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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 psychological powers latent in man.

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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

Vol. 63, No. 1

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A MODERN SANGHA

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, September 1952.]

THOUGH the great spiritual movement is ever one, its historical manifestations have varied to suit the exigencies of the cycle and the people to whom the truths have been presented. But the attempts, whether in India, Egypt, Greece or Babylon, had always been restricted to a limited number of individuals. The existence of the movement was in many cases barely sensed by the public, while its teachings remained veiled and were certainly not available at the purchase price of a book. Even the Sangha that the Buddha established was in a sense limited; for, though its appeal was universal, its members were drawn mostly from India and the neighbouring countries, while its teachings were not intended to co-ordinate the philosophies and movements of other countries. His Sangha, too, was a thing apart from the mass and a Bhikkhu on entering it had to renounce his name and family and give up his wordly vocation.

It is no doubt true that at the head of many of these historical efforts there presided an Initiate; but none of these movements had been proclaimed publicly as sponsored by the Great White Lodge. No doubt the Buddha spoke of the Buddhas that had been, but his Sangha did not become a focal point through which was spread openly testimony to the existence of a body or Lodge of living Adepts. Further, none of the earlier efforts known to us had openly connected itself with its predecessors, nor had any shown the unbroken continuity of effort through the preceding centuries.

Then came the Movement of 1875 with its appeal to the mass

mind. It was an effort, the first of its kind which history records, to unite human beings the world over. Its members came from Brazil and Mexico, from Russia and the Nordic countries, from Greece and the Nile Valley, from the Near East as from China and Australia, from India as also from Europe and North America. They came thus—some to serve immediately as though they were but picking up the work which they had left the night before; others to learn, so that in future incarnations they could be the servers, the missionaries and the martyrs of the Movement.

But the Theosophical Sangha was in no sense organized for the propagation of knowledge alone. It was not meant to be a college of magic *in excelsis*. It had definite objects, the first of which was "to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour." In many of the attempts of the preceding centuries, Brotherhood had been stressed chiefly among the pupils themselves as a *sine qua non* condition for the acquisition of wisdom, but in none so far had there been the fomulation of an object similar to this. For the first time the student was asked to make the attempt to create here a centre or focus of Brotherhood which could be the attracting point towards which would converge those forces which the Brotherhood of White Adepts was prepared to pour down for the preservation of soul-culture upon the earth.

In this work, however, the nucleus must be genuine, be nothing less than a copy or concretization of the ideal Brotherhood of the Masters. Thus understood, the first object takes on a more profound aspect. It means not only recognition of the sameness of essence but also that the tie of kinship between men and the immortal Elect of mankind has to be kept inviolably sacred.

For most of us who aspire towards such a Brotherhood as this, but who are as yet at the start of our pilgrimage, the immediate question is not whether we can be integral parts of that nucleus. The real question before us is whether we are strong and fit enough to be an accretion to that nucleus—an accretion that will remain there for all time and not find itself dislodged at the first attack of misfortune or doubt or organized opposition. If the Sangha that H.P.B. built still stands, it is because faithful hearts still beat through the turmoil and the dust of the fight, and faithful hands still hold aloft the banner of

a wise and benign philanthropy.

The second object of the Movement is to promote the study of Aryan and other scriptures, of the world's religions and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old literatures, such as those of the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Zoroastrian philosophies. As this object comes to be put into practice, the student begins to realize the relationship of his Sangha to the movements of the past. He sees, if proof be needed, that truth has ever been the same the world over and that, if he but arm himself with the key of Universal Symbolism, he can read in each religious text the eternal truths of Life. This object, with its comprehensive amplification in *Isis Unveiled*, gave to the public for the first time a method by which even the average intellect of man can cognize the fundamental unity that runs like a silver thread through all religions and philosophies.

The third object of the Movement is to investigate the hidden mysteries of nature under every aspect possible, and especially the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man. This object but brings a deeper understanding of the necessity of the first great object. The cohesive force that welds men into a vast, all-comprehensive Brotherhood flows from the powers of man himself. It is this third object which is found common to all the previous endeavours, but which, prior to H.P.B., had always remained single and still unyoked to the chariot of brotherhood.

And so, in 1875 was established a new type of Sangha—one which looked back upon and recognized the past efforts; one, moreover, which definitely anticipated a fresh impetus and prepared for it in advance. One of the Wise Ones has said:

True, we have our schools and teachers, our neophytes and shaberons (superior adepts), and the door is always opened to the right man who knocks. And, we invariably welcome the new-comer; only, instead of going over to him he has to come to us.

And so each is welcome to the Sangha and thrice welcome is he who brings the will to achieve, the wisdom to plan, the devotion to persevere. Let him bring as his offering to the common fund his sincere, unquenchable thirst for the True. It is these qualities that are the cement which must go into the building of the earthly counterpart of the "Guardian Wall."

Such, then, is this modern Sangha—impersonal and altruistic—an effort by mortal men to weld themselves together and form a magnet that must attract to itself the benign wisdom that resides in its spiritual archetype—the Great White Lodge of Adepts.

A CONTEST OF SMILES

Say, look here, never growl at anything you have to do. If you have to go, just take it as a good thing you have to do, and then it will redound to the good of them and yourself, but if it is a constant cross then it does no good and you get nothing. Apply your theories thus....It is a contest of smiles if we really know our business.

—W. Q. JUDGE

CHEERFULNESS is often mentioned in the philosophy. It seems to have some magic power in our daily affairs. It in fact gives us some strength we could all use to overpower our inclination toward self-pity. "The very first step towards being positive and self-centred is the cheerful performance of duty," wrote W. Q. Judge. In another talk on "Cyclic Impression and Return and Our Evolution," he advises that instead of being depressed we "start up cheerfulness, be good to someone." We like these expressions—they lift us out of our despondency or selfish attitude, and help us to find that true solidarity which comes from the practice of brotherhood. We like them, too, because they are immediate aids—aids we often turn to for a moment in time of trouble, and, finding a message direct to the heart, look up and smile again.

There is a great strength in this matter of cheerfulness. How does it relate to brotherhood? No doubt we have all seen those people (ourselves, of course!) who, fancying at times that the world is such a hard place to live in, pull their hats over their eyes to brood in darkness, hardly noticing the gentle rays of warmth without. Now, we are certainly aware that this is not brotherhood! How can we see to help others when we are broodingly nursing our own little problems? Self-attachment, self-pity and despondency are all forms of selfishness—most deceptive, since we seldom recognize them as such at the time. If we find ourselves in the midst of a mental or emotional "fog," let us remember that "the fogs must lift."

Let us always keep our problems hidden under a smile. Cheerfulness comes in the joy of helping others, as an encouragement to do more.

GURUS AND CHELAS

THE words "Masters," "Gurus," "Mahatmas," "Chelas" are often misunderstood and used lightly. Who are the real Mahatmas or Great Souls? They are natural products of human evolution—not evolution as modern science understands it, but as the ancient Sages taught it. They are Perfected Men who by special training and a process of self-purification and inner quickening have attained that spiritual Wisdom, that moral stature and mental depth which it will take ordinary humanity many incarnations to acquire. They are *Jivan-Muktas* or Emancipated Beings who, having reached the goal of human evolution—Perfection and Emancipation—renounce and sacrifice that state of ineffable radiance and peace so that they may remain on earth—to inspire human souls, to teach the true Wisdom to those ready to receive it, and through their pupils to change the mind of the race, to elevate the heart of humankind. These renouncers all belong to an Institution known as the Fraternity of Adepts.

The task of this Adept-Fraternity is threefold: (1) To inspire and to awaken, silently and invisibly, through their Ideation and Imagination—this is their collective work for the whole of humanity. (2) To draw near to themselves souls who have awakened and to teach such souls their Mighty Wisdom—this is their individual work. (3) With the help of these pupils or chelas to teach and help the whole of the race—collectively and individually.

It is sometimes asked, Are the members of this Fraternity all of equal standing? They are not. There is an almost infinite range—the *Guruparampara*. The Adept-Fraternity is like a mighty chain composed of innumerable links, and it is an ever-lengthening chain. From the youngest of chelas belonging to this Central School—*Maha Shala*, as it is called in the Upanishad—to the August Head, the Maha Guru, symbolized in the concept of Shiva, the Maha Yogi and Maha Deva, it is a sublime company of learners and teachers—a veritable link between our earth and the sidereal universe of boundless extent.

