





THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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FIGHT OUT THE FIELD, O NEOPHYTE!

I.—THE DESERTION OF DISCIPLINE

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...The fortunate
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,
Whose slightest action or inaction serves
The one great aim.

A VERSE in the *Dhammapada* says that no outer device can purify a person "who has not solved his doubts." It is no exaggeration, then, for the poet to say that "doubts are traitors."

People live so grossly centred in the without that they have no time to attend to the within. Sometimes the without is full of sensuality of the animal kind; sometimes, of adventure devoid of wickedness; for many the without is full of the humdrum passing of days and weeks into months and years; for a few that without is absorption in outer ceremonialism of penance and prayer and even asceticism, with many fasts and no festivals. But always it is preoccupation with matters of the mundane spheres.

The newcomer to Theosophy begins in enthusiasm and with intuitive faith; he becomes a student, then an aspirant, with devotion endeavouring to learn and to serve; he blossoms into a neophyte. In due course he is overtaken by weaknesses and the fear of difficulties. Above all he is lured by the gaiety, the pomp and the power of the world, and he feels that his life is gliding by, untouched by all that wonder. And then come failures and frustrations, followed by doubts

regarding the present mode of Theosophical living, a desire for escape or for change of venue. Boredom leads to laziness as well as discontent and the mischief is done. "My life is marred; discipline is not for me; I must change all this. To gain the soul is fine; but to lose the world for it? No."

We ought to clear our minds about the vital Esoteric teaching that the arising of doubts in the consciousness of a neophyte, if not conquered by quiet study and calm reflection, leads to desertion from the field of battle. Small slips or great sins may occur, but the temptation to commit them is overcome when the neophyte stands firm and gives battle. Even to speculate about desertion of Discipline is to strengthen our doubts about the Wisdom and the Wise Ones, about the Divinity within ourselves, about the true Altruism by which alone man feels the Peace of the Occult World, sees the Light of the Hidden Ones, hears the sound of the Spiritual Spheres. Therefore has doubt been mentioned in the same context as hypocrisy, which is called an unpardonable sin in Occultism. When one gives up the Fight, he begins to forget the rules of the Discipline of the Righteous Soldier; and in a short while he becomes careless, scoffs at the Discipline, struggles anyhow and even fails to see himself as a deserter.

Neophytes talk of their weaknesses, but they let go opportunities to learn and to overcome them. What they are called upon to do is not to fail, not to be broken, but to remain true to the Way of Discipline, to be faithful to the very end. The only sin that Occultism condemns is the sin of desertion. Doubts of the spiritual and higher life ever spring from the form of sin (*papa-purusha*) of the personal man. Carnal forces sow seeds of doubt in us, tempt us to commit follies, goad us on to desert the good, the true and the beautiful. The temptation to desert does not come to the worldly man, for he has nothing to be tempted away from. He is free to "enjoy" his carnal appetites. But the neophyte is tempted to desert the Discipline. What is the form of this temptation? Carnal forces speak to him and say: "Why be a slave to the discipline you have accepted? Be free; make your own discipline." This is the blackest of delusions.

The duty of the neophyte is to possess a direct ray of thought and of purpose and to use the overcoming of his weaknesses, small or big, of body or of mind, for the fulfilment of that purpose and for

intensifying the power of that ray. Says an aphorism: "*Selfishness will desert you, if you do not desert the Wisdom-Word.*"

How encouraging is the instruction:

...each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time. The holy germs that sprout and grow unseen in the disciple's soul, their stalks wax strong at each new trial, they bend like reeds but never break, nor can they e'er be lost. But when the hour has struck they blossom forth.

But where can reward come from if after any failure no sincere attempt is made? When with some degree of failure the neophyte deserts and so is broken, is he not lost? H.P.B. has explained in more than one place the declivity which failure follows, and what this "loss" means. Failure to try and to keep on trying is the one and only real failure. Can it be turned into a success? Not until the temptation which enslaved the deserter, by the false notions of personal freedom, is destroyed; not until the doubts which caused the desertion are removed. Only then restoration to the Path of Discipline is achieved.

HE who is the slave of nothing is able to dispose of all. The first thing then to be done by him who aspires to the power of the initiates is to render his heart and spirit entirely free. He must release the natural forces from the natural chains that cause them to degenerate into passions, and to accomplish this he must absolutely refuse his consent to all weaknesses. Let us take an example: pride is a natural force if it be free, and it is a capital sin if it be a slave. What is legitimate pride? It is merited self-esteem, but we are not estimable if we are weak and unjust. To pretend to elevate ourselves by abasing others, to require that everything should give way to our caprices and that even our faults should be admired is both odious and ridiculous, and such conduct merits and obtains nothing but contempt. No one has the right to exempt himself from duty, and he who neglects his duty has no claim either to his own esteem or to that of others. We cannot always choose our duties, but by our knowledge of life we may be able to make them easier, and the very sentiment of our own dignity rigorously imposes them upon us.

—ELIPHAS LEVI

THEOSOPHY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

AN anniversary is a cyclic event, therefore its observance is beneficial. In ancient days, students of the Wisdom-Religion or Theosophia were taught to observe the festivals of Holy Anniversaries—by real fast, *i.e.*, by starving the lower nature; by true feast, *i.e.*, by eating the manna, the nourishment of spiritual wisdom, and by drinking Amrita, the sweet waters of immortality. That is what students of Theosophy must endeavour to do on important anniversary days in the Theosophical calendar.

The month of November marks the anniversary of the Theosophical Movement, for it was on the 17th of that month that it was launched into the public world in the year 1875. Such an occasion should be used by students of Theosophy all over the world to rededicate themselves to the Cause of Theosophy, which is the Cause of H.P.B. and of the Masters who stood behind her. The great ideas set in motion are still alive, spreading their beneficent influence everywhere.

Our work is to study the science of Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, and that is related to the Third Object of the Movement: "The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man." We are called upon not to develop psychical powers, but to investigate them by the prior study of the unknown and unexplained laws of Nature.

These laws and powers can be studied in the religions, philosophies and sciences of the ancient world; that is why we have the Second Object: "The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study." This study will yield universal uniformity. As said in an ancient text, whether you milk a black cow, a brown cow, a spotted cow, or any kind of cow, her milk is white and sweet; so also sweet and white nourishment comes from the study of the scriptures, the religious philosophies of the world. The result will be brotherliness, concord, harmony.

And that is the First Object: "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour." How can this Brotherhood come to birth save by study of the Wisdom-Religion, by endeavour to apply its tenets, and by learning to know that all human beings are souls, therefore all are our

brothers? Partial brotherhoods—communal or national or racial—create more problems than they solve; recognition and realization of Universal Brotherhood alone is the panacea for the ills of the world. We are called upon to form a *nucleus* of Universal Brotherhood. Mutually assisting and encouraging one another, we may learn how to put Theosophy into practice so as to be able to teach and enforce it by example before others. "We will then each and all," in the words of Mr. Judge, "be members of that Universal Lodge of Free and Independent Theosophists which embraces every friend of the human race."

Next, we must distinguish between two aspects of the Movement—direct and indirect.

Just as every human being is a soul, but does not always know it; just as everyone lives by the power of the soul and labours by its energy, but is ignorant of the fact, so also men and women of this Kali Yuga, hard as iron and black as coal, do not perceive the action of true Wisdom in this world. But a time comes when each human being finds out the purpose and plan of the soul, who is the director of life; so also in our study of history or of philosophy or of psychology or of all these together, we find out that there is a soul to all knowledge, the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy.

Theosophy is the eternal, omnipresent and omniscient Spirit; the Theosophical Movement is the Motion of that Spirit, Theosophy, in the world of mortals. That Motion produces a double phenomenon, direct and indirect. Just as in millions of human beings the soul functions and struggles and makes evolution possible, so also in a million places Theosophy is the power that causes growth. Wherever thought struggles to be free, wherever mind directly sees ideas, wherever feeling loses its pride and prejudice, wherever knowledge is synthetic and beneficial, wherever the spirit of brotherhood, altruism and philanthropy is at work, there the Theosophical Movement is to be discerned. How many men and women and institutions are energized and inspired by the spirit of Theosophy and know it not! So, wider than any Theosophical society, broader than any Theosophical organization, deeper than any Theosophical lodge, is the Theosophical Movement—the Motion of Wisdom, the power which sets into motion mighty universal ideas, profound impersonal thoughts, drawing men and women away from *ahankara* and egotism to the light of universal right and the knowledge of the eternal fitness of things.

