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# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to  
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (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"

N98

1874

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

Vol. 68, No. 1

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### THE REAL GURUS—A SACRED IDEAL

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, November 1963.]

I can come nearer to you, but you must draw me by a purified heart and a gradually developing will. Like the needle the adept follows his attractions.

—A MASTER OF WISDOM

IN India, the institution of the Guru is held in respect, though the status and function of a real Spiritual Teacher are seldom understood. There is no dearth in the country today of self-styled "gurus." Some of these are well-meaning but self-deceived men; others, psychic tricksters and the like, exploit their followers' ideals; and in orthodox Hindu homes it is the family priest who is honoured as the Guru.

The atmosphere that exists in this ancient land of a centuries-old tradition of Soul-knowledge and Soul-life and their teachers and exemplars, arouses in men and women a zest for spiritual instruction and guidance. So simple is the nature and character of the people that they readily go to one or another of the thousands of *fakirs*, *sadhus* and *sannyasis* and often come to grief, for most of these claimants are not proficient, even when they are mentally pure, while many among them are men of evil habits. Those who combine true knowledge with purity of character are few and rare to contact.

We cannot be too strong in our warning against false gurus.

Those who teach for money, those who boast of their powers, those who claim to lead and order others to follow—all such are false gurus. The very first mark of the Real Guru is that He gives, and the receiver knows it not. He opens the inner Vision, yet Himself remains invisible. He speaks not, yet the disciple's ears hear. Such a Guru can be found neither in the Hall of Ignorance, this Earth, the pleasure-ground of senses; nor in the psychic world, where a thousand sweet-tongued voices allure the mind-soul. Beyond the physical and the psychic is the spiritual realm, the Hall of Wisdom, and there alone the Guru of Soul-life awaits the aspiring chela.

One of the missions of Theosophy is to resuscitate the true view about Gurus—Their status, Their Work and the Path to Them. The Great Gurus, to whom Their Messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, pointed the way, are Lords of Light; They are self-luminous, the Embodiments of Glory. Having freed Themselves by self-effort and self-discipline, They have absorbed and assimilated the Wisdom of the Ages. With that Light of Wisdom They serve the human race. It is impossible to describe Their Nature, Their Powers and Their Spiritual Grandeur; and were it possible, it would be unwise to go into details, so sacred is the ideal of the Gurus and so likely to be degraded.

But this might be said: The Path to the Gurus of Light is obscured by false teachers, by false knowledge, by false aspiration. Let the aspirant go into his own heart, for there and there alone is the Real Guru to be found. If anyone on the face of the earth claims to be a guru himself, then he is a false guru. The Real Ones awaken the Soul by the gift of the Tathagata Light and, by that Light, show the Path which, starting from the heart of man, ends at the heart of the universe. The Soul of the aspirant who has been attempting to serve and to learn is like a small light; the ever-watchful Guru, from the height of spiritual Vision he has reached, discerns that spark of light amid the surrounding gloom, and He pours on it the magic oil, the sacrificial butter, and thus the Soul shines with the Tathagata Light. Tathagata, he who follows in the footsteps of his Predecessors, is the title of the Great Buddha. All Buddhas, all Mahatmas, follow but One Path, One Way, One single File; They all follow in the

footsteps of Their Illustrious Predecessors. They do not teach different things at different times; They teach a single Path, impart an indivisible Philosophy.

The lighting of the Tathagata Light in the heart of the aspirant is a kind of minor initiation. It is a blessing which comes as a response from the Invisible Guru to one who wants to serve humanity and enlighten the Souls of men by self-purification and self-knowledge, and who aspires to learn the right method. The aspirant who undergoes this experience often does not know it; and it is good that he does not know, lest he get proud and talk about it, and thus meet with abject failure.

The "grace of the Guru" is no fiction, but, as H.P.B. tells us, one need never expect the most distant approach to the "favour" of one of our Mahatmas, or any other Mahatmas in the world—should the latter consent to become known—that has not been fully earned by personal merit. *The Mahatmas are the servants, not the arbiters of the law of Karma.*

No one, however, who earnestly strives to tread the Path is left unhelped. The would-be disciple, by his gradually developing will, his evolving spirituality and his constant aspiration to work unselfishly for humanity, puts himself in magnetic communication with his Guru and "forces" the latter to respond.

If the Mahatmas really exist, it has been questioned, why do They not set right the affairs of humanity and alter the face of the earth? If it were possible to do so, They would willingly do it, but the law of evolution cannot be set aside and not even the Great Ones can interfere with the workings of Karma. They have stated also that They do not make Themselves objectively known to believers in Them except in those cases where those believers are ready in all parts of their nature and are definitely pledged to Them; but, in spite of remaining unseen, They do help in a very potent manner all those who work earnestly and trust sincerely in their higher nature. Mr. Judge has written:

Fix your thoughts again on Those Elder Brothers, work for Them, serve Them, and They will help through the right

appropriate means and no other. To meditate on the Higher Self is difficult. Seek, then, the bridge, the Masters.

The idea of the Masters as a bridge to the Higher Self, the Atman, the Supreme Divine Spirit overshadowing man, puzzles some aspirants. It needs to be understood, first, that the real Master is not His physical body but that higher Manas which, through the process of self-evolution, is inseparably united with Buddhi and Atma (the sixth and seventh principles). Being merged into these ubiquitous and omnipresent principles, the Mahatmas may be said to be everywhere. The Light of the Higher Self and of the Mahatmas are not different from each other. Knowledge of our true Being and knowledge of the Master go hand in hand. The "Great Master" is the term used by chelas for the Inner Ruler, the Higher Self, the God within, whose presence we must feel at all times. Because the Master works from within the heart, uniting Himself with the chela in the Hall of Wisdom or Buddhi, He transforms the very consciousness of the chela. He reveals the Inner Atma of the chela to be the Atma of all. The Wisdom imparted to the Soul by the Guru ultimately results in the perception of the entire Universe as One Indivisible Whole.

When we begin to lead the Life, and to teach, the Light and Wisdom of the Guru stream forth from our heart and make us see all others as integral parts of ourselves. Such a gift comes from the Great Ones, the True Gurus. How degraded has become the Ideal! With the restoration of the Ideal of the Guru there will be prosperity of the Soul and peace on earth.

We begin a new volume of this Magazine with our reverential salutations and gratitude to such Gurus. It is to the service of Their Cause, which is the Cause of Humanity, that THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT is dedicated.

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THAT man is the true hero, who, while living in the midst of all temptations of the world, attains perfection.

— SRI RAMAKRISHNA

## MAN—A COMPLEX BEING

THERE are in general three conceptions of the constitution of man: the theological conception, the scientific conception, and the Esoteric or Theosophical conception.

In considering the theological view, we must keep in mind that theology is not religion; it is talk about religion, and very confused talk at that. Judaic, Christian and Islamic theologians have twisted out of all recognition the instructions of the early Rabbis, the Church Fathers, and the Sufis, who understood and taught the pure doctrines of Abraham, Melchizedek and Moses in Judaism; of Jesus in Christianity; of Muhammed and his son-in-law Ali, the first of the Sufis. Fortunately, *pandits* or learned men in India were not so crude, so the Aryan religious creeds escaped the narrowness and illogicality of Western theologies. Simply put, the view about man of Semitic-Christian theology is that there is a Jehovah, a God, an Allah, all-powerful, all-wise, who creates the spirits and souls of men—why and how cannot be understood, for these problems pertain to the mystery of Divinity and it is not for man to ask such questions. Enough to know that God created human souls. He also created Devil, Satan, Iblis, so that evil could and should be visited upon man, to test him, to determine whether he shall go to eternal heaven or to eternal hell. Modern minds see quickly the absurdity, the crudity, the blasphemy of such a doctrine—God creating ignorant souls, though He is all wise; sin-laden souls, though He is all-good; and acting infamously and unjustly, though He is all-just and all-merciful. Modern science has delivered human minds from this blasphemy and superstition, and to its view let us now turn.