The chelas of the Real Gurus labour for the Cause of the Adept-Fraternity in the world of mortals. Through such chelas the Great Gurus keep their Flame of Wisdom ever burning in the world. It is said that the Voice of the Masters is ever in the world. Their Message is proclaimed by them sometimes directly, sometimes through their

chelas, and at no time are the chelas of the Gurus away from the world. Incessantly, in one way or another, they carry the Light of the Fraternity, they echo the Voice of the Brotherhood of Great Souls.

In our search for the true Gurus, the very first thing to note is that somewhere, somehow, the Light of Wisdom is burning. But how shall we know the true from the counterfeit? There are many organizations and many persons who claim to be the possessors and the custodians of the Light, so we must look for the hallmark. (a) The work of the real Gurus is not limited by any kind of boundary; it is meant for all—for young and old, for rich and poor, for people belonging to all races, all religions. It is a demolisher of sects and all other distinctions commonly made in the world. Its universality is one mark. (b) The Adept-Fraternity leaves its members absolutely free. There is freedom to fail or to succeed; there is no control by any higher power or agency, though there arises, most naturally, willing obedience to the Laws, as well as willing obedience by the less knowing to those who know more. So one should look out for these two marks in men or in movements claiming to be spiritual: universality and individual freedom.

From the Teaching to the Teachers, from the Wisdom to the Masters of Wisdom—that is the way to proceed. It is the *soul* who seeks the Light and the Way, and outer distinctions of race, creed, sex, caste, colour matter not from the soul's point of view. It is the motive with which one seeks the Light that counts, and genuine love for our fellow-men constitutes purity of motive. True knowledge and power never come to the person who has not love and compassion and sacrifice in his heart. Knowledge has to be sought not for one's own benefit but for the helping of the world.

Anyone who contacts Theosophy or *Brahma-Vidya* learns first that the Wisdom-Religion is a very precise philosophy to be studied, as well as a very definite discipline to be practised. A student without discipline is not fit to be a chela; an aspirant without study also cannot raise himself. Study and discipline, discipline and study, according to the tenets of ancient *Brahma-Vidya* or modern Theosophy—that is the first step.

When that step is taken, there is an inner change of mind and of heart. The marks of the change include a rising above family pride, communal bondage, national arrogance, religious dogmatism and

creedal limitations. One becomes free in some measure; one may not break the chains of bondage at one stroke, but one has to learn to loosen them. When that is done, a real change comes about and in the heart is kindled a little light which one or another of the Great Gurus notices. This world is so darkened by sin and selfishness that any struggle to rise above these seems to the Great Ones from their mountain heights like a light in a dark valley. So the first step has to be taken by the would-be chela, and we are promised that if we take a step in the Masters' direction, one of them takes a step in our direction.

Chelaship is an *inner* process of the heart. Going to the Himalayas is not the way; nor need one learn to walk upon the waters and develop so-called psychic powers. These things are comparatively simple; but to give up personal pride, national and racial conceit, religious and social prejudices, and to become pure—that is a truly difficult task. But the true Gurus can be found only that way.

The treading of the Path of Chelaship requires faithful perseverance with the *inner* discipline. The next step is to develop the power of adaptability and resourcefulness, the powers of the human soul to work with and improve any environment. Adaptability does not imply remaining static; it is not satisfaction with any and every condition, but the power to mould and shape conditions. A would-be chela has to remain in the world and adapt himself to world conditions with a view to changing them. He has to proceed from within without and deliberately labour to overcome the limitations of environment. He has to fulfil his Karma, not run away from it, and the bonds of Karma fall away only through fulfilment. Knowledge as well as discipline is necessary for overcoming Karma through the fulfilment of duties.

When a person takes his evolution in his own hands he may be said to have put himself on the Path of Chelaship. Chelaship has its grades, and in every grade there are tests and trials. Every chela passes through many of them. All tests, however, are but aspects of the One Test—the test of his power to adapt himself to outer conditions and to his own inner transformation. He fails or succeeds in any test by his own resources, or lack of them. Not only his own character and his hard-won faculties are at his command; knowledge offered by the Esoteric Philosophy is also there to help him.

Between Master and pupil there opens up a channel of

communication. The chela adapts himself to the Guru who in turn adjusts the mind of the chela; the Guru using the resources of the chela enables him to gather the force of the Occult World for the benefit of the race of mortals. The highest aspiration of the student of Theosophy should be so to train himself that the Master to whose bidding he has devoted his life may think him worthy of the act of Great Sacrifice whereby the Master pours into the disciple the Light of his own consciousness. This demands supreme adaptability on the part of the chela, for thus he comes to command resources of the highest order.

HIGHER things can be perceived only by a sense pertaining to those higher things. And whoever therefore wants to see the real MAHATMA, must use his *intellectual* sight. He must so elevate his *Manas* that its perception will be clear and all mists created by *Maya* must be dispelled. His vision will then be bright and he will see the MAHATMAS wherever he may be, for, being merged into the sixth and the seventh principles which are ubiquitous and omnipresent, the MAHATMAS may be said to be everywhere. But, at the same time, just as we may be standing on a mountain top and have within our sight the whole plain, and yet not be cognizant of any particular tree or spot, because from that elevated position all below is nearly identical, and as our attention may be drawn to something which may be dissimilar to its surroundings—so in the same manner, although the whole of humanity is within the mental vision of the MAHATMAS, they cannot be expected to take special note of every human being, unless that being by his special acts draws their particular attention to himself. The highest interest of humanity, as a whole, is their special concern, for they have identified themselves with that Universal Soul which runs through Humanity, and he who would draw their attention must do so through that Soul which pervades everywhere.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THEOSOPHY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Hundred Years After H.P.B.

IT was on November 17, 1875, that the Theosophical Movement for the modern era was launched with the establishment of the Theosophical Society in New York City in the United States of America, with Colonel H. S. Olcott as President, Madame H. P. Blavatsky as Corresponding Secretary, and W. Q. Judge as Counsel. The original impulse for this came from the Elder Brothers of Humanity, spoken of as "Masters" or *Mahatmas*. The three well-known objects of the Theosophical Movement from the beginning have been:

- (i) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (ii) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study, especially for purposes of comparison and the selection therefrom of universal ethics; and
- (iii) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Although the Parent Theosophical Society was founded in 1875, the Theosophical Movement, in a larger sense, is to be found in all times and at all places, wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas as opposed to narrow dogmatic ones have been fostered. An example is the abolition of slavery in the United States of America and elsewhere. Though the word "Theosophy" was never used in this context, a sensitive student will not fail to discern the operation of the Theosophical Movement in the recognition accorded to the fact that there can be no justifiable distinction made between one brother and another merely because the colour of the skin of the physical body is different. Nearer home, can we not see in the efforts made to root out the canker of untouchability in our society the indelible, though indirect, impress of the Theosophical Movement? The same could be said in regard to the efforts now in progress in South Africa to end the odious practice of *Apartheid*.

The distinction between the Theosophical Movement and any particular theosophical organization needs to be perceived. The latter

is but a tool to foster the former. Tools are useful—nay, necessary—to achieve certain ends; but they are, obviously, not ends in themselves. Tools may get blunted at times and cease to be effective for securing the desired ends. In like manner, theosophical organizations should serve as tools or vehicles to strengthen the Theosophical Movement. At the same time, being composed of human beings prone to error, the chances of their deflection from the path of the Movement cannot always be ruled out. Our focus in this article will, therefore, be on the impact of Theosophy *per se* and of the Theosophical Movement during the last one hundred years; not on the happenings in any theosophical organization.

When H.P.B. cast off her mortal frame on May 8, 1891, she left behind her a mass of literature outlining the philosophy of Theosophy in all its pristine purity, as conveyed to her by the Masters of the Wisdom-Religion (Theosophy). She also left behind a sizable number of earnest and devoted students both in the East and in the West. For all this, is it not rather sad that even today—after the lapse of over one hundred years—ignorance in regard to what Theosophy is and what it stands for should be widespread? This is perhaps not surprising, considering that even well-known encyclopedias and dictionaries fail to put us on the right track. *Webster's Dictionary*, for example, referred to Theosophy as "supposed intercourse with God and superior spirits, and consequent attainment of superhuman knowledge by physical means and chemical processes." In *Fowler and Fowler's Pocket Oxford Dictionary*, Theosophy is described thus: "Any speculative system basing knowledge of nature on intuitional or traditional knowledge of God, especially that known as esoteric Buddhism and represented as the essential truth of which historic religions are imperfect expressions." While the latter part of this definition is substantially correct, to refer to Theosophy as "any speculative system" betrays rank ignorance.

