beginningless and endless Universe there must be that "Truth" which proceeds from one stage of manifestation to another in an endless continuity. At any point of time, we stand midway between the past and the future.

Following her habit of giving the source of her teaching, H.P.B. wrote in the article "Le Phare de l'Inconnu" (reprinted in *She Being Dead Yet Speaketh*):

Theosophy is a descendant in direct line of the great tree of universal GNOSIS, a tree the luxuriant branches of which, spreading over the whole earth like a great canopy, gave shelter at one epoch . . . to all the temples and to all the nations of the earth. That gnosis represents the aggregate of all the sciences, the accumulated wisdom (*savoir*) of all the gods and demi-gods incarnated in former times upon the earth.

Where is this Truth to be found? She tells us in the same article that "the Beacon-light of Truth is Nature without the veil of the senses." "The Key of Wisdom that unlocks the massive gates leading to the arcana of the innermost sanctuaries can be found hidden in . . . the heart of Nature" (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 797). Theosophy points the way to it—and "Theosophy will be the philosophy and the law, if not the religion of the future." ("Le Phare de l'Inconnu")

As to the relationship between this Truth and the Theosophical Society, she said in her Dedication to *Isis Unveiled*, her first monumental work in two volumes, published in 1877, that the Society was founded "to study the subjects on which they treat." At the close of this work (II. 639-40) she wrote:

Our work is done — would that it were better done! . . . The enemies of truth have been all counted, and all passed in review. Modern science, powerless to satisfy the aspirations of the race, makes the future a void, and bereaves man of hope. . . . The theology of Christendom has been rubbed threadbare by the most serious minds of the day. . . . Instead of expounding the rules of divine law and justice, it teaches but *itself*. In place of an ever-living Deity, it preaches the Evil One. . . .

Our examination of the multitudinous religious faiths that mankind, early and late, have professed, most assuredly indicates that they have all been derived from one primitive source. It would seem as if they were all but different modes of expressing the yearning of the imprisoned human soul for intercourse with supernal spheres. . . . The beam of divine truth, in passing through the *three-sided* prism of man's nature, has been broken up into vari-coloured fragments called RELIGIONS. . . . Combined, their aggregate represents one eternal truth; separate, they are but shades of human error and the signs of imperfection. . . . It but needs the right perception of things objective to finally discover that the only world of reality is the subjective. . . .

Our fervent wish has been to show true-souls how they may lift aside the curtain, and, in the brightness of that Night made Day, look with undazzled gaze upon the UNVEILED TRUTH.

It was because of the success of this work that eleven years later she wrote *The Secret Doctrine*, dedicating it “to all true Theosophists, in every country, and of every race, for they called it forth, and for them it was recorded.” In the Preface she refers again to the ancient source of Theosophy:

These truths are in no sense put forward as a *revelation*; nor does the author claim the position of a revealer of mystic lore, now made public for the first time in the world's history. For what is contained in this work is to be found scattered throughout thousands of volumes embodying the scriptures of the great Asiatic and early European religions, hidden under glyph and symbol, and hitherto left unnoticed because of this veil. What is now attempted is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make of them one harmonious and unbroken whole. . . .

During the years since the publication of these books, much has been accomplished. In many cases, what was not then acknowledged by science has been proved to be true by that very science. What she wrote

about religion and religious faiths has also come true. Education and social conditions in the West, on which also she had much to say, have seen many changes. And the struggle for self-responsibility, freedom from blind belief, and freedom of conscience has made much headway. But what she wrote in her letters to the Theosophical Conventions in America is still true today. In her first Message, that of 1888, she wrote:

... although Theosophical ideas have entered into every development or form which awakening spirituality has assumed, yet Theosophy pure and simple has still a severe battle to fight for recognition. . . . The recognition of pure Theosophy — the philosophy of the rational explanation of things and not the tenets — is of the most vital importance in the Society, inasmuch as it alone can furnish the beacon-light needed to guide humanity on its true path.