Modern science has dethroned Jehovah, God, Allah, a dethronement that is beneficial; but its greatest service to humanity lies in its proclamation that nature and the universe itself are an expression of Law, immutable, infallible, ever present. In place of a personal god creating the universe from without, science says that there is Law—order, justice, rhythm. Man, says science, is a combination of forces in nature. The whole universe is a vibrating whole. Matter itself is motion, is vibration; what looks stable is illusion. Energy

and matter are but two aspects of one and the same substance, and these go to make every form of existence. There is no dead matter; all forms are forms of life. The vibrant universe itself is a form in the ocean of formlessness; all forms fashion themselves out of formlessness. Man himself, according to science, is a form, but a living or energetic form. We do not see its soul, says science. Man, it says, is a living form in which are born thought, will, feeling, and "I-am-I" consciousness or self-consciousness, which is dependent on form and dies with the disintegration of form. The real thinkers among scientists, however, admit: "We do not know all; after all there may be something in human intuition which continues to believe in soul, soul-survival and immortality. There are missing links in our knowledge."

Let us turn to the third, the Esoteric or Theosophical conception. Looking for the missing links, the seeker of facts and truths comes to Theosophy and finds clues. Theosophy says: "Study embryology and note the antenatal life of the embryo and the foetus. Look closely at its progression and see the long, protracted course of evolution compressed within the seven-month gestation period during which the embryo passes from the protoplasmic unit to mineral, vegetable and animal existences before it can be identified as human; then pursue its progress during the eighth and ninth months." Next, Theosophy says to the sciences of physiology and biology: "Study the formation, growth, constitution, and breaking up of cell-life. In that small universe of the microscopic, the whole evolutionary process takes place. And in the highest cell-life you have a miniature copy of human life. Note the four basic principles of cell-life—cell-wall, protoplasmic content, nucleus, nucleolus. Between each of these there are three sub-principles, making altogether seven."

Science admits there are seven aspects or parts of the cell. Also, that our epidermis or skin has seven layers. Doctors know of diseases that follow the cycle of seven days or seven weeks. Scientists know that the spectroscope will not break light into six or eight colours, but only into seven. Theosophy says: Can it not be that man too is sevenfold, that he has a sevenfold nature? If he is

composed of the same matter that is in the distant stars, and if that matter is represented in the sevenfold spectrum, can it not be that the ancients who spoke of *sapta-dhatus*, seven types of substance, were correct?

What is said above goes to show that it is not religious superstition or some kind of fad which prompts students of Theosophy to speak of man as sevenfold. That this is so can be shown along modern scientific lines. But we are more interested in Ancient Science, and religions are remnants, however fragmentary, however corrupt, of that Ancient Science.

What are the seven constituents of man that Theosophy speaks of?

First, there is body, *rupa*. This body, says science, is always changing. Particles come and go; some microbes kill and others bring life and sustenance. Theosophy admits that this is true. In Indian philosophy, the body is said to be composed of 84,000 *dhatus* or elements, which themselves are composed of 33 crores of *devatas* or elementals. People do not laugh when they hear of germs, microbes, infinitesimal living organisms which feed on the human body and feed that body. Why then should they laugh at the teaching about elements and elementals based on ancient knowledge?

The question then arises: What holds these lives or elementals together? The field of a cell, as the field of an atom composed of protons, electrons, etc., offers problems to modern science, not to ancient Theosophy. The latter teaches that there is a foundation or a basis on which, in which, through which these elemental organisms live and labour. It is called the Astral Body, as it is made up of substance that is sidereal—electrical and magnetic in essence. If it is true that all the substances in the universe that scientists have studied with the help of the microscope, the telescope and other instruments are also to be found in man, is it not logical to extend that idea further and say that there are invisible substances which also go into the composition of man? The astral body is the basis or foundation of the physical body. It is called *Linga Sharira*, the design body, because just as a foundation lends to the edifice its

outline and its design, so does the astral design body mould and shape the physical form. It is also called *Pranamaya Kosha*, the sheath of Life, of *Prana*, that which science vaguely calls Energy.

And that is the third constituent. We have a body continuously, perpetually changing; an astral design body on which the visible form rests; and both are made vital and living by *Prana*, life-energy. All of us possess these.

Fourth, all of us have desires, good and bad; loves and lusts, affections and aversions. We need not argue their existence, for who is unaware of them? They are not caused by the body and its senses, but are a principle or aspect of man independent of the body. This is called *Kama* in Sanskrit.

Fifth, we have Mind, *Manas*, a collection of ideas and thoughts, the power to compare and contrast, and which enables us to say, "I am so-and-so." As ideas and thoughts imply a thinker, we have the duality of Mind and Soul, thoughts and he who thinks those thoughts—the Human Soul and his ideation. This principle partakes of both the lower mortal and the higher immortal.

Sixth, we have Intuitive Intellect, called *Buddhi* in Sanskrit—the Discerning Soul, the *Viveki*.

Seventh, there is the Self, the highest Spirit-Self—*Atman*.

To recapitulate in the reverse order: (1) Man is Spirit or Self, a Universal Being—*Atman*. (2) That Universal *Atman* gains a vehicle and becomes an entity, *Buddhi*, the Spiritual Soul. This dual entity, *Atma-Buddhi*, is the Eternal Pilgrim, and is the Soul of all forms. (3) That universal entity gains self-consciousness, the power to think, to analyse, to compare and contrast, and so every human being is *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*—a triune spiritual entity. It is this *Manas* which is the reincarnating principle; it is from *Manas* that a ray emerges at every birth, and in so descending gathers (4) *Kama* or *Tanha*—its psychic heredity, its old passions, virtues and vices. (5) They come to life, leaving behind their quiescent condition because of *Prana*, Energy, whose vehicle is (6) the astral design body, the *Linga Sharira*, on which (7) the physical form or *rupa* is built, sustained, and ultimately destroyed.

It is no use talking of soul-life unless we know what soul is; no

use talking of Spirit if we do not know how it can function in and through the human mind. Most human beings are like ignoramuses; they live without knowing what they are in reality. They go through the round of birth and death, pursue questionable paths, chase the shadows of likes and loves, and run away from the realities of Soul and Spirit.

Man is a complex being—a god at his apex, an animal in the centre, a dressed-up hypocrite at the base. How true it is that we judge a person by appearances and not by what he *is*; by what power of the purse he possesses, not by what knowledge and virtues he uses! It is a strong adjective to call people hypocritical, but is not hypocrisy really the moral synonym for *maya* or illusion? Theosophy says: "Get away from what *seems*, to what *is*." And the first step consists in the study of the human constitution. To take that step, we must get away from theological dogmas and religious superstitions; we must also get away from the changing theories of science, and cease to look upon man as a mere pathological, physiological, biological being. We must view him as a moral entity. There is talk about metabiology. As for psychology, it is not an extension of physiology but its soul. Lunacy or ecstasy or genius cannot be understood by means of pathology. Man's problems can only be solved by Theosophy, the Science of the Highest Self—Divine Science.

So let us study the *whole* man—his body, his mind, his psychic nature, his soul, and his spiritual nature. Let us learn to live on that basis, devoid of illusions. Let us undertake that study—valuable and practical for shaping our own individual character; for building our homes; for re-forming our cities, for governing the land; for enabling our nation to serve Humanity.