Erroneous views on Theosophy which are still held in many quarters may be listed thus: (i) Theosophy is a new religion invented by H.P.B. in the last quarter of the last century. (ii) Theosophists are a weird lot indulging in some kind of serpent-and-devil worship. (iii) Theosophy is meant to teach esoteric groups of students how to acquire occult powers and perform wonders in the astral world—"a nursery for incipient adepts," to borrow an expression from H.P.B.

Does not the prevalence of such erroneous notions on a fairly wide scale indicate that students of Theosophy, by and large, have not, during the last one hundred years, done their homework efficiently and effectively? We are prone to take shelter under the view, "Theosophy is for those who want it and for none others," and forget our responsibility to "seek out him who knows still less" than us and "who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom." In addition, there is inadequate general awareness of the broad contours of the philosophy of Theosophy, so succinctly brought out by H.P.B. and W. Q. Judge through their writings. A responsibility is on us to project Theosophy in its proper perspective and bring out its salient features. Broadly, these are as follows:

(i) Theosophy *per se* is *knowledge* gathered—and tested and verified—by generations of initiated seers who did not confine their attention only to the physical world, as men of science do. "The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form." There is thus nothing speculative about Theosophy. Far from being a new religion invented by H.P.B., it represents the "accumulated Wisdom of the Ages." H.P.B. as the accredited Messenger of the Masters was only a resuscitator of the archaic truths in the public world.

H.P.B.'s teachings as a whole constitute a Message from the perfected Masters of Wisdom. Each must ponder it fully and act as seems best unto him. But the Message cannot be altered by anyone's personal speculation; it is not a tentative theory or a speculation.

(ii) This world of ours is a world of Law, eternal and inexorable. Law is Deity and *vice versa*. It has three aspects—*Karma* (action), *Yuga* (cycles) and *Yagna* (sacrifice-compassion). Any attempt to ascribe human attributes to Deity is to limit what is truly illimitable. The concept leaves no scope for "vicarious atonement" or for getting away from the consequences of one's actions.

(iii) There is a bond of unity that binds all beings. Each man in his innermost spiritual nature is of the same essence as *Alaya*, the Universal Soul (itself an aspect of the Unknown Root). When this identity is realized man attains perfection.

(iv) As all beings are of the same essence in their innermost

spiritual nature, Universal Brotherhood is indeed a fact in nature; notions of separateness are illusory, and in any case impermanent.

(v) Self-effort is needed to attain growth and perfection in the course of evolution, through a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations. Teachers help aspirants in this endeavour by pointing out the way. Elimination of selfishness and development of compassion for all are essential prerequisites in this behalf.

A little reflection will show that in Theosophy we have a synthesis of science, religion and philosophy. We also realize that in Theosophy alone we find the most rational explanation of all that we come across in life. The impersonal supremacy of Law is something that can be verified by each of us in every department of nature. Ours is, therefore, not a fortuitous or chaotic world. The concept of an anthropomorphic God presiding over the destiny of our world cannot explain how "some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall." Mute acceptance of such anomalies on the score that "such is God's will, which must not be questioned," is scarcely satisfying to earnest seekers of truth. We find the true answer in Theosophy when we realize that our evolutionary growth is in our own hands under *karmic* and cyclic law. As observed by H.P.B., "man is himself his own saviour as his own destroyer."

The question arises: If, in Theosophy, we find wholly acceptable answers to all the so-called riddles of life, how is it that it has so few takers today? There is no gainsaying the fact that the number of those taking even a casual interest in Theosophy has dwindled considerably all the world over during the course of the last one hundred years after H.P.B.'s death. It was at one time thought that children born in families where the parents have adopted Theosophy as their code for day-to-day conduct would naturally blossom into students of Theosophy in their turn. Alas, this has not happened on any appreciable scale. In fact, the paucity of earnest students among the younger generation is a matter of grave concern to senior students all the world over. One is left wondering what will happen to the Movement when the senior students of today quit the scene in the course of the next decade or two.

The picture might seem dismal. There is, however, another way of looking at it. Let us ask ourselves the basic question, "Who is a Theosophist?" The stock answer is, "A Theosophist is one who

Theosophy does." In the Declaration of the United Lodge of Theosophists, it is stated that all those who are engaged in the true service of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition, or organization are to be regarded as Theosophists. From this it follows that it is not membership of a Theosophical organization that makes one a Theosophist, but commitment and dedication to the service of humanity, transcending barriers based on caste, creed, or race. Viewed thus, the picture is not one of unredeemed gloom.

The mass-communication media, it is true, project only disquieting events for the most part. We are fed with news from all the world over of brother hurting brother in the name of religion, in the name of race, in the name of caste, in the name of nationality. That should not blind us to the fact that there are also men and women who would go to any extent to bring succour to their fellows in distress, regardless of any parochial considerations, with little concern for publicity. Their number may be much greater than we think, although no empirical surveys have apparently ever been made. Such persons are indeed the salt of the earth, preceptors of sacrifice, love, and compassion. Again, we see a wider acceptance of the concept of *karma* and reincarnation among people in the West and a corresponding weakening of reliance on an anthropomorphic, propitiable Deity. These are undoubtedly encouraging signs, indicative of the impress of the Theosophical Movement on the world over the past one hundred years or so.

Students of Theosophy should not be discouraged by the smallness of their numbers, but should act somewhat like a constructive, responsible minority in a Parliamentary system of governance. We do not, in any case, believe in proselytization; nor are we particularly interested in merely increasing the head count in our fold. We should, however, lend our unstinting support to all steps taken, from whatever quarter, which are in tune with the objectives of the Theosophical Movement. We should be one with men of science when it is the question of a fight against meaningless superstitions and rituals. We should, at the same time, ally ourselves with other progressive forces to check the insidious effects of religious intolerance and fanaticism. We should also extend our full co-operation in weaning people away from rank materialism, which is the bane of our so-called "modern civilization." On the positive side, we should give a helping hand to

all efforts that seek to promote altruism and universal compassion. We should never forget that the Ethics of Theosophy are far more important than the divulgement of psychic laws and facts, as stressed by H.P.B. in her Third Message to the American Convention of Theosophists in 1890.

While tracing the impact of Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement after the death of H.P.B., the question is often raised: "Of what relevance is Theosophy to India today, considering that the source of Theosophy is to be traced to the *Rishis* and *Maharishis* of this ancient land?" To answer this question, we must first pinpoint two major weakening influences in our body politic. In the first place, considerable sections of our people still accept governance of the world by an anthropomorphic Deity. Unfortunately, this kind of faith is often accompanied by the dangerous attitude that we can escape the consequences of our misdeeds by propitiating the All-Forgiving God. We freely indulge in what we ourselves consider sinful deeds and fondly hope, in our naivety, that all will be forgiven if only we deposit a few hundred or thousand rupees in the "Lord's *Hundi*" at the temple at Tirumalai Hills! This tendency is full of dangerous portents and needs to be eliminated.

Even more weakening is the influence of religious intolerance and fanaticism, which is responsible for so much fratricidal strife within the country. Since the last year or two, we have seen with anguish how so many innocent lives have been lost and property looted in many parts of the country in connection with the "*Babri Masjid-Ram Mandir*" dispute in Ayodhya. We are still to see the end of this ghastly dispute. On the other hand, similar disputes may be raked up—so we are warned—in other places as well. As if this is not enough, every other day we hear of atrocities against those belonging to the weaker sections of society. When we consider such highly disturbing circumstances prevailing in the country, we cannot fail to appreciate the extreme relevance of Theosophy in India. Theosophy instils self-reliance. Theosophy further strikes at the very root of fanaticism in our hearts, with its message of universal brotherhood, regardless of caste or creed or religion. By showing that all the great religions have sprung from the same source and that their core values are substantially the same, Theosophy enables us all to live in harmony with our environment in an atmosphere of abundant mutual

love. Theosophy does not call upon a Hindu to give up Hinduism, a Christian to give up Christianity, or a Muslim to give up Islam. It does, however, expect one and all to give up fanaticism and intolerance. It enables a Hindu to be a better Hindu, a Muslim to be a better Muslim, and a Christian to be a better Christian. How is this achieved? The second object of the Theosophical Movement, if faithfully pursued, will enable us to view all the great religions of the world in their proper perspective, and when we so view them we cannot but appreciate the commonality that prevails among them and disregard the subsequent distortions that have crept into them.