But, just as there is a great difference between the one who tries to live his life without knowing what soul is or what the laws of life, and one who knows the soul and its laws, so also there is a stupendous difference between him who comes under the influence of the Theosophical Movement indirectly, and him who contacts Theosophy directly and concretely. For then he knows why he lives, whence he came, how he is evolving, whither he is going. Those who were good and were trying to be better still, before they knew of this mighty philosophy and science, can tell from their own experience that its knowledge makes a tremendous difference. Where before their progress was arithmetical, now it is by a different ratio, algebraic in character.

Let us not have a narrow conception of Theosophy and its Movement. The Theosophical Movement is not confined to any lodge, or all the lodges put together. At the same time let us not make the mistake of identifying the Movement with men and women and institutions who take the sacred name of Theosophy and degrade it by their superstition and pride and ignorance.

Let us not be satisfied merely with the diffused and diffusive aspect of Theosophy. We shall find, if we study, that Theosophy in its visible and concrete aspect is not diffused but very definite. Theosophy is Wisdom-Religion, Bodhi-Dharma, and as a code of knowledge is composed of very definite teachings. These definite teachings are studied and practised by only a few in every age. They, by precept and example, do the work directly, and the world at large benefits from that labour of love.

Just as an ordinary good person works to improve his mind and morals, pertaining to his lower principles of body and senses and emotions and thoughts, so also the common run of reformers work with economic and political, social and religious, educational and artistic phases of corporate life. The Theosophist, learning that the cause of poverty, of misery, of suffering, lies deeper in the region of the soul, knows that only soul-knowledge and soul-service will ameliorate the condition of mankind. It is not that students of Theosophy undervalue the arduous task of, say, the social reformer; they respect greatly all such efforts, but convinced of the truth that individual heart energization and reform will, in the long run, prove most beneficial, they confine themselves to their Theosophical duties, unconcerned with side issues.

THE HIDDEN POWERS OF THE SOUL

THERE may be doubt in the minds of some as to the existence of the soul as a distinct, separate and surviving entity different from the body. There may be differences of opinion as to the genesis of the soul, the objective of soul-evolution. But all those who believe in the soul hold the view that there are powers of the soul.

Theosophy teaches that man, like Nature and Deity, is triune: there is the physical and visible man represented by the body; there is the astral, invisible, energizing man represented by the energies, powers, forces, or *shaktis*; and over them both is the Sovereign Lord, the Spirit, the possessor of powers and their controller, the true man—Atman.

Though this classification—the Self, its powers, and the body in which these powers are expressed—might seem simplistic, study reveals that there is more to it than meets the eye.

The science of physiology deals with the body, but modern physiology, in spite of its wonderful achievements, is very limited in comparison with Occult Physiology.

The science of psychology deals with the powers, energies or *shaktis*. Modern psychology is worse off than its sister science of physiology; it is devoid of philosophy and is often on the wrong track. Not till it goes to Asiatic Psychology will it know the facts about the psyche, the animal terrestrial soul, as the Greeks named the bundle of powers or *shaktis* which reside in the body.

As to the third principle of triune man, the Self, the Divine *Nous*, as the Greeks called it, it is completely ignored by modern science. But *Atma-Vidya*, the Science of the Self, was a very definite body of wisdom known to the ancient Sages of the Orient.

So there are three sciences, each related to one of the three aspects of Man: Occult Physiology gives correct knowledge in detail about the body; Occult Psychology about the *shaktis* or powers; *Atma-Vidya* or Theosophy about the Self—both individual and universal, *Adhyatma* and *Paramatma*. And it therefore includes the other two as well.

The original Sankhya Philosophy of Rishi Kapila (much of which is now lost, and what remains is misunderstood and misinterpreted) was the *speculative* philosophy, called the Science of Numbers because it gave in numbered categories the constituents of body,

energy and Self.

Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy was the *practical* aspect which dealt with the harmonious union or yoga between the body, the energies and the Self. Much of what is in the yoga-sutra of Patanjali is allegorical and the intellectual key to it all lies in the original Sankhya which is lost. So it is best to be wary of sundry interpretations, and to practise nothing till one understands what is what. On the subject of *asana* (postures) and *pranayama* (breathing), especially, there is much confusion and danger.

Vedanta, the end of knowlege, comprises the compendium of older philosophies. Shankara came to complete the work of the Buddha and compiled a marvellous code. There was of course a Vedanta code even before Shankara, but it was lost in the progress of time.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which deals with all three sciences of body, powers and the Self, we have a safe guide for study and exercise. Thus, in the thirteenth discourse we find the true and complete definition of what the body is. In the fourteenth and seventeenth discourses, especially, we find the path of body-evolution outlined. In the fifth, sixth, fifteenth, sixteenth and eighteenth, powers and *shaktis* are treated of. In the second, third, fourth, etc., the Song of Atman is sung.

Theosophy says that man is an Individuality, that he has a personality, and that both these live and work in and through the body. The personality, the mask, is not the true man; it is a bundle of qualities and attributes, and lives by the borrowed light of the Individuality. It is the latter that is the true man, the Soul, the Self, divine and immortal.

Often the Individuality and the personality, the real man and his mask, are taken to be one and the same thing. They are not. Just as our body is not our clothes, so our Individuality or Soul is not our personality, the mask or dress we wear for this incarnation. The analogy is good, almost perfect. Our dress comes from one source, our body from another, though ultimately the two have the same basis—matter or *prakriti*. So also our personality comes from one source; the Soul or Individuality, from another, though in the final analysis both proceed from the same root—Spirit or *Purusha*.

Our body is living; our clothes are not living in the same way as the body. So also the Soul or Individuality is Life itself. The

personality too is living, but its life is very different indeed from that of the Soul. The Soul is like the Sun, the real entity; the personality is like the moon, which shines by the borrowed light of the Sun.

Let us consider these three—the body and its powers, the personality and its forces, the Soul or Individuality and its *shaktis*.

There is much more to the body than physiology and anatomy know. Its powers are: (1) sensation and motion, which produce heat and cold, dryness and moisture, nourishment and elimination, etc: (2) speech—not only articulate sounds as in the animal kingdom, but words with a soul which are ideas or thoughts; and (3) procreation or reproduction of the species.

The personality, the false "I," whose basis is egotism-*ahankara*, also has three powers: (1) thought, (2) will or choice, (3) feeling or desire. Every person can think, will, and feel.

But, just as without the personality the body would be dead, and just as the body in turn derives its power from and through the personality, so also the latter could not exist were it not for the Real Self, Soul, or Individuality, which brings it to life and lends it its powers. The three powers of the body and the three of the personality are but shadows or reflections of the six powers of the Supreme Lord—the Individuality, divine and immortal.

All of us are so engrossed in the personality, in the false "I," that it is necessary to learn how to escape from its bondage and the ignorance and pain it imposes upon us.

The Real Man is Manas, the Thinker; Buddhi, the Intuitive Discriminator, and Atman, the Universal Realizer. These three are aspects of the one entity, the Individuality. Its pure and direct powers are six in number, latent in most of us as we have not reached the stage of evolution where they become manifest. These powers are:

(1) *Jnana-shakti*—the power to know Reality; the power to acquire *Atma-Bodha*, Divine Wisdom.

(2) *Itcha-shakti*—the power to will, to wish, to choose, to resolve; dependent for its operation on *Jnana-shakti*, otherwise it goes awry and wrong.

(3) *Kriya-shakti*—the power to create, dependent on the other two: creation by thought and will; creation of objects and beings directly.

(4) *Kundalini-shakti*—the power to control life in its varied and many expressions; this is greatly misunderstood.

(5) *Mantrika-shakti*—the power to control and use sounds, speech, numbers.

(6) *Para-shakti*—the supreme power which controls heat and light and makes of man a shining one, a *deva*, or god.