So man is a complex being, but fundamentally he is a spiritual being. He has a dual nature—passional and ideative. He lives worse than a savage, when his life is rooted in passion. He is like the savage who comes in contact with modern civilization, and takes to drink. Men and women today are intoxicated by their passions and desires. Divine Ideals have become transformed into demoniacal tendencies. Today, knowledge is used for competing in the

struggle of existence, a struggle in which the strong and the brutish survive.

Theosophy brings the message that there are Those who have transmuted in Their nature the base metals of iron and lead into the gold of Spiritual Peace and Power. The true Alchemists are the Sages, Mahatmas, Masters. They have given the Knowledge whereby each one can purify his or her own ironlike nature and transform it into a golden one, can raise the lower self by the help of the higher. Knowledge is the first requisite. Let us seek that Knowledge and the Teachers of that Knowledge. These Teachers are not dead and gone. They live and are ready to instruct. The first lesson They impart is about Man—spiritual, mental, moral, physical. The second lesson is about the evolution of man—through successive lives on earth, or reincarnation. The Ancient Knowledge of the Ancient Seers is available today, and those who study it take their first step on the Ladder of Spiritual Life, which is a Life of Peace, of Power, of Compassion, and leads to Perfection such as that attained by the Sages, the Super-Men.

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YES; "our destiny *is* written in the stars!" Only, the closer the union between the mortal reflection MAN and his celestial PROTOTYPE, the less dangerous the external conditions and subsequent reincarnations—which neither Buddhas nor Christs can escape. This is not superstition, least of all is it *Fatalism*. The latter implies a blind course of some still blinder power, and man is a free agent during his stay on earth. He cannot escape his *ruling* Destiny, but has the choice of two paths that lead him in that direction, and he can reach the goal of misery—if such is decreed to him, either in the snowy white robes of the Martyr, or in the soiled garments of a volunteer in the iniquitous course; for, there are *external and internal conditions* which affect the determination of our will upon our actions, and it is in our power to follow either of the two.

## THE SUSTAINING FORCE

IT would be to the advantage of the present generation of students of Theosophy to look into the history of the early days of the Theosophical Movement of our era, to learn the lessons that history teaches and to seek the life-force of the Movement. What was the vital spring of the Original Impulse? What has kept it alive to this day? What lay behind the efforts to pollute that vital spring? Let us keep in mind that it is the one MOVEMENT that re-embodies itself periodically.

Ought we not to be getting our house in order, to be cleaning up the present embodiment of the Movement, to be throwing out what is not necessary or what has filled our storehouse of thought with rubbish? Some who see this need think that it can be filled by "uniting" all groups claiming to belong to the Movement. It can, but only on the condition of throwing away the rubbish collected through the years, of searching for the whys and wherefores of failure, of separating the real from the false.

The U.L.T. was and is such an endeavour, for by its Declaration itself all the rubbish collected was swept away and that which was left was Theosophy pure and simple. What more does one want or need? No side issues, no rules, no subscriptions, no officers; spiritual autonomy for all centres of the one United Lodge which has no headquarters, no leaders. Who wants a leader when we have H.P.B.? Dead or alive, she lives in her Message.

Ought not students of Theosophy to be reliving the early years of the Movement's life? During the early period in individual unfoldment, the higher aspect of the mind becomes more and more attached to the personality and more and more operative in it—if allowed. Is it not why at that period of a child's life he lives in his imagination, in stories of heroes, in the glory of achievement against almost overwhelming odds, or in stories of fantasy that feed the heart-imagination? Are we not in need of turning to stories of great lives, of true imagination or inspiration? Most students "know" *The Ocean of Theosophy*; they know the technical side of the philosophy. The *Ocean* has become for us like a textbook *par*

*excellence*; it can be used to answer any question on life or on man's and Nature's composition. It can be used for deeper study; for, no matter what difficult subject is brought up, the key to the answer is there, if we are studious enough to find it. We have other literature also, and a study of *The Secret Doctrine* and of *Isis Unveiled* is most rewarding.

But are we lacking something? Especially those who have been students for years, is their attachment and devotion to the Cause waning?

Where is the child's life rooted? At home, and partly at school. He can appeal to parent or teacher; they give him sustenance and knowledge and he in return gives them love and reverence. H.P.B. said that the Society founded by her was her child; it had her magnetic fluid. Behind her were the great Sponsors of the Movement. Both H.P.B. and They are unseen today. But have They deserted the Movement? Is H.P.B.'s magnetic force still in this embodiment of the Movement? If it is, then should we not begin to draw on it? Are the Great Sponsors still interested in the Work to which They gave the Original Impulse? Who is to say that They are not? Why not derive sustenance from the Original Impulse?

How shall we find this Force and this Impulse? How else except by endeavouring to know more of both? Let us search for them in H.P.B.'s writings, in her life. We can, at least to some extent, know the nature of the great Sponsors by a study of such a work as *The Key to Theosophy*, or of the Masters' letters (*U.L.T. Pamphlet Nos. 22, 29 and 33*) and the many references to them scattered in articles. Shall we drag Their names down as has been done, or shall we put our Theosophical knowledge into practice and learn that They are men, holy mortals, but higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually and spiritually? We would not know Them if we met Them, but we should be able to "sense" that They are great men. Their Mahatmaship we cannot hope to touch; Their manhood as human beings working for humanity and needing helpers, we can touch. Once, by thought, we realize that this Movement and this Work are Their Movement and Their work, we take a different attitude towards both these. If "Lives of great men all remind us/We

can make our lives sublime," as Longfellow sang, then the thought of Them can serve as such an inspiration to us. But we shall advance through work *for* humanity. There is no other way. Working in Their name and on the lines laid down by Them, we become Their helpers. They are not gods; They know no favourites; but Their love is all-embracing; They know of no limitations of space, time, mind and matter. They see us *as we are*, not as we *think* we are.

Sometimes, therefore, when life seems drab and the goal wrapped in mist, should we not feed our hearts on the strength and beauty in our writing? For it is devotion, love, that truly inspires. We feel H.P.B.'s great heart when we read her writings. Some of her words are an inspiration to courage and devotion. Each can turn periodically to those passages in the literature available to us that appeal to him or her the best, and derive inspiration therefrom.

Perhaps in some such way when we find our interest waning, when life and its worries, work and its fatigue, come in the way, or when "I have married and have new responsibilities, and therefore cannot come" is the refrain, we shall find something to rekindle the dying embers in the heart and to pour again our energy and heart-devotion into the Work.

Let us not be of the faint-hearted who perish by the way!

---

OUR duty is to encourage everyone in his struggle to live up to his own highest ideal, and strive at the same time to make the ideal as near as possible to the truth.

What is duty for one is not duty for another.

Ours are the duties. Let the fruits take care of themselves.

Every duty is holy, and devotion to duty is the highest form of worship; it is certainly a source of great help in enlightening and emancipating the deluded and ignorance-encumbered souls of the *Baddhas*—the bound ones.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

## OVERCOMING MENTAL AFFLICTIONS

PATANJALI enumerates in Book I of his *Yoga Aphorisms*, entitled "Concentration," nine obstacles to the attaining of concentration—Sickness, Languor, Doubt, Carelessness, Laziness, Addiction to objects of sense, Erroneous Perception, Failure to attain any stage of abstraction, and Instability in any state when attained. They add up to inertia, indifference, ineptitude and/or lack of enthusiasm and of strenuous and sustained effort.