The task before students of Theosophy all the world over today is clear-cut. It is to foster unity among all, develop reliance on the Law, and depend on Self-effort to achieve Self-knowledge. This is of far greater importance than canvassing for membership in any particular Theosophical organization. This is indeed a mighty task demanding the best we are capable of giving. In this, we can draw inspiration from the words of Robert Crosbie: "We have undertaken a high mission and a heavy task—not because we think ourselves so eminently fit—but because we see the need and there is no one else to do it."

What is the future of Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement in this world? Writing in 1889 in *The Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. expressed the hope that if students of Theosophy adhere to the original impulses of the Movement, "the earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now." The dawn of the twenty-first century is now round the corner, as it were. If this hope of H.P.B. is to be realized, we the present inheritors of the grand philosophy of Theosophy must not fail in our duty. *El Dorado* cannot be reached unless we take steps in that direction. We have to work for it ceaselessly with unflinching devotion. W. Q. Judge once had occasion to observe: "If we had five hundred members in the Society loving one another with true hearts, not criticizing nor condemning, and all bent on one aim with one belief—we could sweep the whole world with our thoughts." Are there five hundred among us to sweep the world with thoughts of Theosophy? Whatever be that number factually, each one of us must strive to make Theosophy a living power in his life and sweep the world with thoughts touching on universal unity and love and compassion for all. To the extent we are able to do so, we shall be ensuring the realization of the vision of

H.P.B. as expressed in *The Key to Theosophy*. We must also remember in this connection that we are not friendless in this noble endeavour. We may rely on the Elder Brothers of Humanity to provide us with the right guidance at the right time.

In conclusion, let us recall the words of W. Q. Judge spoken at the time of the passing away of H.P.B. in 1891: "*Work, watch and wait.*" These words have a *mantramic* quality. They serve to develop in us the right approach in responding most positively to H.P.B.'s clarion call: "*Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy.*"

WHEN mortals shall have become sufficiently spiritualized, there will be no more need of *forcing* them into a correct comprehension of ancient Wisdom. Men will *know* then, that there never yet was a great World-reformer, whose name has passed into our generation, who (a) was not a direct emanation of the Logos (under whatever name known to us), *i.e.*, an *essential* incarnation of one of "the seven," of the "divine Spirit who is sevenfold"; and (b) who had not appeared before, during the past Cycles. They will recognize, then, the cause which produces in history and chronology certain riddles of the ages; the reason why, for instance, it is impossible *for them* to assign any reliable date to Zoroaster, who is found multiplied by twelve and fourteen in the *Dabistan*; why the Rishis and Manus are so mixed up in their numbers and individualities; why Krishna and Buddha speak of themselves as *reincarnations*, *i.e.*, Krishna is identified with the Rishi Narayana, and Gautama gives a series of his previous births; and why the former, especially, being "the *very supreme* Brahma," is yet called *Amsamsavatara*—"a part of a part" only of the Supreme on Earth.... The esoteric doctrine explains it by saying that each of these (as many others) had first appeared on earth as one of the seven powers of the Logos, individualized as a God or "Angel" (messenger); then, mixed with matter, they had reappeared in turn as great sages and instructors who "taught the Fifth Race," after having instructed the two preceding races, had ruled during the Divine Dynasties, and had finally sacrificed themselves, to be reborn under various circumstances for the good of mankind, and for its salvation at certain critical periods; until in their last incarnations they had become truly only "the parts of a part" on earth, though *de facto* the One Supreme in Nature.

THE INNER STILLNESS

Thine "Isle" is the deer, thy thoughts the hounds that weary and pursue his progress to the stream of Life.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

SILENCE is a subject often referred to in Theosophical literature and what is said about it invites study. There are different kinds of silence; which one is referred to?

A very important and striking passage is the one in which a Master wrote that for an aspirant to knowledge it is necessary to observe "silence for certain periods of time to enable nature herself to speak to him who comes to her for information."

Is this stillness that which depends on outer surroundings? Presumably not. Outer silence, however beneficial for our physical well-being in the comparative degree available to most of us, is not indispensable to spiritual progress. The "sweet but selfish rest of quiet wilds" is not of itself the remedy for our ills. In one of Mr. Judge's tales, to one who spoke of those "peaceful places where true progress may be gained," the answer came that there are dangers in those places not appreciated by the inexperienced student. The Dweller of the Threshold is mentioned and the speaker continues:

When you get into what you have called "the peaceful places," this power becomes tenfold stronger than it is found to be on the plane in which we now live in London.

Besides, as *The Voice of the Silence* tells us, both action and inaction may be found in us; the body agitated, the mind tranquil, the Soul as limpid as a mountain lake; or, in the words of a hymn.

In busy mart and crowded street,
No less than in the still retreat,
Thou Lord art there...

Where, then, shall we find the source of the stillness that is required? In that part of man where his fate—success or failure—is determined. Once more, "The fight is in the mind."

That mind is dual—the higher and the lower. Interesting light on the fact of its twofold nature and the practical significance of this fact is found in certain passages in "A Hindu Chela's Diary." (See Vol. X of this magazine, pp. 89–93 and 98–102, especially pp. 99 and 101.)

In connection with the "most instructive and solemn things" he had seen and heard, the chela writes:

I return to my room, and begin to puzzle over them all, to revolve and re-revolve them in my mind, with a view to clearing all up and finding out what all may mean. But I am interrupted by a note from Kunala directing me to stop this puzzling and to let all I saw sink deep into my heart.

After another experience, again the chela begins puzzling and asking himself of what use all the symbols and teachings are if he is unable to "cut asunder these questioning doubts, these bonds of ignorance." And, again, his teacher explains, saying:

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

Hence, "Have mastery o'er thy thoughts, O striver for perfection," if thou would'st cross the threshold of "the gate of Woe." The mind awakes illusion. It is a creature of habit. Thoughts are self-reproductive, and unless an effort is made to control them and lead them into new ways, they will always represent and reflect the past—heredity, habits instilled in childhood and youth, echoes of thoughts held by our family and friends or by the masses among whom old Karma has placed us. But such an effort is not easy. It must originate in our higher nature, and, as likely as not, even in cases where in quiet moments the student understands and values the new, the old thoughts will arise automatically and that which is bright and inspiring just now will be obscured or distorted by the mental and emotional remnants of earlier days—lives, perhaps.

If we think along these lines something dawns on us of the meaning of that puzzling statement: "The mind is the great Slayer of the Real," and of the importance of the injunction: "Silence thy thoughts." The way to accomplish this is elaborated in *The Voice of the Silence*.

ESOTERIC ANTHROPOGENESIS

TO make possible the evolution of Spirit into Matter, the celestial Hierarchies of conscious Divine Powers, or the *Dhyanis* of the seven planes of being, had to sacrifice their own respective super-ethereal essences to animate the man of clay, by endowing each of his inner principles with a portion, or rather a reflection, of that essence. The Lunar Gods or Pitris made physical man out of their *Chhayas* or Shadows, but could not give him the light of mind, for they had it not. The most mysterious of the *Dhyanis* or creators of man are the endowers of Manas, those who gave the fire that vivified the human animal. For, to construct a thinking man, "living Fire" was needed, the fire of self-consciousness.

The Egos or *Kumaras* who incarnated in mindless man at the end of the Third Root-Race were not human Egos of this earth or plane, but became such only from the moment they ensouled the animal man, thus endowing him with his Higher Mind. It was their "rebellion," or their initial unwillingness to move with the evolutionary impulse and incarnate in mindless man, that led to their subsequent "fall" or "expulsion from Heaven." These progenitors of man are referred to by various names in different traditions and mythologies. They are the Sons of Wisdom, the Sons of *Mahat*, the *Kumaras* or Virgin Youths, the Titans, the Promethean Host, the *Asuras*, the Fallen Angels, the Divine Rebels, etc., who, according to tradition, were exiled on Earth after the allegorical War in Heaven. This was the rebellion of intellectual life against the morbid inactivity of pure Spirit, and it is this that has made of us self-conscious, thinking men, with the attributes and capabilities of Gods in us, for good as much as for evil. Hence the so-called "rebels" are in reality our saviours; but for their help animal-man would never have been able to reach upward from this earth and attain through self-exertion his ultimate goal.