These six forces are in their unity represented by the seventh, *Daivi-prakriti*, the Light of the Logos, the "Mother" or Root of all forces, the link between objective matter and the divine Spirit in man and in the universe—Parvati who takes us to Shiva, Laxmi who takes us to Vishnu, Sarasvati who takes us to Brahma and Brahman. Here is a mystery of Hindu Esotericism which without Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* we will not be able to solve.

Who among us has these powers? Practically none. These are the powers of the soul, latent now, but which will become manifest in time, as evolution proceeds and progress is made. Each soul has these *shaktis* which are symbolized as spouses or wives, and herein lies the real basis of polygamy, which in later ages became a mere physical act.

What can we do with all this knowledge of our hidden powers? We need to note, first, that there are more things locked up in the human heart than we have any idea of. Let us leave off pride, personal and collective, and neither say, "I know," nor affirm, "Modern science knows all." Let us acquire humility and begin to enquire, to seek the truth.

Next, reflections or shadows of these powers, partially and even wrongly perhaps, but all the same in actuality, express themselves in the body and in the personality. Thus, our power to think, even to cerebrated, is a poor shadowy reflection, but all the same a variant, of *Jnana-shakti*. Our power to choose and resolve, even though sometimes used incorrectly, is a variant of *Itcha-shakti*. Our power to procreate, though men and women exercise it in great ignorance, is a variant of *Kriya-shakti*, so stupidly prostituted by immoral practices of birth-control and the like. Our power to adapt ourselves to our physical and psychical environment is a pale reflection of *Kundalini-shakti*, giver of true health to every constituent of our being. Our power of speech is a debased reflection of *Mantrika-shakti*; every word is a power which by its sound affects all forms, and by its meaning, all souls, all beings. But who understands it today? *Para-shakti* has a variant in our psychic nature: to radiate joy and knowledge—again used selfishly.

These six powers or energies belong to the Individual, the Purusha, the Chela, the "spouse" of the Supreme Self, Krishna, Ishvara, Ahura Mazda, Christos, Osiris. Only their reflections belong to the personality and body. We are beings of Light, with six powers which illuminate the six quarters of the Universe, symbolized by the six cardinal points—north, south, east, west, zenith, nadir.

In Theosophy, every teaching has its practical and ethical application. We can begin with the manifested powers of the personality: the power to think, to will, to feel, to speak—in that order. Let us illustrate: We desire a thing; we do not *think* why we should have it; we just want it, and we plan how to get it—and we suffer when we do not get what we expected to get. If we desire a thing, let us use our mind and think about the legitimacy of the desire. If the mind guided by knowledge of principles reveals that it is a right desire, then we can exercise the power of choice and resolve. Let us not act without prior thought, nor before we have chosen and resolved with knowledge. We cannot think right without knowledge, therefore study is recommended.

Will is the next power. We vacillate and hesitate and cannot make up our mind, because the mind has not a firm basis to function from. The way to develop will is not by some special act, but by cultivating the attitude of adaptability to our Karma, to our environment and circumstances. Whatever comes our way must be met with an *intelligent* response rooted in knowledge. So once again we see the necessity for enquiry, study, knowledge.

Feeling is the third power—the power to love, to appreciate. It is easy to love what we like; we must learn to love *all* we come in contact with. There is god in all, even in the morally depraved. Do not hate anything, not even vice, for you will not understand and remedy vice that way. Look for its purpose, its existence. If you begin with thought and resolve *intelligently*, you will invariably evolve the right feeling.

Then there is the power of *speech*. It is the connecting link between body and personality. It is the instrument of the personal man, just as *Mantrika Shakti* is the instrument of the Soul, the language of the Soul. What is to be avoided is unnecessary speech. Thought, not mere feeling, should precede speech. Think, resolve, then you will feel rightly; and then only speak. Thought purifies

speech; will controls speech.

These four powers should be cultivated—thought, will, feeling, speech. If we remember that they are primarily the powers of the Sovereign Lord, Atman, we shall be careful not to debase them, not to pollute them. These four are the energies, *shaktis* or powers through which the Soul, the Self, the Atman, radiates its light in the body and through the body. Light up your temple of the body, just as, in a symbolic manner, temples that are places of worship are lit up on festive days. This custom is a reminder to us that the temple of the body is likewise to be illuminated. Thought, will, feeling and speech bring about the illumination. The Festival of Lights will be celebrated in India this month. Let us prepare ourselves by purification and by study, so that when our houses are lit up, our own soul's house is not enveloped in darkness.

What shall we do during this festive season? *Sarasvati Puja*, or worship of Wisdom; then *Laxmi Puja*, or worship of the goddess of Charity; then *Kali Puja*, or worship of the goddess of Mystic Knowledge, dreaded by mortals, debased by evil ones. She is the "spouse" of the Mysterious Lord, "mother" of the Souls of men. She regenerates. And then the Light within shines, and the New Year, *i.e.*, the New Man, is born!

So let the soul that is not unworthy of that Vision contemplate the Great Soul; freed from deceit and every witchery, and collected into calm. Calmed be the body for her in that hour, and the tumult of the flesh; aye, all that is about her, calm; calmed be the earth, the sea, the air, and let Heaven itself be still. Then let her feel how into that silent heaven the Great Soul floweth in....And so man's soul be sure of Vision, when suddenly she is filled with light; for this light is from Him, and is He; and then surely shall one know His presence when, like a god of old time, He entereth into the house of one that calleth Him, and maketh it full of light. And how may this thing be for us? Let all else go.

—PLOTINUS

SPREADING SEED-IDEAS

WHAT is the cause of manifestation? This is a natural question for any earnest enquirer to ask. It seems at first difficult merely to suggest consideration of the Absolute, "Be-ness," Parabrahm, the Rootless Root, because such phrases and words seem to be vague and to convey so little, and there is nothing to argue about. Perhaps this is because we have so little faith in ourselves as transmitters and above all in the seed-ideas we scatter. Should we not consider it stupid for a farmer to refuse to sow because he could not see the full-grown crop ready for the harvesting in the tiny seeds he holds? He would be lacking in elementary faith in Nature's laws. Similarly we cannot judge the depth, fertility and possibilities of another's heart and mind; but we do know that the seeds of an immemorial philosophy have been tested and are known to be viable. We also can judge for ourselves how we came by those seeds, and therefore whether this is the time for sowing, or for hoarding. And, if we decide to sow, why should we worry about the effect they may or may not have upon another?

We have grown so personal that sometimes we shrink from using high-powered, high-sounding words lest our hearers think we wish to appear more learned than we know we are. This is not fair or *faithful* to the philosophy, for the words used have a living power of their own, a soul, an Idea enshrined in them by long usage by those greater than we. Then let those Ideas go forth unhindered by any diminution of our making. They are the real Currency of international spiritual wealth. And if we think that we should hoard, let us heed the condemnation, in Jesus's parable of the talents, of the man who hid his master's money in the ground, being afraid lest he should lose it or should fail.

The question, "What is the cause of manifestation?", each one must solve for himself in the depths of his own consciousness. Space, the Absolute, the One Reality, God, Law—all these are key phrases and ideas which help. So also, "Desire first arose in It, which was the primal germ of mind, and which Sages, searching with their intellect, have discovered in their heart to be the bond which connects...*Manas* with pure *Atma-Buddhi*."

Let, then, these words and phrases conveying Ideas immortalized

by aeons of holy usage and strivings, work their mysterious transformation from within outwards on others and ourselves. Does not Patanjali say that ultimate realization comes by mental dwelling on the idea, like a seed fructifying in the womb of the mind? Our duty is to sow our best, but with that wise husbandry which learns in time whether a cluster of seeds should be placed together, or whether they should be separated at intervals in space and time. The young practitioner, too often, alas, smothers the newcomers with too many seed-ideas, and these ideas die because too closely packed for proper digestion, assimilation and growth.