Patanjali's mentioning of *sickness* first among these obstacles may seem puzzling, but Book IV of *Kiu-te*, in the chapter on the "Laws of Upasans," cited by H.P.B. in her article, "Chelas and Lay Chelas," names "perfect physical health" as the first of the seven qualifications expected in a Chela, at least of one aspiring to perfect chelaship. But, although it is there named first, H.P.B. explains that it alone of the qualifications mentioned in that work, "in rare and exceptional cases might have been modified."

She mentions, indeed, in "Psychic and Noetic Action" that extreme weakness and exhaustion of the material body through illness and suffering may make possible the reaching of the plane of the higher Manas in mystic visions. This is only occasional, however, and "does not depend on the will of the Seer," whereas the *Yoga Aphorisms* give directions for the purposeful and deliberate use of the will, which is described as "the prime factor in the guidance of thought."

It is true that bodily ill health can be made use of from the spiritual unfoldment point of view, enabling us to throw off the poisons and clear the system. No physical disease is wholly physical, and physical cleanliness and psychic purity are aspects of one phenomenon. But certainly an aching body makes concentration very difficult so long as we lack the power to regard aches and pains of the body as different and apart from our real self.

It is obvious that *languor*, with its connotation of listlessness or lassitude going towards passivity, must be overcome before concentration becomes possible as "the deep and constant practice of a power that has been made a possession." To become one-pointed,

to focus all one's faculties on an object or a subject, demands strong effort, a positive attitude and strenuous endeavour. To be passive is to tend towards mediumship, which is the antithesis of the goal of adeptship, to which the serious practitioner of true yoga aspires. Listlessness is not far from lethargy, and we are told in *Light on the Path*:

When pain or sorrow has worn out the keenness of suffering, the result is a lethargy not unlike that which accompanies old age, as it is usually experienced by men and women. Such a condition makes the entrance to the path impossible, because the first step is one of difficulty and needs a strong man, full of psychic and physical vigour, to attempt it. (p. 38)

Of the third affliction, *doubt*, H.P.B. has written: "...doubt, eternal wavering—it leads one to wreck." And again: "He who believes in what he professes and in his Master, will...come out of the trial victorious; he *who doubts....FAILS.*" One of the Great Masters described as "the first element of success in a candidate—*unshaken faith*, once that his conviction rests upon, and has taken root in knowledge, not simple belief in certain facts."

*Carelessness*, the fourth of the afflictions named, is another word for heedlessness, and the Buddha says: "The reflecting vigilant die not. The heedless are already dead" (*The Dhammapada*, Verse 21). We have to be fully conscious in all that we do, heedful and accurate in all things. Whether the duty is preparing food, entering figures in a ledger or directing a great enterprise, it calls for full attention to the task in hand. Accuracy in space forms one of the mighty ethical triad, of which punctuality in time and purity of motive are the other two. It is to be cultivated by constant practice in placing and keeping the mind on whatever be the duty that one has to perform.

*Laziness*, the fifth affliction, the manifestation of the quality of *tamas*, is akin to those named before it. It is not only physical. H.P.B. writes in the Preface to *The Key to Theosophy*:

To the mentally lazy or obtuse, Theosophy must remain a riddle; for in the world mental as in the world spiritual each man

must progress by his own efforts. The writer cannot do the reader's thinking for him, nor would the latter be any the better off if such vicarious thought were possible.

She wrote in a letter published in "She Being Dead Yet Speaketh":

It should be the aim of each and all of us to strive with all the intensity of our natures to follow and imitate Them....Try to realize that progress is made step by step, and each step gained by *heroic* effort...."Try" is the battle-cry taught by the teacher to each pupil. Naught else is *expected* of you.

The personality's naturally strong *addiction to objects of sense* has to be overcome. "Sensation," Mr. Judge writes, "temporarily succeeds in drowning the voice of conscience and the pressure that comes from the soul that so many men and women unintelligently feel." "A.E." (George William Russell), Irish Theosophist and mystic poet, wrote:

The methods by which men and women try to shelter themselves from their souls are innumerable. If the superficial mind is for a moment unoccupied, a gentle tap makes it aware of the majestic outcast calling on it to be up and doing, playing its part in the cosmic purpose, and the prospect is so terrifying that the mind immediately occupies itself with bridge, or ping-pong, or crossword puzzles, and closes all relations with the unwelcome intruder.

The serious aspirant, however, is not looking for ways of escape, but for ways to reach the goal, and for him Patanjali has many a valuable suggestion.

It is attending to the inclinations of the senses that sets our feet on the steep declivity warned against in verses 62-63 of the Second Chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which slopes down to the quicksand of "loss of all." The bearing of the control of all the senses upon attaining concentration is hinted at by H.P.B. in what she writes in an editorial note on overindulgence of the sense of taste:

If there is one thing worse than another which paralyses the will-power in man and thereby paves the way to physical and moral degradation, it is intemperance in eating....A body clogged

with an overstuffing of food, of whatsoever kind, is always crowned with a stupefied brain, and tired nature demands the repose of sleep.

The man whose attention is habitually turned without and who does not see the value and the need of introspection is naturally glamoured by the pairs of opposites and especially by the reactions, whether to outer or to inner stimuli, of attraction and repulsion. The natural motion of the mind takes it to what it likes or else to what it wishes to avoid. But like and dislike are manifestations of the Kama principle. Absence of desire and constant practice are the ingredients in Krishna's prescription for gaining control of the mind. He adds that, while the "divine discipline called yoga is very difficult for one who hath not his soul in his own control, yet it may be acquired through proper means and by one who is assiduous and controlleth his heart."

Fewer desires, and those high, pure and altruistic, which Mr. Judge recommends for strengthening the will, will be effective also for overcoming the addiction to objects of sense.

*Erroneous perception* in the majority of men and women springs as often from ignorance, predilection or prejudice as from sense defects. That "there are none so blind as those who will not see" is proverbial. An open mind, an ardent quest of knowledge, mental honesty and the courage to admit mistakes are means of overcoming erroneous perception.

*Failure to attain any stage of abstraction* may be due to want of sufficiently earnest and sustained effort, but this obstacle to concentration, as well as that of *instability in any state when attained*, may in many cases be ascribed to memory, which H.P.B. calls "the most unreliable thing in us." This "collecting together of impressions," Mr. Judge wrote in *The Theosophical Forum* for July 1895, "constitutes the first and the greatest obstruction to meditation."

A man sits down to concentrate on the highest idea he can formulate, and like a flash troops of recollections of all sorts of affairs, old thoughts and impressions come before his mind, driving away the great object he first selected, and concentration

is at an end. This trouble is only to be corrected by practice, by assiduity, by continuance. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*)

It must hence follow that the storing of a multiplicity of useless and surely-recurring thoughts is an obstacle to the acquirement of truth. (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 176)

Hence, "a hindrance to service and a barrier to individual development," because of the associative power of memory which, due to a peculiarity of the human mind, is waked up the very instant concentration is attempted.

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THERE IS NO doubt that, as the *Yoga-vasishtha* says, "In all the joys and sorrows, as in all graspings, the mind is the doer, and the mind is the enjoyer. Know the mind as man." Just as the mind creates bondage, the mind brings freedom as well. It is true that if the mind can create enmity, it can end it, too; quite in the same way as, out of itself, it creates love, and out of itself, it destroys love. These are only some illustrations of a more fundamental truth, namely, in whatever way the mind perceives another person, it *creates* that person in that way. This is connected with another undeniable truth, the *Yoga-vasishtha* says, which is that we see in the Other what we *wish* to see. And that, in turn, is governed by our desires, ego, inclinations, thought, imagination, and memory—that is, the mind. It is out of them that each one of us first creates his or her specific personality, his or her own world. There is, thus, a precise meaning to the *Yoga-vasishtha* saying: "Know the mind as man, *manasam viddhi manavam*." Since there are countless individuals in the world, there are worlds within worlds. They are related with each other, and not related. Also, they are neither in relation nor outside it.