A clear understanding of this can reveal the meaning of many hitherto incomprehensible allegories and mysteries. It explains, for instance, the allegory of Prometheus, and the many allegorical accounts about the "War in Heaven," including that between the *Suras* and the *Asuras* in Hindu mythology, and that of *Revelation* with respect to the Christian dogma of the fallen angels. It explains the "rebellion" of the highest Angels, and the meaning of their being cast down from

Heaven into the depths of Hell, *i.e.*, matter.

In esoteric philosophy, the "Fall" was the result of man's knowledge, for his eyes were opened. The "fallen angels," in fact, are Humanity, ourselves, for they became our *Manas*, Mind, and Self-consciousness. They are the immortal Egos, the Individualities which incarnate in men from life to life, the *Sutratma* or luminous thread on which are strung, like so many beads, our countless personalities.

The Secret Doctrine corrects at considerable length the theological error of pitting God and Devil against each other. Both are identical and are in us, and it has been so from the day we got our *Manas*. There is no good or evil outside of Humanity. It is our Mind that is both our tempter and our redeemer, our intelligent liberator from pure animalism. The downfall of the disobedient angels—not demons, but gods, logoi, demiurgi—signifies simply their fall into generation and matter from their original exalted position. It is the curse, in its philosophical meaning, of being compelled to incarnate on this earth—an unavoidable rung on the ladder of evolution—once they had separated themselves from the parent essence, or, in other words, after the unit had become a multiple, after differentiation and manifestation.

Some of the divine Beings took up their abode in a portion of the mankind of the Third Race, in those who had reached the highest point of merit, under Karma, in the preceding *Manvantara*. These men, the elect, became incarnations of the Lords of Wisdom; they constitute the race of Arhats, or sages, or divine men. The bulk of mankind, however, those whose organisms were half-ready, had their fifth principle, *Manas*, simply quickened by a spark thrown into it; the incarnating powers, seeing that these men in form but not in mind were not fit abodes for them, only breathed their essence into them, or made them the vehicles of their reflections.

Those who, under the law of Karmic development, were half-ready and received but a spark, constitute the average humanity which has to acquire its intellectuality during the present *Manvantaric* evolution, after which they will be ready in the next for the full reception of the "Sons of Wisdom." But, besides the above-average and the average, there was a third category of Monads, the below-average, those who were not ready at all, the latest entrants who had hardly evolved from their last transitional and lower animal forms at

the close of the Third Round. They remained the "narrow-brained" who were not fit to receive even a spark. However, after these mindless men had committed the sin of mating with she-animals, the creators repented and atoned for their neglect by endowing them with mind. They are the interior races, of which there are still some remnants left, as, for instance, some Australian and African tribes.

The important Verse 24 (Stanza VII) in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 161 *et seq.*) contains the key to understanding why humanity, though of the same essence physically and spiritually, is not the same at all at the intellectual level. Commenting on this Verse, H.P.B. states:

This Stanza contains, in itself, the whole key to the mysteries of evil, the so-called Fall of the angels, and the many problems that have puzzled the brains of the philosophers from the time that the memory of man began. It solves the secret of the subsequent inequalities of intellectual capacity, of birth or social position, and gives a logical explanation to the incomprehensible Karmic course throughout the aeons which followed....

It explains the otherwise unaccountable degrees of intellectuality among the various races of men—the savage bushman and the European—even now. Those tribes of savages, whose reasoning powers are very little above the level of the animals, are not the unjustly disinherited, or the *unfavoured*, as some may think—nothing of the kind. They are simply those *latest arrivals* among the human Monads, which *were not ready*: which have to evolve during the present Round, as on the three remaining globes (hence on four different planes of being) so as to arrive at the level of the average class when they reach the Fifth Round. One remark may prove useful, as food for thought to the student in this connection. The MONADS of the lowest specimens of humanity (the "narrow-brained" savage South-Sea Islander, the African, the Australian) *had no Karma to work out when first born as men, as their more favoured brethren in intelligence had*. The former are spinning out Karma only now; the latter are burdened with past, present, and future Karma. In this respect the poor savage is more fortunate than the greatest genius of *civilized countries*.

In the course of natural law, man will become a perfect septenary being only at the end of the seventh Round. Yet he has all the principles latent in him from the beginning of his evolutionary cycle.

For average humanity, the fifth principle, *Manas*, will be fully developed only in the Fifth Round. Those whom *The Secret Doctrine* calls "Fifth-Rounders" are the prematurely developed beings whose *Manas* has become entirely divine in this present cycle of evolution. On the other hand, no amount of culture or training can raise the Bushmen and some other tribes, in whom the spark burns low, to the intellectual level of average humanity. This explains why savagery and civilization have always co-existed.

Thus the three lines of evolution could not keep pace with each other. The original homogeneity was broken once intellectual evolution started and inequalities of development began to be felt. The gift of the divine Beings, who gave man his self-consciousness and his free will, became at the same time the chief cause of Evil. It is in the differentiation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous, the unit into plurality, that lies the root of Evil.

Evil, or selfishness and its brood, never had any being before the appearance of self-conscious man. Man contaminated the god in him by linking the pure spirit with the impure demon of matter. This indwelling, fallen god is cursed to undergo the never-ceasing cycles of human incarnations, in which evil will predominate till the day when humanity is redeemed by the true divine Enlightenment which gives the correct perception of things.

The "Fall of the Angels" and the "War in Heaven" are repeated on every plane, for the lower mirrors the higher. This war between spirit and matter, says *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 268),

will last till the inner and divine man adjusts his outer terrestrial self to his own spiritual nature. Till then the dark and fierce passions of the former will be at eternal feud with his master, the Divine Man. But the *animal* will be tamed one day, because its nature will be changed, and harmony will reign once more between the two as before the "Fall," when even mortal man was *created* by the Elements and was not born.

COURAGE CONSISTS NOT IN blindly overlooking danger, but in seeing it and conquering it.

—RICHTER

DOES GOD DEAL OUT FAVOURS?

IT is in childish, illogical delusions about a personal God who may deal out favours if properly placated that can be found the source of two-thirds of our evils and troubles. We live in hopes, not in knowledge.

To avoid facing oneself as one really is and to try to escape into forgetfulness is the usual course adopted by untried, unproven souls. The churches, temples, mosques are filled with those who first hope and then affirm the belief that their God watches over them carefully, continually and forgivingly. None, however, really trust in their God's *continued* attention. Some think the intercession of a priest or a saint is required for them to receive what they want; otherwise their needs might be overlooked. But tragedy stalks the most devout.

It is evident that people do not really trust to God's care without continual reminders, and there are in India those who visit both Christian churches and Hindu shrines. If they have been brought up in the wrong faith, at least at the Last Judgment God will know they did not completely neglect the proper faith! Every Hindu temple seems to be equipped with bells to wake the God or Gods to full attention to what is wished for. How far have we come indeed from the teaching of Jesus who advised prayer in the secrecy and solitude of one's own closet and not in public, and of Krishna who taught that all the offering required was a leaf, a flower, or fruit, or water, presented with a pure heart! Truly, cunning has taken full advantage of men's fears and anxieties, and propitiation of a personal God or Gods has been built up and strengthened.

People are puzzled when they see the good suffering and the wicked seemingly prospering. They then ask, "Is God, if such a *Being* exists, just, unjust or perverse?" To say that God's ways are inscrutable is to run away from the issue. Are the many apparent injustices offset by sudden unpredictable outbursts of rewards? Evidently, from the slow building up of character and of the sense of responsibility, rewards do result, so that in the end justice seems clearly evident. Then is God perverse—sometimes cruel and destructive, sometimes benevolent and truly rewarding? Most thinkers find themselves on the horns of this dilemma, summed up in the stultifying formula: "God's ways are inscrutable."