She wrote in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 635):

We would that all who have a voice in the education of the masses should first know and then *teach* that the safest guides to human happiness and enlightenment are those writings which have descended to us from the remotest antiquity; and that nobler spiritual aspirations and a higher average morality prevail in the countries where people take their precepts as the rule of their lives.

The United Lodge of Theosophists has done a wonderful piece of work in stressing the fact that Theosophy is a body of knowledge which it is not for us to add to or subtract from, and in refusing to popularize “opinions” or “other knowledge” in contradistinction to Theosophy. It is not prejudice or preconceptions that make for this attitude, but an ever-increasing faith, based on knowledge as far as we can see, of the Truth as given by Theosophy. But all students of the U.L.T. should keep in mind the Three Objects of the Theosophical Movement, the chief one being Brotherhood. This is implicit in our Declaration, but we often fail to see that this Brotherhood is a fact because of our roots in the ONE SELF. Only a study of Theosophy and an endeavour to live by its tenets and ethics will make Brotherhood real to us, for only thus can we understand unity in diversity.

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The very title of Colin Wilson's article in the June *Illustrated London News* — "A Universe That Thinks" — is indicative of the great stride that science has made since the rigid materialism of the 19th century. The author predicts that by the year 2000, scientific materialism will be a thing of the past and will be regarded "with mild wonder and amusement, as one of the more preposterous manifestations of the human spirit." A revolution is taking place in many branches of science and philosophy, but the author devotes himself mainly to "what may well be the most revolutionary idea yet: the theory of the 'intelligent universe.'" In his own words, what is happening is this:

For more than 200 years, science and philosophy have tended to be materialistic. There is a story of Goethe and Schiller coming out of a scientific meeting in Jena. They had just met for the first time. Goethe hated the materialistic attitude of the scientists, and said to Schiller: "There ought to be some other way of grasping nature — as *active and living* . . ." Schiller shrugged and said: "That's not scientific. It's just an *idea* of yours." For 200 years, science has agreed with Schiller. And now, amazing as it seems, it is beginning to agree with Goethe.

Why? Because as we get to know more about the universe, we discover that the old rigid, mechanical ideas leave too much unexplained. For example, when Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, his idea of "mechanical" evolution seemed to cover all the facts that were known. According to Darwin, you do not have to assume that creatures *want* to change and evolve. They don't. But in the course of time the sick and the stupid die, because they aren't as fitted to survive as the healthy and intelligent. It is all quite mechanical. . . . According to the Darwinians . . . the mind cannot influence the genes.

In the past ten years an increasing number of biologists have been willing to concede that, in certain cases, the mind *does* somehow influence the genes. It is Goethe's living nature, Shaw's life force.

In short, science and philosophy have been doing their best to account for the universe in terms of mechanical principles: but little by little they are discovering that the universe is too complicated to be explained in this way. It is not a revolution by religious cranks or mystics who want to introduce God by the back door. It is the scientists themselves who are slowly conceding that things are more complicated than they thought.

The article goes on to explain how a cybernetician named David Foster arrived at the theory that we are living in an “information universe,” an *intelligent* universe. As a computer is “coded” or “programmed” for a particular task, so in the mid-50s biologists began to recognize that our genes too are “coded.” It was discovered that the order of molecules in the DNA code, as it is called, determines a person’s sex, height, the colour of his hair and eyes, and other physical characteristics. It struck Dr. Foster that every living thing is “programmed” for the life it is to lead. Everything in nature is the product of a kind of computer card. An acorn, for instance, is a “programme” of an oak tree. But the all-important question is: Who — or what — does the programming?

Dr. Foster suggests that it always needs a superior intelligence to do the programming:

It is obvious that in order to tap out Morse code, my brain must be *more complex* than my Morse transmitter and receiver, just as the boss of a big firm needs a more complex grasp of affairs than his dispatch clerk. . . . The overall picture of a “coded” nature seems to point to some superior intelligence doing the coding. . . .