And if "Desire first arose in It," certainly the early days of infancy depict the true leanings of gratitude towards one's Teacher and Protector. It is said that gratitude not properly felt or utilized turns to hatred, and hatred in turn is the Root from which spring the three "gates of hell": Anger, Lust and Greed. But, if Gratitude is truly felt, nurtured and sustained, then the bolts of the gates on the opposite Path, leading to spiritual lore and endeavour, automatically spring open. This for each one of us who sincerely strives with patience and with love immortal, the question of when and how mattering not. "*Grow as the flower grows*"—*naturally*. So we must not only sow the seeds to have a rich harvest, but we must see that periodical plantings are not omitted from our own nature. We are and we are not separate from our fellows. It is a matter of all for one and one for all—the Ocean in the drop and the drop mirroring all the potentialities of the Ocean. So let us spread broadcast the ancient Ideas to make their immemorial mark. Ours but the task to foster them undamaged and uncorrupted while they are in our care, and to pass them on as we have received them.

THE integrity of men is to be measured by their conduct, not by their profession.

—JUNTIUS

LIGHT ON THE PATH

[P. Sreenevas Row's annotations on the valuable gem, *Light on the Path*, a devotional book treasured by students of Theosophy, appeared in several issues of *The Theosophist* during the years 1885-86. The annotator, an active Theosophical student-worker in India of those days and a Judge of the Small Causes Court, Madras, writes as follows in his Preface:

"The Rules propounded [in *Light on the Path*] are in perfect accordance with the religious doctrine and philosophy of the Aryans, not only in substance, but also in many instances in the very phraseology employed in their composition. For the purpose of illustrating this remarkable coincidence by means of numerous quotations from the Aryan sacred books; of explaining to the utmost extent of my limited capacity, certain difficult passages in connection with the Rules; and of tracing the relation which those Rules bear to one another, so as to enable the reader to form a connected idea of the whole Treatise, as a code of ordinances for the spiritual benefit of mankind, I have ventured upon the following Annotations. I trust that the same may, to some slight extent, prove useful to students, in helping them to comprehend the Text properly, and facilitating their labours in their progress on the Path of Wisdom."

As is known, *Light on the Path* was written down by M.C. (Mabel Collins) under Adept inspiration, she being chosen as but a channel for the recording of the high spiritual teachings contained therein. As for the source of these teachings; H.P.B. wrote in *Lucifer* for December 1888 (Vol. III, p. 347): "This little book—a true jewel—belongs to, and emanates from the same school of Indo-Aryan and Buddhist thought and learning as the teachings in the SECRET DOCTRINE."

We reprint here the first instalment of P. Sreenevas Row's notes and comments from *The Theosophist* for June 1885. The series will be continued in subsequent issues of THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT.

—Eds.]

A TREATISE WRITTEN FOR THE PERSONAL USE OF THOSE WHO ARE IGNORANT OF THE EASTERN WISDOM, AND WHO DESIRE TO ENTER WITHIN ITS INFLUENCE.

What is the value of this wordly wealth to us? What is its advantage? Tell us, O Jatavedas—for thou knowest—what is the best course for us on this secret passage, so that we may follow the

direct Path (Patham) unobstructed.

What is the limit, what are the objects, and which is the desirable end, towards which we rush like swift chargers to the battle? When for us will the Divine dawns, the brides of the Immortal Sun, overspread the world with light? (*Rig Veda*, IV, v, 12 and 13)

Such have been the earnest yearnings of man's heart since the first glimmerings of his nascent thought began to prompt him to seek intuitively for that light which would disclose the Path leading to his final goal, the Absolute Truth; and the object of the Treatise is to help the earnest pilgrim in the course of his difficult journey, by shedding a light on the path, by means of short Rules, which, by reason of their epigrammatic brevity are admirably calculated to imprint themselves easily and deeply on his mind, and thus serve as a nucleus round which he may gather the result of his own researches and experiences.

The Path here spoken of is the Path of *Rita*, which includes all that is right, true and safe as we find from the following extracts from the *Rig Veda*: "May we, Mitra and Varuna, traverse all the evils on the path of *Rita*, as we traverse the waters in a ship" (*Rig Veda*, VII, 65,3). "O Indra, lead us on the path of *Rita* over all evils" (*Ibid.*, X, 133, 6). *Rita* also means the universal, unerring Law (*Ibid.*, II, 28, 4 and VIII, 12, 3.) In short, *Rita* is conceived as the eternal foundation of all that exists; as Para Brahman itself. (*Taitreya Upanishad*, *Siksha Valli*, XII, 1; *Taitreya Narayanam*, XII)

But this Path is not easy to follow. "The wise affirm this to be a difficult path, a sharp knife-edge, hard to walk along. Therefore, arise at once, go to the Teachers, and learn." (*Katha Upanishad*, III, 14)

Let it not, however, be supposed that a path so difficult and gloomy, must therefore be worthless. The path, though certainly hard and dark, is the one that leads to that which is extremely luminous and beneficent. An ancient Rishi thus addresses the Supreme in the *Rig Veda*: "Dark is the path of Thee who art bright: the light is before Thee." (*Rig Veda*, IV, vii, 9)

Thus encouraged, let the disciple pursue his toilsome course in order to enter within the influence of the Eternal Light, a light which, though shining with a brightness nothing else an equal, is yet invisible to one whose sight is obscured by things unholy.

"You can never," says an ancient Rishi to an enquirer, "easily know

the supreme universal soul. Something else stands between that and yourself. Enveloped in mist and with faltering voice, even the so-called wise walk along rejoicing in wordly things" (*Rig Veda*, X, 82, 1). To remove this mist and so become able to reach the luminous goal, the disciple must needs have some help and light to guide him in the middle passage. And this our Text offers to furnish—in imitation of what Sri Krishna did for Arjuna, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, where he says: "I will now summarily make thee acquainted with that Path, which the doctors of the Veda call never-failing; which persons of subdued mind and conquered passions enter; and which desirous of knowing, they live the life of purity." (VIII, 11)

Now, it must be remarked that the instruction which this Treatise gives to the disciple is professedly based on the principles of the Eastern Wisdom; and this is because the Sun rises in the East, and light must flow from the East to all the quarters of the globe; but it must at the same time be remembered that, "though each religion (in various nations) has its own peculiar growth, the seed from which they all spring is everywhere the same. That seed is the perception of the Infinite, from which no one can escape, who does not wilfully shut his eyes. From the first flutter of human consciousness, that perception underlies all other perceptions of our senses, all our imaginings, all our concepts, and every argument of our reason. It may be buried for a time beneath the fragments of our finite knowledge; but it is always there; and, if we dig but deep enough, we shall always find that buried seed, as supplying the living sap to the fibres and feeders of all true faith." (Prof. Max. Muller's Hibbert Lectures)

I

"These rules are written for all disciples: Attend you to them."

A disciple is one who seeks to receive instruction from a spiritual Preceptor with all earnestness, faith, and devotion; and it is considered quite unsafe to impart sacred truths to any but such a disciple. "The knowledge of Brahma shall be explained only to a *worthy* son or disciple," says the *Chandogya Upanishad* (III, xi, 5). "The deepest mystery of the Vedanta," adds the *Swetasvatara Upanishad*, "is not to be declared to sons or others, whose senses are not subdued" (VI, 22). In the Institutes of Manu, the Sacred Learning is figuratively represented to have approached a Teacher and said, "I am thy precious gem.

Deliver me not to a scorner." (II, 114).

In short, "the real meanings of the sacred texts reveal themselves to the high-minded, who have an *absolute reliance in the Supreme, as well as in the teacher*" (*Swetasvatara Upanishad*, VI, 23). But it is no blind faith that is here exacted. "He alone understands the system of duties, religious or civil, who can reason by rules of logic; and this is agreeable to the scripture," says Manu (XII, 106). I know there are persons who consider that the bulwarks of their *Dharma* (Religion) would be undermined by the scientific treatment of questions relating to religion, and thus look upon all the philosophical discoveries with horror. But I know also, on the other hand, that there are other persons who look upon religion as being outside the pale of philosophy, and consider that the discoveries of science are so many weapons of attack against religion.