Theosophy is for those courageous men and women who are not afraid of questioning God, Devil or circumstances in their search for Truth. It recognizes that man's concept of God is the basic determining factor in his own character. If one man's God is a cruel, tyrannical being, who must be contemplated with servility and cunning—then that man himself will show those cruel, tyrannical traits. If God is conceived as only sweetness and light, the person holding and meditating on that concept will lose discrimination and will in time be rendered incapable of distinguishing true principles from false—for "Isn't God all love?"

But, if a man or a woman sees the vision glorious of God as Law, impersonally just—as Krishna seated in the heart of every being, Brahmin or outcast, Hindu or Muslim, saint or sinner, as that eternal Consciousness which represents *Spirit* of every degree in every kingdom of Nature, indwelling and welling up in each material form—if that Vision is glimpsed, then is born the feeling of individual responsibility. No longer can life be purposeless; no longer is God inscrutable, perverse or irresponsible. A new concept of forgiveness and of mercy is born, for responsibility means the balancing against the causes that *we* set in motion, of their legitimate and just effects, and true mercy in the long process of learning is seen to be impersonal justice. We discern the rule of Law everywhere. God is then no longer completely unknowable, despite the transcendental aspect that has been described as a flame which, as approached, ever recedes.

We then toss into the limbo of discarded childish toys all desire for "providential protection" and "lucky breaks." Life as it comes to us may seem to be lucky or unlucky, but we hold to the firm conviction that we are learners from each and every experience. Then the bodily aches and pains are assuaged; or lacerated feelings receive the healing salve of a universal compassion as our uncertain, wandering thoughts become anchored to the concept that, if the millions of great stars in the firmament move systematically and harmoniously under fixed laws which can be ascertained, then puny man cannot be excepted from the rule of such Law, Order and Justice. Nor is man so puny that he cannot span with his mind's eye and intuitively and *willfully* catch the vision of God as universally pervasive, inherently just—not a Being but a Presence, impersonal, harmonious and balanced.

LIGHT ON THE PATH

[P. Sreenevas Row's annotations on the closing Section of *Light on the Path*, entitled "Karma," are continued here from our last issue. They appeared originally in *The Theosophist* for November 1885.]

SECTION III. CLAUSE II

These threads [of the rope of individual existence] are colourless, are perfect in their qualities of straightness, strength and levelness. This rope, passing as it does through all places, suffers strange accidents. Very often a thread is caught and becomes attached, or perhaps is only violently pulled away from its even way. Then for a great time it is disordered, and it disorders the whole. Sometimes one is stained with dirt or with colour; and not only does the stain run on further than the spot of contact, but it discolours other of the threads.

THIS illustration of the threads of a rope being pure at first, but becoming stained with colour and dirt when it is used for different purposes, needs no explanation, as it is within the experience of every person in daily life. Now the application of this illustration to human existence shows that the soul is itself pure, but that it becomes impure and stained with colour when it is encased in a body, indulging in appetites and desires incidental to such embodiment, during the innumerable migrations which the soul undergoes.

The Soul is, in its nature, *nirvanamaya*, pure (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, 4; and VI, 7); and the particles of *Prakriti* (matter), the aggregation of which in a gross form constitutes the body, the habitation of the soul, are also pure (*Mahabharata*, *Vana Parva*, Sl. 12619); for the primary particles of matter called the *Tanmatras* have no qualities such as those which would affect the soul (*Vishnu Purana*, I, 37). But *Prakriti* (matter), in its manifested and differentiated condition, that is, when it is moulded into shapes and forms, becomes by some mysterious natural process invested with three principal (*gunas*) qualities, viz: the *Satwa-guna*, *Rajo-guna*, and *Tama-guna* (*Devi Bhagavata*, III, viii, 4, etc.). "The *Satwa-guna*, because of its purity, is clear and free from defect, and entwineth the *Purusha* (soul) with sweet and pleasant consequences" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, XIV, 6). "The *Rajo-guna* is of a passionate nature, arising from the effects of

worldly thirst, and invests the *Purusha* with the consequences proceeding from action" (*Ibid.*, 7). And the "*Tama-guna* is the offspring of darkness, and is the confounder of all the faculties of the mind, and it imprisoneth the *Purusha* with intoxication, sloth and idleness" (*Ibid.*, 8). These qualities are capable of binding *Purusha* to the body. So that the *Purusha*, who resides in the *Prakriti* (i.e., the soul enveloped in a body), partakes of the qualities thus proceeding from *Prakriti*; and the consequences arising from those qualities are the causes which operate in the birth of *Purusha* and determine whether it is to be in a good body or evil (*Ibid.*, XIII, 21). How pure souls are thus capable of becoming impure is fully described in the *Vayu Purana* and in the *Mahabharata*, *Vana Parva*, Sl. 12619; and also in the *Vishnu Purana*, which latter being more clear than the others, I quote it in full:

The individual soul is of its own nature pure and composed of *nirvanamaya*, and wisdom. The properties of pain, ignorance, and impurity are those of *Prakriti* and not of the soul. There is no affinity between fire and water; but when the latter is placed over the former in a cauldron, it bubbles and boils, and exhibits properties of fire. In like manner, when the soul is associated with Nature, it is vitiated by egotism (*Ahamkara*) and the rest; and assumes the qualities of grosser Nature, although essentially distinct from them and incorruptible....The ill-judging embodied being, bewildered by the darkness of fascination, situated in a body composed of five elements, loudly asserts, "This is I." But who would ascribe spiritual individuality to a body in which the soul is distinct from the ether, air, fire, water, and earth of which that body is composed? What man of understanding assigns to disembodied spirit corporal fruition, or houses, land, and the like, that it should say, "These are mine?" What wise man entertains the idea of property in sons or grandsons—begotten of the body—after the spirit has abandoned it? Man here performs acts for the purpose of bodily fruition, and the consequence of such acts is another body; so that their result is nothing but confinement to bodily existence. (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, 7)

The same idea is conveyed in the *Maitri Upanishad* from another standpoint, in these words:

The five rudiments (*Tanmatras*) are called by the name "element"; next, the five gross elements (*Maha-bhutas*) are also

called by the name "elements"; and the aggregation of these is called the Body, *Sarira* (i.e., the *Sukshma Sarira* composed of Tanmatras, and the *Sthula Sarira* made of gross elements). That which verily rules in this body is called the elemental soul (*Bhutatma*). Thus the soul's immortal nature, which in itself is as a drop of water on a lotus leaf, becomes assailed by the qualities of the said elements of nature (*Prakriti*); and from being thus assailed, it suffers bewilderment; and from its bewilderment it sees not the Lord *Bhagavanta*, who is within one's self. Borne along by and sailing on the stream of qualities, uncertain and unstable, bereft of true knowledge, full of desires and forlorn, it becomes subject to selfishness (*Abhimana*). Thinking such thoughts as "I," "he," "this is mine," and so on, it binds itself by itself, as a bird with a snare. Entangled in the fruits of its own actions, it obtains honourable or mean births; its course becomes upward or downward; and it wanders about assailed by various pairs (such as pleasure and pain; cold and heat, etc.) (*Maitri Upanishad*, III, 2)

Thus it is that the Soul, pure at first, becomes subject to desirable and repulsive objects after its embodiment in the mortal coils (*Chandogya Upanishad*, VIII, xii, 1); but as this misery is brought about by the line of conduct adopted by himself, it is quite possible for him to obtain bliss by choosing and following the best path during his pilgrimage. For the soul is the lord of life, has the choice of actions, and can control and restrain the passions incidental to his physical embodiment, if he only wishes to do so earnestly. "He is the chooser between *three* roads (Virtue, Vice and True Knowledge); and his success or failure depends upon what road he chooses" (*Swetaswatara Upanishad*, V, 7). And "when the soul has surpassed the three qualities which are existent in the body, then it is delivered from birth and death, and old age and pain; and drinks the water of immortality." (*Bhagavad-Gita*, XIV, 20)

From the foregoing observations the reader will perceive that the threads of human existence were originally pure; they became impure by subsequent contaminations; and it is possible for them to regain their original purity. But how, he may ask, is all this consistent with the teachings of the preceding clause, which are to the effect that the Karma of mankind is infinite, without beginning or end, and can never break? That both these propositions are in perfect harmony with each other will be evident if the reader will be pleased to go over the

observations made in the preceding clause once more. There he will find that human existence and Karma are spoken of as infinite only when they are viewed with reference to *mankind, generically, as a whole* and not in respect of *an individual unit viewed singly by himself*. So that it is quite proper to say that the Karma of each person began with his encasement in the body, and would terminate with his dis severance from it and from all its concerns. If this were not so, it would be idle to speak of one's attaining purity and emancipation (*Moksha*), the ultimate end and purpose of every individual soul.