What are these superior intelligences? There is obviously no point in asking, since we have no possibility of formulating the answer. For the sake of simplicity, Dr. Foster is perfectly willing to call it God; but that is purely a matter of convenience. His arguments do not “prove” the existence of God. They only indicate that, in view of the complexity that surrounds us, it is by no means far-fetched to assume that the energy waves that fly through the universe are carrying information, like Morse code.

And if he is right — or even halfway right — then the old epoch of scientific materialism is quite definitely at an end. From now on we scrutinize the heavens and the molecules of organic matter on the assumption that they reflect an *information code* rather than purely mechanical laws of nature. Religion need not enter into it, but the concept of *purpose* does.

As a closing thought, the article offers what it admits scientists might dub as an “outrageous speculation.” If this is an “information universe,” then it follows that there is no limit to the knowledge one can gain. Until now,

whenever science encountered things it could not explain — second sight, telepathy, knowledge of future events — it dismissed them

as superstition. It had to, because there was no way of making them fit into the universe of mechanical laws.

Now science itself is being forced to enlarge its boundaries, to explain weird but perfectly natural phenomena — like the DNA code and the homing instinct of birds and fishes. And suddenly, there is no need to dismiss extra-sensory perception, second sight, and the rest. It is possible to acknowledge that the range of our senses, and our subconscious knowledge, may be wider than we suppose. If this is an “information universe” and all living beings are crude attempts at radio sets, then there is no telling what stations your radio might not be picking up.

Science today is asking questions to which it does not still have the answers; yet, as H.P.B. predicted in *The Secret Doctrine*, it is “drawn more every day into the maëlstrom of Occultism; unconsciously no doubt, still very sensibly.” The intelligence that goes to make the “code” that forms a human being, or any other being, is a mystery to scientists, and it will remain a mystery till the day when scientists condescend to accept the Occult theories.

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“Mere Survival Is Not Enough for Man” is the title of a thought-provoking article by René Dubos in *Life* (Asia edition) for August 17. The author, who heads the Department of Environmental Bio Medicine at Rockefeller University, suggests that man need not fear extinction as a result of environmental pollution, as some scientists do fear; something worse still is in store for him. In his own words:

Man will survive as a species for one reason: He can adapt to almost anything. I am sure we can adapt to dirt, pollution and noise of a New York or Tokyo. But that is the real tragedy — we can adapt to it. It is not man the ecological crisis threatens to destroy but the quality of human life different from animal life.

Wild animals can survive and even multiply in city zoos, but at the cost of losing the physical and behavioural splendour they possess in their natural habitat. Similarly, human beings can almost certainly survive and multiply in the polluted cage of technological civilization, but we may sacrifice much of our humanness in adapting to such conditions. . . .

The worst effects of environmental pollution are probably yet to come since it is only during recent decades that certain chemical pollutants have reached high levels almost everywhere and that children have been exposed to these pollutants almost con-

stantly from the time of birth.

But the quality of the environment cannot be measured only in terms of gross defects such as air, water or food pollution. Environmental conditions experienced early in life (including the formative months before birth) cause the most profound and lasting changes in man. But human beings continue to be shaped by their environment throughout their lives. What we call humanness is the expression of the interplay between man's nature and the environment, an interplay which is as old as life itself and which is the mechanism for creation on earth. . . .

Ecologists and medical scientists have been chiefly concerned with the undesirable effects of the physical environment of man. But the creative aspects are more interesting and more important in the long run. The problem of the environment involves the salvation and enhancement of those positive values which man uses to develop his humanness. It involves, ultimately, a social organization in which each person has much freedom in selecting the stage on which to act his life: a peaceful village green, the banks of a river, the exciting plaza in a great city. Survival is not enough. Seeing the Milky Way, experiencing the fragrance of spring and observing other forms of life continue to play an immense role in the development of humanness. Man can use many different aspects of reality to make his life, not by imposing himself as a conqueror on nature, but by participating in the continuous act of creation in which all living things are engaged. Otherwise, man may be doomed to survive as something less than human.