Both these classes of people are wrong, in our humble opinion. True philosophy and Divine Truth are convertible terms, and one cannot be repugnant to the other, although the former must necessarily be subordinate to the latter. The professed object of the religionist is to apprehend the Infinite. On the other hand, the scientist considers this to be impossible. He derives all his knowledge from sense and reason; and, as everything that is perceived by the sense or comprehended by the reason is necessarily *finite*, he does not recognize the idea of the *infinite*. Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his *First Principles*, p. 99, says, "We are obliged to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation of some power by which we are acted on; and though omnipresence is unthinkable, yet as experience discloses no bounds to the diffusion of phenomena, we are unable to think of any limits to any diffusion of this power, while the criticisms of science teach us that this power is incomprehensible." But the true religionist would tell the scientist that, although such power is incomprehensible by reason, it is cognizable by spiritual illumination within ourselves. Our conception of the Infinite is formed independently of sense and reason, and with the aid of an inner light, the divine illumination. Thus enlightened, we can perceive and apprehend what we could not perceive and apprehend by means of our sense and reason alone, in the ordinary acceptation of those terms. This necessary condition of the successful search after this internal light, obstructs the scientists in their further progress on the path of wisdom; and they must, therefore, make up their minds to remedy this

great defect by directing their attention to psychological studies, and apply all their researches and discoveries in physical matters to things metaphysical. There is not the slightest justification for hostility or jealousy between the scientist and the religionist, since they are both labouring in the same direction and with a common purpose, namely, the discovery of truth; and, therefore, the triumph of the one is the triumph of the other. It therefore behoves them both to act with perfect unanimity and harmony, bearing in mind the golden sentiments of a great Oriental Sage who states that, what is really wanted is a "Universal religious philosophy, one impregnable to scientific attack, because itself the finality of absolute Science, and a religion that is indeed worthy of the name, since it includes the relation of man physical to man psychical, and of the two to all that is above and below them."

One who can conscientiously act upon these principles, keeping the grand ideal of such a "universal religious philosophy" steadily before him, and honestly endeavouring to realize the same in all its integrity, is a fit disciple; and any sacred knowledge imparted to him is seed thrown on a fruitful soil.

Having thus stated what instruction is proposed to be given, and to whom it is intended to be imparted, the Text proceeds to deliver the following preliminary exhortations for the guidance of the disciples:

Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness. Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters, it must have lost the power to wound. Before the Soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.

These Rules relate to the preliminary process which a disciple has to undergo. They inculcate the necessity of restraint of organs and purity of heart, and exact from him a firmness and steadiness of mind, which gradually develop into moral character so essential for his further psychical advancement. He, like others, does certainly possess organs of sense and action, and has a right to use them for every legitimate purpose; but it is required that he should preserve an undisturbed serenity of mind at all times and under all circumstances, without allowing any object to produce either emotion or sensation on his calm spirit within, as such emotions and sensations disturb the mind, often shackling it and debarring it from higher and purer

pursuits. Whatever may be the consequences, however serious and however awful, outward objects and events are to be as if unfelt and unperceived by the disciple. "He should look on objects as if he were blind, hear sounds as if he were deaf, and view his body as if it were a log of wood." (*Amritanada Upanishad*)

But it is of no avail that the disciple remains in that frame of mind which is produced by stupefaction, or that he allows his mind to rest in an abnormal and dormant condition. What is required is that he should exercise a *conscious control* over his senses, and acquire perfect mastery over his mind. He should withdraw them within himself, "even as a tortoise draws in all its members within itself" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, II, 58). This is what the text requires of a disciple in respect of his various organs. The rule that the eye must be incapable of tears corresponds exactly with what Manu has ordained, namely, "Let him at no time drop a tear" (*Manu*, III, 229); and also with what Sri Krishna said to Arjuna, who was standing before him with eyes overflowing with tears. "Whence, Arjuna, cometh unto thee, standing in the field of battle, this folly and unmanly weakness? It is disgraceful, contrary to duty, and is the foundation of dishonour. Yield not thus to unmanliness. It becometh not one like thee. Abandon this despicable weakness of heart, and stand up." (*Bhagavad-Gita*, II, 1-2-3).

Then, as to the ear losing its sensitiveness, the rule in the Text is the same as the verse in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which requires a disciple to "sacrifice the ears and other organs in the fire of constraint" (IV, 25). And, lastly, as to the speech of the disciple being incapable of wounding others, I may remind readers of what Manu has said, "All things have their sense ascertained by speech; in speech they have their basis; consequently, he who abuses speech, abuses everything." (IV, 256)

Thus, the actions of all the organs and faculties ought to be sacrificed in the fire of self-control (*Bhagavad-Gita*, IV, 27), and "he alone will be considered as really triumphant over his organs, who, on hearing, touching, seeing, tasting, or smelling, neither rejoices, nor grieves." (*Manu*, II, 98)

These remarks apply to the five organs of sense and five organs of action (*Manu*, II, 90-91); but there is another organ, the eleventh, namely, the heart, which by its nature includes both sense and action. If therefore the heart is subdued, the other organs of sense and action

are also subdued (*Manu*, II, 92). Hence it is a matter of great importance that the mind should be constantly kept under proper control. "The mind of the man is the cause of his bondage and his liberation. Its attachment to objects of sense is the reason of his bondage, and its separation from the objects of sense is the means of his freedom. He who is capable of discriminating knowledge should, therefore, restrain his mind from all objects of sense" (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, VII, 29, etc.) It is over and over again ordained that in all his actions man should be pure, not only in word and deed but also, more especially, in thought (*Manu*, XI, 232, etc.); but this is a difficult task. One can curb his tongue and hold back his hand more easily than he can check the streams of thought, which are swifter than the flashes of lightning. Even such a great personage as Arjuna complained that "mind is unsteady, turbulent, strong, and stubborn. I esteem it as difficult to restrain it as the wind" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, VI, 34). Nevertheless, the disciple must try to check the evil propensities of his mind; and he may rest assured that if he is earnest, persistent and unselfish, there is a fair chance of success. For, "although it is certainly difficult to confine the mind," says Krishna to Arjuna, "yet it can be restrained by constant practice and subjection of wordly desires" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, VI, 35). No doubt the task will pain the disciple much, and will even cause his heart to bleed; but he must take courage, and persevere in the attempt. This is the blood in which the Text requires that the feet of the soul should be washed before the disciple can stand in the presence of his Masters. He alone is a true disciple, who can cut the root of evil from his heart, and triumphantly trample upon the blood drawn from it.

And, lastly, the Text says that it is the Soul of the disciple that should stand before the Masters. This means that no mere physical act will be of any avail. The physical body and all that relates to it, including even the knowledge confined to bodily senses, will perish; whereas the Soul is eternal, and the instruction and knowledge which a disciple ought to seek at the hands of his Masters is spiritual, such as would survive his physical death, and adhere to his Soul, throughout its numerous transmigrations. Hence, the necessity for the Soul to stand before the Masters, and not simply the physical frame.

(To be continued)

SOUL PERCEPTION

BECAUSE there is more in life than we can see, the human heart yearns for that which lies within and beyond it. This simple observation ought to suggest a deeper meaning and a greater purpose of our being here than is generally realized. The human belief that any event in life is "an act of God" is due sooner or later for a shattering blow. Though we may not know it, all the events and circumstances of our life are the results of our own actions, individual and collective. Such is the decree of the just, wise and merciful law of Karma.

Strange as it may seem to some, human beings have scarcely begun to know themselves or one another. Students of Theosophy begin in this life, or began in a preceding one, to try to learn the great lesson. Philosophizing may give a temporary intellectual satisfaction, a conviction that all is clear, but only profound experience and work for Theosophy, arising from devotion to the light that comes from within, can make the Teachings of Theosophy a heart-perceived reality. This is a law which binds the devoted ever more firmly together in a living brotherhood.

Three distinct points of view characterize human thinking. One is the hypothetical, ranging from idle fancy to speculative theory. This is a cause of religious and scientific dogma as well as of speculative "philosophy," so-called, not to mention the host of glamorous schemes, cure-alls and systems for personal gain.

Another point of view is the objective one which regards externals as the only realities. This path, the one pursued by modern science, advocates the scientific approach to all things. Its increasing popularity is the result of dissatisfaction with speculative fancy and the temporary satisfaction yielded by the tangible results obtained in the realm of material things.

When the first viewpoint no longer satisfies, the second may become a palliative. When the soulless character of the second fails to satisfy, the instinctive yearning for something to fill the void may result in a fall into sensuous gratification or in reversion to some speculative theory or fanciful religion, unless the urge is strong to seek enduring wisdom. That alone is soul-satisfying.