But *what*, or *who*, governs the mind? The mind, given its innate power of self-observation and self-criticism, sifting various layers, one deeper than the other, of perceptions wrapped in ignorance. That faculty of the mind brings knowledge, which comes from human endeavour.

## ONE IMMENSE CHAIN

WE read in *The Secret Doctrine* that the Esoteric Philosophy proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the sun. (I, xx)

From *Gods* to *men*, from Worlds to atoms, from a star to a rush-light, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being—the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. (I, 604)

Therefore are we told, "Break a single link and all passes into annihilation." (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 138)

If the world of Form and Existence is one immense chain, what about the world of Intelligence? If the former is one, is not the latter one also? We read that

there is but one indivisible and absolute Omniscience and Intelligence in the Universe, and this thrills throughout every atom and infinitesimal point of the whole finite Kosmos which hath no bounds, and which people call SPACE. (*S.D.*, I, 277)

From Gods, therefore, to the meanest organic being, from Omniscience to the lowest of intelligences, all is one. Emerson, in his essay on "Compensation," expresses this truth very simply: "The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb."

Humanity, too, is one, for it is "an emanation from divinity on its return path thereto" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 214). And "not one of its Units can escape its unconscious mission, or get rid of the burden of its co-operative work with nature" (*S.D.*, II, 446). Why is this so? Because the universe must be considered "as a whole balanced by the exquisite adjustment of parts" (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 542). Or, as Pythagoras taught, "the entire universe is one vast system of mathematically correct combinations." (*Ibid.*, I, 318)

Poets and mystics have *realized* this: we but *repeat* what we have heard. How to realize it is our problem. "In rare moments of ecstatic bliss," we are told, we mingle "our higher soul with the universal essence" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 70). How shall we

arrive at this condition?

Swinburne wrote in his poem "Hertha":

One birth of my bosom;  
 One beam of mine eye;  
 One topmost blossom  
 That scales the sky;  
 Man, equal and one with me, man that is made  
 of me, man that is I.

There is only one way to realize the truth of these statements, and this has been expressed beautifully and simply by Shelley in his poem "Epipsychidion":

I know  
 That Love makes all things equal: I have heard  
 By mine own heart this joyous truth averred:  
 The spirit of the worm beneath the sod,  
 In love and worship blends itself with God.

But what is love? Does not Shelley also say, "One word is too often profaned..."; and is not that word "love"?

Love is worship. It is a blending of oneself with another—"man that is I," as Swinburne wrote. It is Kamadeva, not Kama that is lust. It is the desire of creating universal happiness and love, and can develop only when the personal element is absent. When this condition is attained, "the Universe grows I." As "Nature alone can incarnate the Spirit of limitless contemplation," so only Nature in its totality can incarnate the spirit of Love. All barriers must be removed; the bonds of the petty personal self must burst and the consciousness soar to the heights of the sublime. We must live in the awareness of our unity with the ALL.

As seen above, we can arrive at this condition "in rare moments of ecstatic bliss." In *The Key to Theosophy* we read: "Real ecstasy was defined by Plotinus as 'the liberation of the mind from its finite consciousness, becoming one and *identified with the infinite*' " (italics ours). How often does our supposed love or brotherly feeling make us feel *identified with* another being? And yet, without this identification how can we understand unity?

Ecstasy comes only to the few, at times of deep meditation. We are generally limited to this personality and its walk in life; but, if we search deep down, we may find a thread of continuity, something on which the details of the day have been strung, something which persists from day to day. If, therefore, we can make this deeper feeling of union and of true all-embracing love manifest as the desire to serve and to help, even if by silent effort, then we shall find that there is a growing feeling in us of the permanency of the Real. More and more we shall learn to live in the spirit of loving help, and, by discrimination and dispassion, shall learn slowly how best to give that help, for real help is not emotionalism. The feeling behind the help we give, what wells up in us of love, comes from the One Source that has its seat in the depths of our heart. There, we are told, is our sacrificial altar on which our personal, *i.e.*, limited, selfish feelings and thoughts have to be sacrificed and purified so that the inner light can shine through us as it radiates on us from those Great Ones who shine in the subtler worlds and warm the sorrowing aspirant as he turns his heart to them.

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PEOPLE are always talking about originality; but what do they mean? As soon as we are born the world begins to work upon us, and this goes on to the end. And, after all, what can we call our own except energy, strength, and will? If I could give an account of all that I owe to great predecessors and contemporaries, there would be but a small balance in my favour.

—GOETHE

## THE MYSTERY OF MAN

"MANKIND in its first prototypal, shadowy form, is the offspring of the Elohim of Life (or Pitris); in its qualitative and physical aspect it is the direct progeny of the 'Ancestors,' the lowest Dhyanis, or Spirits of the Earth" (*S.D.*, I, 224). For, "the first Dhyanis, commissioned to 'create' man in their image, could only throw off their shadows, like a delicate model for the Nature Spirits of matter to work upon" (*S.D.*, I, 225). These "Pitris, the progenitors of mankind...come...from the Lunar Chain. They give birth to humanity, for, having become the first men, they give birth to others by evolving their shadows, their astral selves....The first humanity (if indeed it can be called humanity) are the astral Chhayas of the Lunar Ancestors over which physical nature builds the physical body, which at first is formless." (*Transactions*, pp. 100-101)

But mankind is something more: "For its moral, psychic, and spiritual nature, it is indebted to a group of divine Beings" (*S.D.*, I, 224). "Men are made *complete* only during their third, toward the fourth cycle (race). They are made 'gods' for good and evil, and responsible only when the two arcs meet (after three-and-a-half rounds towards the *fifth* Race). They are made so by the *Nirmanakaya* (spiritual or astral remains) of the Rudra-Kumaras, '*cursed* to be reborn on earth again; meaning—*doomed in their natural turn to reincarnation* in the higher ascending arc of the terrestrial cycle'." (*S.D.*, II, 255 fn.)

Now man, "endowed with divine powers, and feeling in himself his *inner* God...felt he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the 'Sons of Light.' Those who fell victims to their lower natures, became the slaves of Matter. From 'Sons of Light and Wisdom' they ended by becoming the 'Sons of Darkness'." (*S.D.*, II, 272)

As for ourselves where we now are, we learn that "the impres-

sions projected into the physical man by the Ego...constitute what we call 'conscience'; and in proportion as the Personality, the lower Soul (or *Manas*), unites itself to its higher consciousness, or EGO, does the action of the latter upon the life of mortal man become more marked. This Ego...is the higher *Manas* illuminated by *Buddhi*; the principle of self-consciousness, the 'I-am-I,' in short. It is the *Karana-Sarira*, the immortal man, which passes from one incarnation to another." (*Transactions*, p. 63)

To sum up: "Collectively, men are the handiwork of hosts of various spirits; distributively, the tabernacles of those hosts; and occasionally and singly, the vehicles of some of them." (*S.D.*, I, 224)

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WE may claim to have placed before the thinking public a logical, coherent, and philosophical scheme of man's origin, destiny, and evolution—a scheme pre-eminent above all for its rigorous adherence to justice. And, that we may broaden our criterion of truth, our research extends to an inquiry into the nature of the less known forces, cosmic and psychical. Upon such themes many of our books have been written, and many of our reprints of ancient works, with or without commentaries, have been selected with reference to the light they throw upon these *quaestiones vexatae*.