But the reader may fairly demand an explanation as to how Karma, that is, one's own action, inactive and ineffective as it seems to be, is capable of producing such results as would affect him favourably or prejudicially during this life and in the future. The solution of this difficulty forms the subject of the following clause.

(To be continued)

NEITHER in the world of nations, nor in the world of the nation, will all individuals sacrifice their interests. They cannot do it. It is impossible. They have not reached that stage of ethical development. But there is a handful of individuals—hundreds, thousands, may be hundreds of thousands—who have reached it. They have learned, or begun to conjecture, that the moment is come when they must sacrifice their *all*. At first slowly, then with slowly increasing speed, then in the last hundred years with a truly sickening acceleration, first the nation, then the world of nations has become one *body*. The vast world is one Man. And that one Man is sick, as individual men, time out of mind, have been sick; he is divided within him. There is unconscious growth below; the mind above is fixed. The pangs of rebirth are at hand. He dreams of better things, he desires better things; but how to achieve them he does not know. The World Man now longs, as the individual man has longed, time after time, for newness of life. And the answer to the World Man is the same answer that was given to the individual men two thousand years ago: "He that loseth his life, the same shall save it."

—John Middleton Murry

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The long-drawn confrontation between science and religion is no longer in the centre of the stage. What scientists now face is a new set of problems that belong primarily to science and have nothing to do with religion, says Mary Midgley, who writes in *New Scientist* (August 1, 1992) under the title "Can Science Save Its Soul?" At issue is the arrogance of some scientists and the excessive claims they make about the scope and capacity of science as a whole, especially the claims of cosmologists that they are close to understanding creation—and even God—and providing a "theory of everything." This has resulted in a rash of books and newspaper articles questioning the cultural ascendancy and function of science.

Midgley, author of many books (the latest titled *Science as Salvation*) and former senior lecturer in philosophy at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, indicts the doctrine of "scientism"—with its implied belief in the omniscience of science—which has been steadily gaining ground in modern culture:

The territory claimed is *not* just that of the religions. It is the whole area of organized and everyday thought. And science, as a claimant of that territory, means essentially just physical science. Though the doctrine is sometimes expanded to include technology and social science, these extensions are foreign to it.

This seductive promise of universal explanation is something new. It outbids the explanatory offers of any religion, both in scope and certainty. The religions habitually admit, indeed claim, that they deal in matters not fully knowable by human beings, whereas science now seems able to offer fully reasoned proof for all answers to all possible questions. People today are far more vulnerable to such offers than they were a century ago, because the world has become so confusing. In today's desperate muddles, people long for a map, a clear world picture....

Scientific education is now so narrowly scientific that many scientists simply do not know that there is any organized, systematic way of thinking besides their own....The exalted claims that scientism makes for science are not just excessive, they are of quite the wrong kind....

Of course, scientists have every right to explore questions outside scientific territory. But they cannot do it effectively without changing their methods. If they do not take the trouble to acquire

new ways of thinking about their new subject matter, they are liable to get conceptually lost....

Should all the large claims, then, simply be withdrawn? Many of them surely can and should. Theorists such as Popper have already proposed various forms of scientific minimalism, techniques for abandoning large claims. They have suggested that science is really just a store of facts, a record of hypotheses that have been experimentally verified, or at least not falsified—which turns scientists into humble operatives in an immense, impersonal falsification factory. Or perhaps talk of truth and falsity is itself too bold. Perhaps, as the philosopher Larry Laudan puts it, "the aim of science is merely to secure theories with a high problem-solving effectiveness."...

In my recent book, I concentrated simply on displaying the enormity of the current overconfidence in science by examining some fantastic prophecies recently put forward by eminent cosmologists....This is part of a wider effort to put science back in context—to show its borders not as sharp, defended frontiers, but as complex interactions with other ways of thinking....Bryan Appleyard contends in his book *Understanding the Present* that humanity would be better equipped to deal with moral and spiritual questions if scientism could be halted in its tracks, and I agree.

Can then science save its soul? Is the light of science the light of truth? If material benefits cannot save the world, no more can science as long as it confines its interest to the phenomena of the material world. But let exact experimental science blend itself with metaphysics, study spiritual and psychic as well as physical nature, seek the spirit of living nature behind the form, and a sincere and unselfish hunger for the Truth will have an incalculable potentiality of moral results. Only then can science become an integral *whole*.

Technical advances and the new ability to engineer our future give rise to many questions concerning human values. Not only the future of individuals, but the future history of humanity itself is at stake, writes Michael Mautner in the July-August *Futurist*. At issue are not the technical methods, but the human consequences of the technologies. The author recommends extensive public debate on subjects such as

human biotechnology, bioethics, genetic engineering:

People are clearly interested in the human future. Bioethics attracts much public interest. This is attested by the wide media coverage of topics such as "test-tube babies," artificial insemination, surrogate mothers, and euthanasia, and also related science-fiction topics such as brain transplants, life extension, etc. Nevertheless, the scientific machine is moving with increasing momentum, free of public scrutiny. It promises extended life-spans, increased intelligence, robots that will assume the unpleasant necessity of labour. Apparently, it is presumed that these alterations of the human experience are universally desired. Since the experts presume to know what people want, there is no effort to actually ask the public.

Though technically feasible, many humans are not sure they want these advances. The results of a questionnaire put to a group of people who were "future-oriented" and open-minded, indicate that there are few who approve of basic changes from the present human condition. For instance, although fear of death is a common instinct, yet most are against an indefinite life-span. While everybody would like to be smarter, superior intelligence for all got a low rating. While many people dislike menial work and dream of more leisure time, liberating people from all work did not find favour with most of the respondents. They seemed to perceive such "improvements" as dehumanizing.

In their verbal comments, the respondents again expressed strong reservations about extreme changes. Many stressed the need to reinforce human values rather than achieve these technological advances, or at least to accept the advances only if they promote human values. For example, intelligence should be raised only if this makes people "better" in accordance with an agreed-upon set of values. Robots and computers should not rule because they lack emotions. Life-spans should increase only if the quality of life increases. "Superhumans" should be enlightened, humane, and loving. Given the state of the environment, the statement "Humankind populates the universe" led one respondent to comment, "God help the universe."...

The answers appear to reflect deeply seated human feelings. It is therefore quite possible that a public referendum in any nation—or globally—would have a similar outcome.

Yet, science keeps advancing in these directions. Scientists are

driven by curiosity, ambition, and a sense of power. Scientists also desire to serve humanity in a manner that they define as, or at least assume to represent, "progress."...Science is a human enterprise. Like all other human enterprises, it should serve Life first. If the communal instinct of survival senses a threat, then the warning should be taken seriously.

The common sense of the majority of human beings is indeed prudent in perceiving bioengineered evolution as a threat that it is.

The enthusiastic popular support a suspended Roman Catholic priest, Eugen Drewermann, is receiving in his homeland, Germany, is symptomatic of the crisis in the Catholic Church. *Time* magazine (August 24, 1992) calls him "a latter-day Martin Luther," and his popularity rating in a recent national opinion poll is higher even than that of Pope John Paul II. Religious dissent is not new, but the fact that a vast majority of people are backing it is a notable sign of the times. Over the past two years, the Catholic Church in Germany has lost some 300,000 members—a record number—and Drewermann's books on liberal theology have become best-sellers, with more than a million copies sold.

The dissident priest's writings attack the rigid Catholic patriarchy and challenge some of the church's most immutable positions, including the secondary role it assigns to women, its opposition to divorce and remarriage, and its literal interpretation of virgin birth and the Ascension of Jesus, which Drewermann views as symbolic rather than literal truths. Finding his views untenable, the Catholic hierarchy suspended him from the priesthood last March. But this has left him undeterred and has only won him more public support.