The spiritual point of view is relatively rare. It is a recognition of the soul nature of all things and beings. It neither ignores objectivity

nor excludes subjectivity. Standing above both of them, it is a realization in some degree of the only enduring One Reality. The result is an equilibrium between Spirit and Matter, subject and object. The wise are balanced, poised, steady, fearless and devoted. The Seer apprehends the Truth that is overlooked, derided or denied by the fanciful, the speculative or the supposedly "matter-of-fact." Practical application of the ideal has become a proven verity. To see with the eye of the soul affords the only possibility of really seeing anything correctly for what it is, not just as it may appear to be.

The Secret Doctrine is designed to awaken the soul to a realization of the eternal truths that constitute the foundations for living the higher life in the true sense. The aim of this work is thus stated in its Preface:

...to show that Nature is not "a fortuitous concurrence of atoms," and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring; finally, to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization.

It is not to scientific literature that we can turn to find the soul perception of things, though many scientific observations shorn of their materialistic negations give significant evidence.

The foundation of modern science is matter. All its theories revert exclusively to that. Hence the soulless character of materialistic speculations and the assignment of causes to externals. The origin of evolution is traced to genes and chromosomes, and mutations are assumed to be caused by heredity and environment. Causative intelligence evolving within any form is ignored, if not denied. The vague theory of indeterminacy that continuously there are being introduced into the world what are supposed to be genuinely new elements which have no apparent antecedents is insupportable in view of the metaphysical antecedents, unperceived by materialistic science. Furthermore, there can be no introduction of anything without something that introduces it. This Theosophical observation ought to be taken as testimony to the working of intelligence from within.

The distaste and even contempt shown by the majority of materialistic scientists towards metaphysics is because of: (1) an erroneous notion

as to what metaphysics really is, and (2) inability to comprehend sound metaphysical principles. Yet these are precisely what help to illumine the soul nature of all things.

The consequence of the denial of metaphysics is that its propositions are erroneously defined as fixed patterns of thought instead of as enduring principles; as a machine-like fate instead of essential law. The result is that cause, being misconceived, is replaced by indeterminate chance. The folly of this learned confusion results in soulless and senseless thinking, which wanders far from the discipline of spiritual knowledge.

To overcome self-deception is at the same time to gain a deeper appreciation of the soul of Nature. The whole world appears different to soul perception as a beautiful sunrise or sunset would to one who took off coloured glasses. To see character beneath surface appearances, motive behind pretence, purpose in struggle, lessons in pain, the underlying meaning of phenomena and the goal of the soul's evolution, is to see what negation can never understand. The possibilities within human life, and beyond it up to the divine, are no idle fancy. Even the lower kingdoms become a thousandfold more friendly to the soul consciously and knowingly at one with higher Nature. The common service of true and enduring ideals is the most practical aim for man.

THERE is a world of values real and eternal, which is other than and outside the world of evolving life. Of this world we may achieve knowledge which is intuitive in character and cannot be demonstrated by argument or communicated to those who have not shared the experience on which it is based. The view that the values are the expressions of an underlying unity has seemed to me to possess considerable antecedent plausibility.

—C. E. M. JOAD

UNITY IN THE RANKS

ALL students of Theosophy accept the idea that Universal Brotherhood is a fact in Nature, and strive to make the formation of a *nucleus* of such Brotherhood a reality in their midst. There is only *one* United Lodge of Theosophists, though groups of Associates exist in various parts of the world. Each group is autonomous for the purposes of serving the Cause of Theosophy, for making the necessary sacrifices in time, money and work in Its behalf, but all groups are united by similarity of aim, purpose and teaching.

"It is an occult law," says H.P.B., "that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 201). We are told also that the would-be occultist "cannot go far upon his way without realizing to what a great extent he is 'his brother's keeper,'" (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 19). We live in one another.

"The T.S. represents the world," said Robert Crosbie; and we could say the same for the U.L.T. In it, in embryo, are fought the battles of the world. All the differences and difficulties that have arisen since the founding of the original T.S. are lessons for us, if we read them aright—lessons that can be had nowhere else in the world. It should be noted that all the foibles and follies that have been perpetrated during the history of the Movement have centred round personalities and have been the result of disunity within the ranks.

It is significant also that disciples are not selected because of their natural affinity for one another, but for quite other reasons. As Mr. Judge puts it: "We differ and must agree to disagree, for it is only by balancing contrary things that equilibrium (harmony) is obtained. Harmony does not come through likeness" (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 129). Harmony has been described as the great law of Nature and of ~~the~~ the Universe. "As above, so below"; as with the Universe, so with man, its miniature copy, and with the affairs of men.

In the writings of H.P.B. and Mr. Judge much can be found as to what earnest student-aspirants can do to make themselves worthy of the teachings they have received, and thereby pour fresh energy into their work for the Cause; for it is our work in and on ourselves that determines the usefulness of our work in the world. The statements

from books and articles by H.P.B. and Mr. Judge bearing on the subject are too numerous to be given in full. A selection follows:

"The T.S.¹ is meant to be [a brotherhood], but has for many years been in a state of friction. It has now, if possible, to come out of that. It cannot be a brotherhood unless each, or some, of its units becomes a brother in truth. And *brother* was the noble name given in 1875 to the Masters. Hence you and I and all of us must cultivate that. We must forgive our enemies and those who assail us, for only thus can the great brothers properly help by working through us....So you see, forgive, forgive and largely forget. Come along, then, and with me get up as fast as possible the feeling of brotherhood." (*W.Q.J. in Letters That Have Helped Me*)

"There are two forces at work in the T.S., as well as in the world and in man. These are the good and the bad....Let us all draw closer together in mind and heart, soul and act, and try thus to make that true brotherhood through which alone our universal and particular progress can come." (*Ibid.*)

"Let me say one thing I KNOW: only the feeling of true brotherhood, of true love towards humanity aroused in the soul of someone strong enough to stem this tide, can carry us through. For LOVE and TRUST are the only weapons that can overcome the REAL enemies against which the true theosophist must fight. If I, or you, go into this battle from pride, from self-will, from desire to hold our position in the face of the world, from anything but the purest motives, we shall fail. Let us search ourselves well and look at it as we never looked before: see if there is in us the reality of the brotherhood which we preach and which we are supposed to represent." (*Ibid.*)

"All the work that any of us do anywhere redounds to the interest and benefit of the whole T.S., and for that reason we know that we are united." (*Ibid.*)

"You are, I think, quite right to attempt to get all members to work for their individual advance, by working for their Branches. By doing things in this way, they provide an additional safeguard for themselves, while forming a centre from which Theosophical thought can radiate out to help and encourage others who are only beginning their upward way." (*Ibid.*)

¹What is said about the T.S. in these extracts is also applicable to the U.L.T.

"We cannot promulgate the doctrines and the rules of life found in Theosophy and at the same time ourselves not live up to them as far as possible. We must practise what we preach, and make as far as we can a small brotherhood within the Theosophical Society. Not only should we do this because the world is looking on, but also from a knowledge of the fact that by our unity the smallest effort made by us will have tenfold the power of any obstacle before us or any opposition offered by the world." (W.Q.J. in "The Future and the Theosophical Society")

"The work of a Branch has two objective points where it is intended, in the theosophical order of things, that its help and influence are to be felt. The first is in and among its members, and the other upon that portion of the world which lies within its purview. If, as I firmly believe, the theory of universal brotherhood is based upon a law—a fact—in nature that all men are spiritual beings who are indissolubly linked and united together in one vast whole, then no Branch, no individual theosophist, can be regarded as without significance and influence, nor is any member justified in supposing that he or she is too obscure, too unprogressed, to be of any benefit to the movement and thus to mankind at large." (W.Q.J. in "Theosophical Study and Work")

"Just as man is composed of atoms descended to him in various lines from many forefathers, all of which have a part in the influence he exerts, so a Branch is a being composed of the atoms—its members—included within its borders. And it is no fancy, no fantastic dream, to say that this being may be intelligent, or forceful, or weak, or wicked as a whole, just as it is made the one or the other by its component parts....Not a single good example in theosophical life is lost, but every one of us affects not only the immediate associates but also projects into the great universal current an influence that has its weight in the destiny of the race." (*Ibid.*)