In one word, our whole aim and desire are to help, in at least some degree, toward arriving at correct scientific views upon the nature of man, which carry with them the means of reconstructing for the present generation the deductive metaphysical or transcendental philosophy which alone is the firm, unshakable foundation of every religious philosophy. Theosophy, the universal solvent, is fulfilling its mission; the opalescent tints of the dawn of modern psychology are blending together, and will all be merged into the perfect daylight of truth, when the sun-orb of Eastern esotericism has mounted to its noon-stage.

— H. P. BLAVATSKY

# THEOSOPHY AND YOGA

## I

[Collated from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky]

YOGA (*Sk.*). (1) One of the six Darshanas or schools of India; a school of philosophy founded by Patanjali, though the real Yoga doctrine, the one that is said to have helped to prepare the world for the preaching of Buddha, is attributed with good reasons to the more ancient sage Yajñawalkya, the writer of the *Shatapatha Brahmana*, of *Yajur Veda*, the *Brihad Aranyaka*, and other famous works. (2) The practice of meditation as a means of leading to spiritual liberation. Psycho-spiritual powers are obtained thereby, and induced ecstatic states lead to the clear and correct perception of the eternal truths, in both the visible and invisible universe. (*The Theosophical Glossary*)

Yogi (*Sk.*). (1) Not "a state of sixfold *bodily* and mental happiness as the result of ecstatic meditation" (Eitel); but a state which, when reached, makes the practitioner thereof absolute master of his six "principles," *he now being merged in the seventh*. It gives him full control, owing to his knowledge of SELF and *Self*, over his bodily, intellectual and mental states, which, unable any longer to interfere with, or act upon, his Higher Ego, leave it free to exist in its original, pure, and divine state. (2) Also the name of the devotee who practises Yoga. (*Ibid.*)

Raja-Yoga (*Sk.*). The true system of developing psychic and spiritual powers and union with one's *Higher Self*—or the Supreme Spirit, as the profane express it. The exercise, regulation and concentration of thought. Raja-Yoga is opposed to Hatha-Yoga, the physical or psycho-physiological training in asceticism. (*Ibid.*)

Hatha-Yoga (*Sk.*). The lower form of Yoga practice; one which uses physical means for purposes of spiritual self-development. The opposite of *Raja Yoga*. (*Ibid.*)

Siddhis (*Sk.*). *Lit.*, "attributes of perfection"; phenomenal powers acquired through holiness by Yogis. (*Ibid.*)

A Yogi in India is a very elastic word. It now serves generally

to designate a very dirty, dung-covered and naked individual, who never cuts nor combs his hair, covers himself from forehead to heels with wet ashes, performs *Pranayam*, without realizing its true meaning, and lives upon alms. It is only occasionally that the name is applied to one who is worthy of the appellation. The real meaning, however, of the word when analysed etymologically, will show that its root is "yug"—*to join*—and thus will yield its real significance. A real Yogi is a person who, having entirely divorced himself from the world, its attractions and pleasures, has succeeded after a more or less long period of training, to reunite his soul with the "universal Soul" or to "join" with Parabrahm. If by the word "Yogi" our correspondent means the latter individual, *viz.*, one who has linked his 7th and 6th principles or Atman and Buddhi and placed thereby his lower principles or Manas (the animal soul and the *personal ego*) *en rapport* with the Universal Principle, then he may be classed with the Mahatmas, since this word means simply a "great soul."...They can be called "Yogis" only when remaining single, *viz.*, after devoting their lives to religious contemplation, asceticism and—celibacy.

Theoretically every *real* Yogi knows more or less the Occult sciences; that is to say, he must understand the secret and symbolical meaning of every prescribed rite, as the correct significance of the allegories contained in the *Vedas* and other sacred books. Practically, nowadays very few, if any, of those Yogis whom one meets with occasionally are familiar with occultism. It depends upon their degree of intellectual development and religious bigotry. A very saintly, sincere, yet ignorantly pious ascetic, who has not penetrated far beyond the husks of his philosophical doctrine would tell you that no one in *Kali-Yuga* is permitted to become a *practical* occultist; while an initiated Yogi has to be an occultist; at any rate, he has to be sufficiently powerful to produce all the *minor* phenomena (the ignorant would still call even such *minor* manifestations—"miracles") of adeptship. The real Yogis, the heirs to the wisdom of the Aryan Rishis, are not to be met, however, in the world mixing with the profane and allowing themselves to be known as Yogis. Happy are they to whom the whole world is open, and who know

it from their inaccessible *ashrums*; while the world (with the exception of a very few) knowing them not, denies their very existence. But, it really is not a matter of great concern with them whether people at large believe in, or even know of them. ("Pertinent Questions," *The Theosophist*, June 1883)

The whole object of the Hindu *Yogi* is to bring into activity his interior power, to make himself ruler over physical self and over everything else besides. That the developed *Yogi* can influence, sometimes control, the operations of vegetable and animal life, proves that the soul within his body has an intimate relationship with the soul of all other things. ("The Magnetic Chain," *The Theosophist*, October 1879)

Most of the thousands of fakirs, gosseins, bairagis and others of the mendicant order, who throng the villages and religious fairs of India in our present age, may be and undoubtedly are worthless and idle vagabonds, modern clowns imitating the great students of the philosophic ages of the past. And, there is but little doubt that, though they ape the postures and servilely copy the traditional customs of their nobler brethren, they understand no more *why* they do it than the sceptic who laughs at them. But, if we look closer at the origin of their school and study Patanjali's *Yoga Vidya*—we will be better able to understand, and hence appreciate, their seemingly ridiculous practices...

The *Raja-Yogins*...have nothing to do with the physical training of the *Hatha* nor with any other of the innumerable sects who have now adopted the name and emblems of *Yogins*...It is not that among the *Hatha-Yogins*—men who at times had reached through a physical and well-organized system of training the highest powers as "wonder-workers"—there has never been a man worthy of being considered as a true *Yogin*. What we say, is simply this: the *Raja-Yogin* trains but his mental and intellectual powers, leaving the physical alone, and making but little of the exercise of phenomena simply of a physical character. Hence it is the rarest thing in the world to find a real *Yogi* boasting of being one, or

willing to exhibit such powers—though *he does acquire them as well as the one practising Hatha Yoga, but through another and far more intellectual system*. Generally, they deny these powers point-blank, for reasons but too well-grounded. The latter need not even belong to any apparent order of ascetics, and are oftener known as private individuals than members of a religious fraternity, nor need they necessarily be Hindus....

The practices of *Hatha Yoga* are conducive but of the production of physical phenomena—affording very rarely flashes of real clairvoyance, unless it be a kind of feverish state of artificial ecstasy. If we publish them, it is merely for the great value we set upon this information as liable to afford a glimpse of truth to skeptics, by showing them that even in the case of the *Hatha Yogins* the cause for the production of the phenomena as well as the results obtained can be all explained scientifically; and that, therefore, there is no need to either reject the phenomena *a priori* and without investigation or to attribute them to any but natural though occult powers, more or less latent in every man and woman....