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Science students Jack Hagerty and Patrick Stack of Pleasanton, California, are convinced that plants react to human emotions, but they disagree on what causes this phenomenon. While one of them believes it to be the result of cellular ESP, the other attributes it to electro-chemical stimulus. (*Psychic*, May-June 1970)

The students used a galvanic response machine (GRM) and an impscope to determine if a split-leaf philodendron would react to human emotions and mental activity. The GRM, which records electrical resistance, showed definite reaction when the philodendron was subjected to screaming and glares and, later, just to the names of those who had abused it. The impscope, designed to measure electro-chemical impulses, reacted violently when lettuce, apples and bananas were destroyed in front of the plant.

It is Hagerty's theory that every cell, no matter how primitive, has an extra-sensory perception capability. "It [the cell] simply reacts to whatever the person around it is thinking," he said. Stack, however, believes that it is just "electro-chemical stimuli that react to light and sound stimulus."

These experiments are along the same lines as those of Cleve Backster, a New York polygraph expert, who demonstrated last year that plants experience emotions. (See "In the Light of Theosophy" for September 1969.) Mr. Backster witnessed definite reactions in a plant when he attached the electrodes of his polygraph to the plant leaves. In one experiment he dipped a leaf in a cup of hot coffee and got no measurable reaction on the polygraph, but when he *thought* about burning the leaf, the needle on the graph leapt upward.

Is this not a proof, if proof be needed, that all life is intelligent?

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The same issue of *Psychic* reports the current involvement of the young with oriental religions, so called, hypnotism, psychic phenomena and the like. The young are also "tuning in to tarot cards, ouija boards, astrology charts, palmistry, and other manifestations of the occult." Some people in the U.S. have even set up schools to train and prepare future "mystics," "magicians," "seers" and "prophets"!

In a more scientific vein, experimental courses in parapsychology have been introduced in scattered colleges and universities around the U.S., with greater than expected response. There is a growing demand now for the establishment of departments to conduct serious scientific study into all forms of psychic phenomena. As one Chula Vista college student has put it, "Man is not realizing the potential of his mental capabilities. We want to know more about those things that give man a sense of awareness and help him explore his possibilities."

It is of primary importance for students of Theosophy to note the signs of the times so as to make their service more effective. Theosophy is in the world to change the Manas of the race; but how can students help in this direction unless they know whither the race mind is tending? In this decade of the 70s — which for Theosophists has a special significance as it will witness the close of the present centenary cycle and the beginning of another — the psychic-manasic traits and tendencies that are unfolding should especially be noted.

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Experts from 28 countries who attended a meeting on "Education for International Understanding and Peace," with special reference to moral and civic education, agreed that the task of educators was to prepare pupils for life in the global society which is emerging and also for their responsibilities in it. (*Unesco Features*, September (II), 1970)

The meeting, held at Unesco headquarters in Paris from August 17 to 28, was one of Unesco's activities for International Education Year in which the promotion of international understanding through education is a priority objective. It recommended that students should be assisted to appreciate the world, first as individuals, then, progressively, as families, to nations which may be different in many ways, but which are fundamentally the same.

Another suggestion was that at all levels — primary, secondary and university — curricula should include special courses in the history of the culture and art of all countries, regardless of their social structures, as well as practical training in civics and ethical conduct.

A net conclusion of this meeting was that education, above all, must aim at instilling a conception of human relationships which will help the construction of a peaceful world by shaping habits of thought and behaviour.

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The drug habit among today's youth has become a grave problem calling for urgent solution. Many are the theories advanced as to its cause. A unique survey sponsored and conducted by a group of Port Washington, N.Y., high school students puts a good part of the blame on parental drinking. A sheet of 47 questions was distributed to 1,416 students. It asked things such as: "How many times have you smoked marijuana — never? Once? Twice? 3-15 times? More than 15?" It probed family background, drinking habits, philosophy and attitude of parents, sibling rivalries, etc., and the data was programmed into a computer. The most significant fact to turn up in the study was that those who said their mothers "got drunk" had a considerably greater tendency to be drug users than those who said their mothers never drank. Parental drinking habits, the survey disclosed, showed the greatest effect in tendency of the children to use drugs or not. (*Science Digest*, July 1970)

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