"Thus we are all, theosophically speaking, keepers and helpers of each other, not only in the United States but in England, in Bombay, in Calcutta, in Madras. If we do not do our duty it may happen that some struggling Branch in some far off place will by reason of its newness or weakness be the recipient, not of help but of damage from us. Each Branch is separately responsible for its own actions, and yet every one is helped or injured by every other. These reciprocating

influences work on the real though unseen plane where every man is dynamically united to every fellow man." (*Ibid.*)

"Under this doctrine of unity and selflessness the work of a Branch ought to be entered into by all the members with an unselfish spirit which will lead them to have patience with the weaker brethren, for a chain is no stronger than its weakest link." (*Ibid.*)

"The individual cannot separate himself from the race, nor the race from the individual....In helping on the development of others, the Theosophist believes that he is not only helping them to fulfil their Karma, but that he is also, in the strictest sense, fulfilling his own. It is the development of humanity, of which both he and they are integral parts, that he has always in view, and he knows that any failure on his part to respond to the highest within him retards not only himself but all, in their progressive march. By his actions, he can make it either more difficult or more easy for humanity to attain the next higher plane of being." (H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy*)

"The law of universal causation...necessarily implies, as its logical outcome, that human solidarity on which Theosophy so strongly insists. If the action of one reacts on the lives of all, and this is the true scientific idea, then it is only by all men becoming brothers and all women sisters, and by all practising in their daily lives true brotherhood and true sisterhood, that the real human solidarity, which lies at the root of the elevation of the race, can ever be attained. It is this action and interaction, this true brotherhood and sisterhood, in which each shall live for all and all for each, which is one of the fundamental Theosophical principles that every Theosophist should be bound, not only to teach, but to carry out in his or her individual life." (*Ibid.*)

"True Occultism is the destruction of the false idea of Self, and therefore true spiritual perfection and knowledge are nothing else but the complete identification of our finite 'selves' with the Great All. It follows, therefore, that no spiritual progress at all is possible except by and through the bulk of Humanity. It is only when the whole of Humanity has attained happiness that the individual can hope to become permanently happy—for the individual is an inseparable part of the Whole." (H.P.B. in *Lucifer* "Correspondence," March 1889)

"Those who wish to succeed in Theosophy, abstract or practical, should remember that want of union is the first condition of failure.

But let ten determined theosophists unite themselves; let them work together, each according to his own way in one or another branch of universal science, but let each one be in sympathy with his brother; let this be done, and we can answer for it that each member would make more progress in the sacred science in one year than could be made in ten years by himself. In Theosophy what is needed is emulation and not rivalry." (H.P.B. in *Revue Théosophique*, March 1889)

"[When] suspicion and inharmony are the natural result, the psychic atmosphere, so to say, is thrown into confusion, and the reaction, even upon the stauncher students, is very harmful. Sometimes vanity blinds what was at first strong intuition, the mind is effectually closed against the admission of new truth, and the aspiring student is thrown back to the point where he began." (H.P.B. in "Lodges of Magic")

"On the day when Theosophy will have accomplished its most holy and most important mission—namely to unite firmly a body of men of all nations in brotherly love and bent on a pure altruistic work, not on a labour with selfish motives—on that day only will Theosophy become higher than any nominal brotherhood of man. This will be a wonder and a miracle truly, for the realization of which Humanity is vainly waiting for the last eighteen centuries, and which every association has hitherto failed to accomplish." (H.P.B. in *Five Messages*)

"There may yet come a time when the moral and ethical foundations of the Society may be wrecked....What can be done to prevent such a thing is for each Fellow of the Society to make Theosophy a vital factor in their lives—to make it real, to weld its principles firmly into their lives—in short, to make it their own and treat the Theosophical Society as if it were themselves. Following closely on this is the necessity for Solidarity among the Fellows of the Society; the acquisition of such a feeling of identity with each and all of our Brothers that an attack upon one is an attack upon all. Then consolidated and welded in such a spirit of Brotherhood and Love, we shall, unlike Archimedes, need neither fulcrum nor lever, but we shall move the world." (*Ibid.*)

It is a greater thing to make another strong than to carry his load.

—CHINESE PROVERB

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

There are scientific studies these days even in an experience as subjective as meditation. Hardly heard of in the West but a few decades ago, meditation is now almost a household word, though this does not mean that what the word represents is at all well understood. Forms of meditation that are run on commercial lines and that make tall claims have created a warped idea of what it is and what it can do.

An article in *New Scientist* for July 6, 1991, "Is Meditation Good For You?" deals with current scientific research, which is admitted to be "fraught with problems." One form of research is the recording of the pattern of electrical activity in the brain of the meditating person on an electroencephalograph (EEG) machine. Researchers hope that the EEG would provide "a kind of window into the person's mental state." More recently, some investigators are trying to see whether meditation makes the EEG patterns in the left and right hemispheres of the brain more similar—a phenomenon known as EEG coherence. Some meditation researchers claim that greater coherence could lead to increased creativity and personal growth, while others point out that increased coherence can happen in many states, including epileptic seizures, coma and death.

The writer of the *New Scientist* article, Susan Blackmore, who is in the Department of Psychology of the University of Bristol and the Department of Social Sciences, University of Bath, admits that the objective approach of scientific experimentation is not the ideal way to study meditation. Experiments have disproved many of the more extravagant claims of the Transcendental Meditation (TM) organization, but, as she says, there is "more to meditation than this," and "we are wise not to dismiss it altogether." Some forms of meditation "may offer insights into the nature of human identity." She writes:

Various forms of meditation have been practised for centuries, and most of its practitioners are anything but commercially minded. They are more likely to claim that meditation reduces stress or increases awareness than that it produces the wide-ranging effects claimed for TM. So are there really any benefits from meditating?...

Let us turn to the simpler claim: does meditation, in any form, reduce stress? This must be the most common claim for

meditation....Experiments seem to show that while meditation may reduce feelings of anxiety, it does not reduce bodily responses to stress. In other words, if you want to reduce your physiological stress levels, do not turn to meditation. This is an interesting conclusion, which contradicts some of the claims made for meditation, and yet it fits rather well with a more Buddhist idea of meditation. Buddhists teach that meditation is a means of training the attention to be open and direct, so that the world is seen "as it is" rather than through the confused illusion created by our normally muddled minds.

What does this mean, though, to say that the world is seen "as it is"? Psychologists' understanding of perception is that it is a constructive process—a human brain builds models or representations of the world on the basis of the information it receives from the senses. Surely there can be no "as it is." Perhaps what it means is constructing less complex illusions or being less influenced by expectations and desires....

We still do not know and cannot measure just what effects meditation is having on whom. All this makes the empirical scientist want to despair. Designing well-controlled experiments to test the effects of meditation seems to be too hard. So do we give up? Certainly these problems are no justification for concluding that there are no effects. Perhaps there are effects that are just not measurable in these ways? If so, what could they be? I would suggest that meditation can clear the mind of much of its confusion.

With clarity can come insights which science is only gradually revealing in its particular way. The most obvious is the constructed nature of the world. Most of us assume that there is a real world out there and that we see it in some sense directly. Psychology reveals this to be an illusion—what we perceive is a mental construction. In its different way, meditation can reveal subjectively the extent of our own biases in seeing the world.

Most of us, for example, assume that we are some kind of solid self—real, acting, deciding, powerful entity which goes on and on through an entire lifetime and perhaps beyond. Psychology is now revealing more and more of the constructed nature of self. The self we value so much is a mental model we have developed through a lifetime and which perhaps has no persistence beyond its similarity (but not identity) from one day to the next.

Peter Fenwick [a neuropsychiatrist and meditation researcher]

has remarked that through meditation a person is freed from "the illusion that he is 'doing.'" Perhaps this is what the Buddha meant when he said: "Actions do exist, and also their consequences, but the person that acts does not."...Perhaps the training in meditation is so long and hard because we all resist so strongly the idea of our own impermanence.