This system, evolved by long ages of practice until it was brought to bear the above-described results, was not practised in India alone in the days of antiquity. The greatest philosophers of all countries sought to acquire these powers; and certainly, behind the external ridiculous postures of the Yogis of today, lies concealed the profound wisdom of the archaic ages; one that included among other things a perfect knowledge of what are now termed physiology and psychology. Ammonius Saccas, Porphyry, Proclus and others practised it in Egypt; and Greece and Rome did not shrink at all even in their time of philosophical glory to follow suit. Pythagoras speaks of the celestial music of the spheres that one hears in hours of ecstasy; Zeno finds a wise man who having conquered all passions, feels happiness and emotion, but in the midst of torture; Plato advocates the man of meditation and likens his powers to those of the divinity; and we see the Christian ascetics themselves through a mere life of contemplation and self-torture acquire powers of levitation or aethrobacy, which, though attributed to the miraculous intervention of a personal God, are nevertheless real

and the result of physiological changes in the human body. "The Yogi," says Patanjali, "will hear celestial sounds, the songs and conversations of celestial choirs. He will have the perception of their touch in their passage through the air"—which translated into a more sober language means that the ascetic is enabled to see with the spiritual eye in the Astral Light, hear with the spiritual ear subjective sounds inaudible to others, and live and feel, so to say, in the *Unseen Universe*. "The Yogi is able to enter a dead or a living body by the path of the senses, and in this body to act as though it were his own." The "path of the senses"—our physical senses supposed to originate in the astral body, the ethereal counterpart of man, or the *jiv-atma*, which dies with the body—the senses are here meant in their spiritual sense—volition of the higher principle in man. The true *Raja-Yogi* is a Stoic; and Kapila, who deals but with the latter—utterly rejecting the claim of the *Hatha-Yogis* to converse during Samadhi with the *Infinite Iswar*—describes their state in the following words:

To a Yogi, in whose mind all things are identified as spirit, what is infatuation? What is grief? He sees all things as one; he is destitute of affections; he neither rejoices in good, nor is offended with evil. A wise man sees so many false things in those which are called true, so much misery in what is called happiness, that he turns away with disgust....He who in the body has obtained liberation (from the tyranny of the senses) is of no caste, of no sect, of no order, attends to no duties, adheres to no shastras, to no formulas, to no works of merit; he is beyond the reach of speech; he remains at a distance from all secular concerns; he has renounced the love and the knowledge of sensible objects; he flatters none, he honours none, he is not worshipped, he worships none; whether he practises and follows the customs of his fellow men or not, this is his character.

And a selfish and disgustingly misanthropical one this character would be, were it that for which the TRUE ADEPT would be striving. But, it must not be understood *literally*....

Various correspondents have asked whether the Siddhis of Yoga can only be acquired by the rude training of Hatha-Yoga....The

fact is that there is another, an unobjectionable and rational process, the particulars of which cannot be given to the idle inquirer. (Comments on "A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy," *The Theosophist*, September, October, November 1880, January, April 1881)

For six years now, we have been publicly asserting that Indian Yoga was and is a true science, endorsed and confirmed by thousands of experimental proofs; and that, though few in number, the true Indian Yogis may still be found when the right person seeks in the right way. That these affirmations should be challenged by Europeans was only to be expected, inasmuch as neither modern Europe nor America had so much as heard of the one thing or the other until the Theosophists began to write and speak. But that Hindus—Hindus, the descendants of the Aryas, the heirs of the ancient philosophers, the posterity of whole generations that had practically and personally learnt spiritual truth—should also deny and scoff, was a bitter draught to swallow. Nevertheless, we uttered our message, and not in a whisper, but boldly. Our voice came back to us almost echoless from the great Indian void. Hardly a brave soul stood up to say we were *right*, that Yoga was true, and that the real Yogis still existed....But when it was seen that we were not to be silenced except by counter-proof, and that no such proof could be given, the first signs appeared of a change of the current of opinion. The old Hindu philosophies acquired fresh attractiveness, their mythological figures were infused with a vital spirit which, like the light within a lantern, shone out through their many-coloured fantasies....If this Aryanistic drift continues it will end in a thorough revival of ennobling Hindu philosophy and science. And that implies the collapse of dogmatic, degraded forms of religions, in India and everywhere else. (Comments on "A Hindu Professor's Views on Indian Yoga," *The Theosophist*, April 1881)

(*To be continued*)

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The nature *versus* nurture debate goes on—and shapes our view of ourselves. Do genes play a major role in controlling behaviour, or are environment and society and the choices we make the more powerful shapers of our lives? In *U.S. News and World Report* (April 21, 1997), Wray Herbert relates how everything from criminal behaviour to addictions to homosexuality is seen today less as a matter of choice than of genetic destiny. On the personal level, such a view diminishes the potency of personal qualities such as will, capacity to choose, and sense of responsibility for those choices. On the social and political level, biological determinism colours all public-policy debates on issues such as health care, juvenile justice and welfare reform.

Even basic personality [Herbert states] is looking more and more like a genetic legacy. Nearly every week there is a report of a new gene for one trait or another. Novelty seeking, religiosity, shyness, the tendency to divorce, and even happiness (or lack of it) are among the traits that may result in part from a gene, according to new research....If it's in your genes, you're not accountable. It allows the alcoholic, for example, to treat himself as a helpless victim of his biology rather than as a willful agent with control of his own behaviour. Genetic determinism can free victims and their families of guilt—or lock them in their suffering....

Genetic determinism can have paradoxical consequences at times, leading to disdain rather than sympathy for the disadvantaged, and marginalization rather than inclusion. Cultural critics are beginning to sort out the unpredictable politics of biology, focusing on four traits: violence, mental illness, alcoholism, and sexual orientation....

More and more experts, including dedicated biologists, sense that the power of genetics has been oversold and that a correction is needed....Most believe that heredity plays some role, but not a primary one....Across the board, most believe that people's lives are shaped by the choices they make.

The nature-nurture debate indeed needs a radical rethinking.

Human behaviour is so complex that neither heredity nor even environment and upbringing can account for it *in toto*. Theosophy says that inborn mental and moral characteristics are brought over by the individual from his own long past. Reincarnation remains the missing link of modern science, and until the fact that every baby born is a returning soul who brings with it all that it had garnered in previous lives on earth is recognized, psychologists, geneticists and other researchers will continue to argue round and round the subject of human behaviour without arriving at any satisfactory answer.

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Researchers in Europe claim to have discovered that there is more to heredity than sequences of DNA (*deoxyribonucleic acid*, an essential component of all living matter and a basic material in the chromosomes of the cell nucleus), and that the embryo's environment too can produce lasting, inheritable changes in the way DNA works.

"This extremely important finding shows that genes are not enough," comments Lawrence Hurst, professor of genetics at the University of Bath, England. "We will need to do more than sequence genes to understand how the genome works."

In *Current Biology* (Vol. 7, p. 277), the researchers conclude that "epigenetic" changes to DNA—modifications that do not change the sequence of DNA, but affect the way it works—can be inherited. Wolf Reik and his colleagues at the Babraham Institute near Cambridge, England, assisted by researchers in Berlin, admit that they do not yet know how environmental influences produce heritable changes in gene function. "The mechanism is wide open," says Reik.

The question of heredity has long puzzled researchers and will continue to be an enigma to them as long as they proceed on the assumption that matter alone is operative in the process. The physical, Theosophy maintains, evolves from the spiritual, the mental and the psychic. Heredity is but a mode of the evolutionary process, by which the permanent conscious Force within matter

strives for ever fuller self-expression and self-realization. Science does not recognize that purposive intelligence pervading matter; still less that it is a reflection of the wisdom of the hosts of sentient beings which guide evolution. Science, moreover, knows nothing of the astral prototype, an indispensable factor in heredity which, in the vegetable and animal kingdoms no less than in the human, is the substratum and model for the developing physical form. Science tells us that DNA transmits the hereditary pattern, but that pattern, Theosophy insists, is not mechanical and is instrumental rather than causal.