The church as it exists [he insists] is a bureaucrat's church, a bunker that conceals the truth Jesus wanted us to know....I believe in the kingdom of God but not in the church. It doesn't matter to me if I'm Catholic or Protestant. I just want to be allowed to be a Christian....

My goal is to help people. I would have liked it if that could have happened in the church. Since it didn't I will go ahead without the church and, if necessary, against the church.

Arrogance and ignorance result in dogmatism in its worst form. The battles that H.P.B. fought are still being waged. "We have no quarrel," she wrote, "with Christians whose faith is sincere, and whose practice coincides with their profession." But the exploitation by interested parties of "the idolatrous and unreasoning faith of all plebeian multitudes" (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 134) still goes on. However, confrontation between reformist theologians and the church is not uncommon and is one of the trends of the times which students of Theosophy cannot but take note of. It is pertinent to remind ourselves of H.P.B.'s words that

what the world now wants is a Church that will...be at least on a level with the ideas and knowledge of the times. Dogmatic Christianity is not suited for a world that reasons and thinks, and only those who can throw themselves into a mediaeval state of mind can appreciate a Church whose religious (as distinguished from its social and political) function is to keep God in good humour while the laity are doing what they believe he does not approve; to pray for changes of weather; and occasionally, to thank the Almighty for helping to slaughter the enemy. It is...spiritual guides that the world looks for today—a "clergy" that will give it ideals as suited to the intellect of this century as the Christian Heaven and Hell, God and the Devil, were to the ages of dark ignorance and superstition. ("'Lucifer'" to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Greeting!": reprinted from *Lucifer*, December 1887, in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, January 1963)

While some scientists dismiss psychic phenomena as "impossible things," there are researchers—some distinguished in their fields—who say that there is a growing body of evidence for these phenomena, and that scientists should take them seriously.

According to *New Scientist* (August 8, 1992), "strong evidence" for psychic phenomena comes from a series of experiments on telepathy conducted between 1983 and 1989 by Charles Honorton, now at the University of Edinburgh. In a series of 355 sessions, Honorton asked subjects to watch randomly selected video sequences and try to communicate the images telepathically to a second person. This person selected one of four possible answers for each video clip.

Honorton found that over 30 per cent of the answers were correct. He is now attempting to repeat his experiments. Critics say that there is no point in claiming anything until the repeat experiments are completed, though to some parapsychologists repeatability is of dubious importance.

Pains were taken to eliminate the possibility of fraud or ordinary physical communication, and Honorton was meticulous in his experimental methods, we are told. The experiments are said to have won support outside the circle of committed believers in the paranormal. Yet *New Scientist* comments editorially that "extraordinary claims" on behalf of psychic phenomena "will require extraordinary evidence," and that "convincing repeatable evidence for any psychic phenomena" is still lacking.

Those with closed minds who recognize nothing beyond the physical realms will forever remain sceptics. And those with open minds who are trying to look into psychic forces and phenomena use such methods of investigation that even after a century of research they have come up with hardly anything by way of "convincing scientific explanation." Evidence that numerous types of phenomena do occur has been collected, but their how or why is not understood. There is still the same *a priori* rejection of all explanations that cannot be reconciled with a materialistic hypothesis. Is it any wonder that the progress of Western psychic investigators is so slow? Even when a genuinely open-minded attitude has been maintained, researchers handicap themselves by ignoring accessible data. A preliminary acquaintance with the findings of Eastern psychology as summarized in the writings of Madame Blavatsky would save countless false starts and solve many problems of psychic research.

That all phenomena have natural (though not necessarily wholly physical) causes goes without saying in a universe of law. The day may be at hand, it seems, for the fulfilment of the prophecy of H.P.B. She assured her readers that if they but waited with patience they would see some day the majority of the professors coming over to the side of their colleagues who were prepared to consider paranormal phenomena seriously.

...and then though "miracles" will be considered as much an absurdity as now, yet occult phenomena will be duly taken inside the domain of exact science and men will be wiser. ("Nature's

Human Magnets": *She Being Dead Yet Speaketh*, p. 196)

Czechoslovakia's retired President Vaclav Havel's moral importance transcends his political achievements. *Time* magazine (August 3, 1992) describes him as "Czechoslovakia with brains—the country's better self, its idealist, its moral philosopher, the visionary of 'living in truth.'" He cherishes hopes of a "global civil society" and asserts values not often heard of in world politics and public affairs—decency, good taste, courtesy, intelligence and responsibility.

Time publishes an interview with him in which he expresses his idealistic views:

When I became President, I tried to bring a more personal dimension back to politics, because this world is endangered by large "anonymization." We are becoming integral parts of mega-machineries, which move with their own uncontrollable inertia. I tried to accentuate the spiritual and ethical dimensions of political decision-making.

In this I even foresee a way of saving the world from all global threats to mankind. I do think that no more technical tricks or systematic measures could be created capable of preventing these threats. Certain changes of the human mentality are necessary in order to deepen the feeling of global responsibility. The renewal of global responsibility is not thinkable without a certain respect for a higher principle above my own personal existence....

I cherish a certain hope in me, hope as a state of spirit—a state of spirit without which I cannot imagine living or doing something. I can hardly imagine living without hope. As for the future of the world: there is a colourful spectrum of possibilities, from the worst to the best. What will happen, I do not know. Hope forces me to believe that those better alternatives will prevail, and above all it forces me to do something to make them happen....

I have found that good taste, oddly enough, plays an important role in politics. Why is it like that? The most probable reason is that good taste is a visible manifestation of human sensibility towards the world, environment, people....

My position seems to be the one of a dreamer who mumbles something about ideals, completely untouched by real life, whereas politics takes a different course. But this is a very banal view. In

reality it seems to me that my constant repetition of certain things planted seeds. I do see this right now, in the moment when my federal presidency is over. From various sides I seem to be hearing voices that call for exactly such a person who would be constantly reminding the society of the values I stand for....the seeds I planted in the subconscious of the people are there acting indirectly.

An extract by Lester R. Brown from the Worldwatch Institute Report, State of the World 1992, appears in the May issue of *Green Magazine* (London). He says among other things:

Overall, global environment trends are not reassuring. The health of the planet has deteriorated dangerously....As a result, our world faces potentially convulsive change....

There is no precedent for the change in prospect. Building an environmentally sustainable future depends on restructuring the global economy, major shifts in human reproductive behaviour, and dramatic changes in values and life-styles. If this Environmental Revolution succeeds, it will rank with the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions as one of the great economic and social transformations in human history....

The Environmental Revolution is the product of seeing ourselves again as part of nature rather than apart from nature....

Unless more of us become environmentally active, both as individuals and in organized groups, the Environmental Revolution will not succeed. Success depends on overcoming human inertia, vested economic interests in the status quo, and some of the structural impediments of society....

The issue is not our survival as a species, but rather the survival of civilization as we know it....We can all contribute.

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

By H. P. Blavatsky:

ISIS UNVEILED. A photographic facsimile of the original edition of 1877.
THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.
INDEX TO THE SECRET DOCTRINE
THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE
THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY
THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE
FIVE MESSAGES TO THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHISTS
RAJA-YOGA OR OCCULTISM
SHE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH
THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS
A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

By William Q. Judge:

THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY
LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME
THE BHAGAVAD-GITA
NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA
THE YOGA APHORISMS OF PATANJALI
VERNAL BLOOMS
THE HEART DOCTRINE
ECHOES FROM THE ORIENT
AN EPILOGUE OF THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHY GENERALLY STATED
A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

By Robert Crosbie:

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY
UNIVERSAL THEOSOPHY
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THE LIGHT OF ASIA
SELECTIONS FROM THE UPANISHADS, AND THE TAO TE KING
"BECAUSE—" FOR THE CHILDREN WHO ASK WHY
THE ETERNAL VERITIES
THE TELL-TALE PICTURE GALLERY
STUDIES IN "THE SECRET DOCTRINE" (BOOKS I AND II)
LIVING THE LIFE
THE BUILDING OF THE HOME
"THUS HAVE I HEARD"
THE ZOROASTRIAN PHILOSOPHY AND WAY OF LIFE
U.L.T.—ITS MISSION AND ITS FUTURE
TEXTS FOR THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"
IN MEMORY OF HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY, BY SOME OF HER PUPILS
U.L.T. PAMPHLET SERIES, NOS. 1-36
H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES

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.