True meditation goes much further. It brings awareness not only of our impermanent lower self, but also of that permanent centre in us which is our true Self. Meditation is precisely that practice which raises the level of consciousness from the evanescent and the perishable to the imperishable and the divine. It opens up a channel of communication between the two selves in us—the higher and the lower. Needless to say it is a difficult exercise, with many mental hindrances to be overcome before any degree of success is achieved. The perception of what in traditional Buddhist terminology is called "things as they really are," is insight into the true nature of things; more abstractly, a direct perception of reality itself. This is what meditation is at its height. And this perception is twofold: it is insight into the conditioned, mundane, transitory, as also insight into that which transcends it—that which is unconditioned, permanent, the True.

The mistake that is commonly made is to confuse the several relaxation methods currently in vogue with meditation—an infinitely more exalted and difficult practice. Meditation, as Plato expressed it, is "the ardent turning of the soul toward the divine; not to ask any particular good (as in the common meaning of prayer), but for good itself—for the universal Supreme Good" of which we are a part on earth, and out of the essence of which we have all emerged.

Controversy continues to rage in scientific circles as to where modern humans, *Homo sapiens*, originated—and when. Until recently, the argument centred almost exclusively on evidence from fossils. But in the mid-1980s molecular biologists entered the fray, with evidence from human genetics. Studies of the DNA inside present-day human mitochondria, the tiny structures that provide cells with energy, made some researchers think that all modern humans evolved from a single

African woman—"Eve," as she came to be known—and then spread out, replacing indigenous archaic humans. Recently uncovered evidence challenges this theory. (*New Scientist*, June 22)

Some anthropologists, who have lately discovered important similarities between the skulls of ancient humans and their modern counterparts, now back a completely different theory: that *Homo sapiens* evolved from ancient humans gradually in many different parts of the world rather than just one part. The era of the modern human, they say, began with a smooth transition rather than an abrupt invasion. In each region of the world, they have uncovered links that tie living populations to their local antecedents, whose remains are claimed to have been preserved in the fossil record for the area. The most convincing evidence, they say, comes from Asia.

Other evidence uncovered in Western Europe and the Middle East, with the help of newly developed dating techniques, suggests that the last Neanderthals coexisted with the early modern humans for several thousands of years. Palaeoanthropologists are of the opinion that the extent and manner of the interactions between Neanderthal and early modern populations could have taken different forms in different areas. They were probably sufficiently closely related to allow hybridization, say the experts. (*Nature*, June 27, 1991)

Modern findings concur with ancient records only in a few particulars: that savagery and civilization have co-existed in the past as they do today, and that the first human groups did not have just a single place of origin. It is futile to talk of man's origin in Africa or Asia or Europe as we know them today. The appearance of man on earth, Theosophy says, took place in a bygone era when the geography of the world was nothing like what it is now, and the continents as we know them were slumbering yet on the ocean floors. According to *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 327), the cradle of the human race was Lemuria, an immense continent that "once reigned supreme over the Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans."

It follows that palaeoanthropologists and others who rely on fossils as a guide to human evolution are completely off-track. Their changing hypotheses are evidence of the confused state in which modern science finds itself in the matter of man's origin. Theosophy posits that seven human groups appeared simultaneously on seven different portions of the earth, coming over to it from other globes of an older

chain. These groups represented seven hierarchies of intelligence or degrees of unfoldment that the evolving Monads had reached by reason of prior Karma.

Homo sapiens, or true man, is distinct from the near man or ape-man thought to be the earliest ancestor of modern humans. The lineage of *Homo* extends much further back than believed by modern science. Theosophy asserts that

...owing to the very type of his development man *cannot descend* from either an ape or an ancestor common to both, but shows his origin from a type far superior to himself. And this type is the "Heavenly man"—the Dhyan Chohans, or the *Pitris* so-called. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 683)

There are moments in the political history of a nation when morals seem to have completely effaced themselves, or retired to the background, making way for the interest and benefit of a select coterie. But that is a wrong impression, says Professor Boris Koval, Deputy Director of the Institute of the International Working-Class Movement, in his article "Morals and Politics" appearing in *Social Sciences*, Quarterly Review of the USSR Academy of Sciences (Vol. XXII, No.2). The role of the moral factor in socio-political processes, he argues, has never come to nought, and has become especially relevant today when the new political thinking has revived the idea of the priority of universal interests. "It is the awareness of an universal human element in the life of each individual (and of each class) that constitutes the power of morality," Professor Koval writes.

The article deals mainly with conditions obtaining in the USSR, but the conclusion that is drawn has a wider application:

Nowadays, universal human values, in the first place—the ethical, spiritual ones—rule the minds and hearts of millions. No historical advance, let alone a conscious revolutionary action of the masses, is feasible without "moral oxygen."...Social forces are not an abstract notion—they consist of men and women with their individual character and their own understanding of Good and Evil, people endowed with the will and consciousness, possessed by feelings, and just because of this—socially active, struggling and dynamic....

The present stage in the development of mankind has put forward a lot of new problems, including the global ones, which call for their moral assessment. Therefore, it is no fortuity that the moral appraisal of the problem—war or peace, has in our day basically changed, which has resulted in the growth of the universal, one even can say, independent of class, significance of the ethics of survival. Nowadays the role of violence in politics is evaluated in many respects differently than in the past...Moral views on the problems of morality and human rights, alienation, participation, etc., have over the last years become extremely acute. The "theology of emancipation" has acquired great popularity among the members of the numerous group of independent countries....In our epoch the moral evaluation of ecological problems has acquired a particular topicality.

One could continue the listing of new tendencies. I deem it important to stress the following point: it is high time to begin the complete return of man to himself as a social (*i.e.*, human) being. One can reach one's aim only if one persistently moves towards it.

A symbol has been called a recorded parable, and a parable a spoken symbol—an allegorical representation of life-realities, events and facts. A moral can ever be drawn from a parable, that moral being an actual truth and fact in human life. Further, we are told in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 307) that the religious and esoteric history of every nation, all the learning and knowledge of the early races, are preserved to this day in allegories and parables, in symbols and ideographs. Every nation had its own "mystery" language, unknown save to those who had the keys to its understanding.

Two leading Soviet researchers, Yuli Schreider and Nikolai Muskhelishvili, have examined various parables and "ideologemes," and discovered their inseparable unity. In *Social Sciences* (Vol. XXI, No. 4), under the title "Parable and Initiation of Living Knowledge," they offer several definitions and pithy statements to express the significance of a parable in general, out of which the following few are culled :

A parable is a means of indirect communication for the transmission of a doctrine. The immediate content of a parable

does not therefore have a meaning in itself but serves to render a deep meaning that does not admit of sign expression. According to M. Buber, "A parable is the placing of an absolute in the world of things."

A parable is necessary in situations in which the means of sign communication are directed towards the transmission of that which is not reducible to things, processes and relations. It is necessary not to communicate something but to overwhelm. A parable is passed on as a burning candle to kindle a new fire.

The addressee of a parable is compelled to give up its interpretation in terms of familiar cultural oppositions. A parable cannot therefore be understood in the traditional sense of the word. It requires a revision of the very mode of understanding and thereby stimulates the awakening of consciousness.

The addressee's intention directed towards an understanding of the deep meaning of a parable enables him to implement an act of comprehension aimed at overcoming the stereotypes of everyday consciousness and thus facilitating the transition to the higher states of consciousness.

The orientation towards understanding the deep meaning of a parable entails a rejection of perceiving the meaning indicated by the immediate sense. Instead of a forced perception of meanings the addressee freely reacts to the deep meaning.

The factual impossibility of retaining the intentional state makes it necessary to comprehend a parable again and again, as if for the first time, although the experience of previous understandings may be accumulated. Living knowledge is never completed, it is always connected with the intention of understanding.

A parable makes behaviour free and responsible.

While direct communication transmits knowledge which is reduplicated in the addressee, indirect communication transmits, through a parable, subjective rather than objective truth (the subjectiveness of the individual's reaction), a personal assimilation. This reaction cannot be transmitted through intelligible presentation, it must be awakened in the addressee, *i.e.*, created anew and in this sense doubled.

A parable transmits to the addressee living knowledge requiring personal efforts for understanding.

A parable elicits in the addressee knowledge which is a sign of the state of his consciousness.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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