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In the last few years, psychologists and environmental activists have created a new field, ecopsychology, to help restore the planet while healing individuals' psyches. Ecopsychology has been described as psychology practised "as if the whole world mattered." Everywhere we see the signs of an environment in serious trouble. Rather than viewing the ecological dilemma as a crisis "somewhere out there" in our physical environment, ecopsychology recognizes that human consciousness is inextricably involved in addressing the problem.

A special section in the June issue of *The World and I* is devoted to this emerging field. Bill Strubbe says in his leading essay that ecopsychologists view the earth, Gaia, as a living system of which human beings are just a part. They emphasize our human interconnectedness with the earth and with all life. In this sense, neither the earth's problems nor humanity's can be resolved without taking full account of this fundamental connection. "The world as self, the self as world," should become our motto, he says:

We find ourselves avoiding signs of environmental distress... We avert our eyes, trying to assure ourselves that it's not really happening. But on some level, we know better. If, as Harvard tropical biologist Edward Wilson writes in *The Diversity of Life*, 137 species are already disappearing every day, then our own future looks less than promising....

Until recently, psychologists have ignored this widespread willful blindness to our self-destruction, focusing instead on

each client's private, internal world, "as if," writes well-known author and environmentalist Theodore Roszak, "the soul might be saved while the biosphere crumbles." .....

Ecopsychologists are mainly therapists who believe that what happens in the so-called outside world affects their clients' emotional well-being; that because we are born of the earth and are connected to it, we feel pain when it is damaged. They say that our pain needs to be addressed, and that sometimes the only way to confront it is to try to change the world instead of just our minds....

What does make people change, says Roszak, is self-knowledge.... "The earth speaks through us," says Sara Conn, an instructor at Harvard Medical School, "and speaks the loudest through the most sensitive among us." ...Robert Greenway, a psychology professor and cofounder of the Peace Corps, believes that direct contact with nature can help heal Western civilization's artificial split between humans and nature, between "the knower and the known." ...

Human survival beyond the twentyfirst century depends on our maturing awareness of the irrevocable interrelation of all living systems, which includes the backyard trees, the ocean plankton and whales, and the homeless children in Brazil. Through acknowledging our fears, grief, and love, ecopsychology seeks to help us experience ourselves as an integral part of nature, thus empowering us to commit ourselves to the enormous task of healing the earth as a part of healing ourselves.

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A Buddhist perspective on the question of inner peace leading to peace in the outside world, is offered by Dr. Yoichi Kawada, director of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy, in a talk delivered at the Interdisciplinary Conference on the Evolution of World Order, held this June in Toronto, Canada. An article based on the talk appears in *SGI Quarterly*, July 1997. Dr. Kawada discusses three dimensions of peace: inner peace, peace in the community of humankind, and ecological peace or peace with the Earth. Using the Buddha's famous Fire Sermon as a starting point, Dr. Kawada goes

on to say:

What Shakyamuni was trying to convey was his understanding that the phenomenal world that we inhabit is engulfed in the "flames" of suffering originating in deluded impulses. It is the fires of greed, hatred and ignorance, raging fiercely in the hearts of people, that are the basic cause of the sufferings of human existence. Therefore, Shakyamuni urges us first and foremost to come to a clear understanding of the root cause of suffering....

Buddhism views these impulses—greed, hatred and ignorance—as poisons inherent in life....The flames of the three poisons and of all deluded impulses originate in, and spew forth from, the inner lives of individuals to engulf families, ethnic groups, nations and eventually the whole of humanity....

The core of Shakyamuni's enlightenment was his awakening to the "law of dependent origination." The essence of this concept is the interdependence of all living beings and indeed all phenomena....

In Shakyamuni's Lotus Sutra, the destructive effects brought about by deluded impulses are described as "defilements," and classified into five stages, from the innermost and most personal to that which stains an entire age or era....Modern civilization increasingly exhibits the aspects of what Buddhism would term the "defilement of the age." Signs of this include: rampant materialism, the ruthless domination and exploitation of nature, and unbridled consumption....

In other words, we should not be content with our inner peace of mind but should broaden our horizons and extend our endeavours to include abolition of war—that is, peace of the global human community—as well as truly sustainable development and harmonious coexistence with the global ecosystem—that is, peace with the natural world.

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The constellation of Ursa Major (Great Bear) is an important spectacle in the sky, and right from ancient times people have known of it with its seven bright stars. Starting with this as a basis, Adrian Berry, Consulting Editor (Science) of the *Daily Telegraph*,

looks into why the human race has such a mystical affinity with the number seven. In *Astronomy Now* (August 1997), he writes about "The Riddle of the 'Sevens,'" referring especially to biblical tradition:

Legends are filled with references to the fourth prime number, to the extent that people seem to have attached a religious significance to it. There were seven days of Creation and seven ages of Man. In the Apocalypse there are seven churches of Asia, seven candlesticks, seven stars, seven trumpets, seven spirits before the throne of God, seven horns, seven vials, a seven-headed monster, and the Lamp with seven eyes.

There used to be seven Wonders of the World, and the Apostles elected seven preachers as the first deacons. To the Babylonians and Egyptians, there were seven planets. Seven ewe lambs were sacrificed during the oath between Abraham and Abimelech at Beersheba, and the Hebrew verb to swear means literally "to come under the influence of seven things."

We talk of the seven seas...we are liable to commit seven deadly sins, and "seven" appears far more often in movie titles than any other number....

At some time during the age-long frigid millennia, the first calendars were invented. It was found convenient, and perhaps devout, to divide the lunar month into four weeks, each of seven days with their own individual names.

Apart from noting the fact that the "cult of the sevens" began with the ancients and has survived to this day, modern science has little to offer by way of explanation. In her writings H.P.B. has repeatedly pointed out that this widespread tradition is not, as scientists make it out to be, a mere fad or coincidence, and that the number seven is "the special representative, or the *Factor* number," of our present *Manvantara* or Life-cycle (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 590). "Everything in the metaphysical as in the physical Universe is septenary" (I, 158). "The mysterious Septenary Cycle is a law in nature" (II, 623 fn.), and is present and acting in the Kosmos as in man—in every form of life, in fact.

Those interested are referred to the *Secret Doctrine* passages on the subject, brought together in our issues for June, July and

August 1994.

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That people living in nations which consider themselves among the most civilized should find amusement in the cruelty of blood sports, is one of the anachronisms of our time. Congratulations are due to Patrick Bateson and his colleagues at the University of Cambridge for their pioneering scientific analysis of the suffering experienced by the hunted deer, as also to the men and women of the stag hunts in Britain who agreed to join in the study even though they knew that it could spell the end to their long tradition of hunting for sport.

As it has turned out, the report has done exactly that. Commissioned by the National Trust, which owns most of the land on which the hunts take place, the report analyses the blood chemistry and stress hormone levels of the hunted deer. It shows that deer pursued by hounds are driven to total exhaustion and suffer levels of stress similar to those experienced as a result of traumatic injury. In comparison, deer shot by a skilled gamekeeper suffer very much less.

*New Scientist* reports that the National Trust has responded to the research by banning the hunts from its lands. The important thing now is to ensure that this first step in a scientific approach to hunting leads to a second in which fox hunting is similarly examined. Britain has around 200 packs of fox hounds and there are as many more in Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Portugal and the U.S. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has said it would help finance a study if the government will not. Let us hope the study goes ahead and brings all blood sports to an end.

H.P.B. said, with regard to vivisection, that the effects on the vivisectors were worse than on their victims ("Cruelty to Animals," *Lucifer*, June 1890; reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, June 1967). So, too, while admitting the cruelty to the hunted animals, we must realize that the effect on the hunters is worse.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY  
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# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

**T**HE 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."*

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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.