

The Theosophical Movement

A Magazine Devoted to the Living of the Higher Life

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- **Working for a Better Morrow**
- **The Ancient Wisdom and its Restatement**
- **The Inner Change**
- **The Lure of the Occult**
- **A Sense of Direction**
- **The Basis for Union**
- **The Ashwattha Tree in the Gita**
- **In the Light of Theosophy**

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Working for a Better Morrow

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A new volume of THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT commences with this issue. Over the years, regularly every month, it has offered its ration of Soul-nourishment and tried to bring to its readers Wisdom and Peace, and not only Theosophical information.

Its special task has been to point the way to a different life, a new style of thinking and of acting, and with renewed vigour it will continue that work. The Path of the Higher Life has to be entered one by one. Each has to find its beginning by self-effort and self-examination and to see himself as a unit linked to a mighty and magnificent whole. Our task is to awaken individuals to recognize that "the now *ideal* human perfection is no dream, but a law of divine nature."

The transition age is taking its toll in every land, and neglect of the advice and instruction which the Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky offers for the right practice of Universal Brotherhood has precipitated grave consequences. Many front-rank thinkers of our time have voiced their concern over the crisis facing modern man. For all that, the turn of the cycle is fast approaching when a New Era of Peace and Progress will be ushered in. The grave, nay, critical state in which we find ourselves is but a prelude to the improvement which must soon set in. The degradation caused by selfishness and greed on the politico-economic plane having reached its nadir of manifestation, has sent a large number of individuals in search of true Peace—the Peace of the divine nature within each one.

It is not unnatural that the beneficent revolution taking place on the inner and invisible planes of being is unperceived by many, engrossed as humanity has been and is in the physical revolution which, with its conflicts, wars and carnage, has claimed our attention.

Politico-economic afflictions are, like bodily diseases, the final expression of mental and moral disorders. The former are not causal; the latter are. To attend to humanity's moral and mental ailments is to work on the plane of causes. In spite of the obstacles rooted in the ignorance of the so-called leaders and patriots in every nation, large numbers of people are seeing through the glamour and the machinations of their animal-mind.

H.P.B. wrote in her article "The Fall of Ideals":

The periodical rise and fall of human character on the external planes takes place now, as it did before, and the ordinary average perception of man is too weak to see that both processes occur each time on a higher plane than the preceding. But as such changes are not always the work of centuries, for often extreme changes are wrought by swift acting forces—*e.g.*, by wars, speculations, epidemics, the devastation of famines or religious fanaticism—therefore do the blind masses imagine that man ever was, is, and will be the same. To the eyes of us, moles, mankind is like our globe—seemingly stationary. And yet, both move in space and time with an equal velocity, around themselves and—*onward*. (U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 27, p. 2)

In writing this, H.P.B. emphasizes the task of "every man, as a unit," who "has it in his power to add his mite" in the grand task of ushering in an era of peace and prosperity—active peace and real prosperity arising from sacrifice.

Most of us look to others to secure the blessing of peace and the benefits of prosperity. We live in an age of constant change, yet to most human minds there seems to be a changeless monotony: going to sleep and waking up, breakfasting and going to work, recreation interspersed and friends seen, and then night and sleep again. Men and women experience numerous small joys and petty pains; a few major events such as births and weddings, disease and death, come the way of some, and thus the years pass. How many feel, except on rare occasions, the deep peace of the heart which alone spells happiness? If the real Sages are ever full of peace and bliss, and radiate these hour by hour and incarnation after incarnation, cannot men and women who, though less advanced than they are, belong to the same human kingdom, let stream forth a similar blessing once a week, once a month, once a year? But to give peace we must possess peace within; to sacrifice we must have something worth while to offer.

The monotony of days lengthening into months, of weeks stretching into years, can be relieved only when we feel that inner peace which illumines the whole field of our existence and touches those who come in contact with us. That is possible for ordinary men and women to feel heart-happiness is proven to them when through some act of *genuine* self-sacrifice they have pleased others—even if only their kin or their friends. But acts of genuine self-sacrifice are not common, and many deeds which are called sacrificial are not real offerings of the Spirit but only kindly acts which hide within them the desire for an adequate response. How many love only with a view to being loved in return! How many acts of charity are performed with a desire to gain recognition! How many times have we not heard people say, "I sacrificed for nothing"! Even so-called pious people resolve to offer to God or the Gods, if He or They will fulfil their desire. The bargaining spirit deprives any action of its aspect of sacrifice. That is why men and women do not feel the peace which comes with real sacrifice. The spirit of giving streams forth in one direction; the spirit of getting moves in the opposite direction. If men and women would distinguish their own acts of real sacrifice from those of pseudo-sacrifice they would take a step towards the kingdom of peace.

If we aspire to feel even for a short period the peace which the Sages always feel, not only do we have to learn the art of giving without desiring something in return, but, further, we need to possess some knowledge about the nature and the power of the Sages whose peace abides for ever. Many are the useless sacrifices which fail to produce beneficent results, and among such there are sacrifices which produce positive evil effects. The art of doing good, the art of making sacrifices, is difficult; that art has its principles and its technique without which one can no more create beauty in actions than a person having bought canvas, paints and brush, can begin to use them effectively without a knowledge of the principles and technique of the art of painting.

Is not living analogous to the painting of a picture? We can paint our days in colours which radiate light, beauty and peace. But the art of thus painting successfully the days and the years

of life cannot be mastered unless we study the rules of that painting. Knowledge is therefore necessary.

The peace which the Sages feel results from their great knowledge. They understand the Universe; they understand the human kingdom, the ways of men and women, the pains which they suffer, the pleasures which beguile them; and, because the Sages are compassionate, they are ever ready to teach mortals the art of painting life in hues of the peace of the heart, the prosperity of the mind, the sacrifices made with hands of power. People say that they want peace, they want knowledge, they want truth; but only a few are willing and prepared to work for securing heart-peace, for obtaining wisdom, for seeking truth.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT endeavours to awaken as many as possible to that blessed state of peace, of wisdom and of truth, so that, in the words of H.P.B., the "*abnormal, unnatural*" manifestation of vice and wickedness may weaken and "the Higher Ego, or incarnating principle, the *nous* or *Mind* [may] reign over the animal Ego."

In our task of presenting ideas which enlighten the mind and energize and inspire the heart, we look to the help our contributors can give. Though their number is small, they are in the four quarters of the globe; we offer our thanks to them and appeal for more. Friends of THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT who are in sympathy with its aims and objects but feel for one reason or another that they cannot write for its pages can help in other ways, as in making the magazine known to as many of their friends as are likely to be interested in it.

What Mr. Judge wrote editorially in *The Path* of March 1890 is worth pondering over by all students of Theosophy, as much of what he says is applicable also to THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, which seeks to serve, as *The Path* did, the cause of genuine Theosophy:

All Theosophists who can afford \$2 per year are asked if they should not support *The Path*. The magazine is not carried on for profit, and is solely devoted to the interests of the Theosophical Society, and yet it is a fact that its subscribers are nearly all non-theosophists. Its editor and its writers all work for nothing, but for four years it has been published at a loss which is always met out of private means. Members of the Society who all know that *The Path* maintains an independent attitude, supporting no clique and pandering to no self-interest, should not keep back their support from a journal that does much to keep alive and make respected the Society and its literature....*The Path* will not stop even if this suggestion is not followed, because so long as its Editor thinks the Society can be helped by it, he will publish the magazine. Nevertheless, a larger circulation aids a magazine in every way, bringing it to the attention of persons otherwise ignorant of it and of its mission, stimulating writers to their best efforts for its columns ensuring more notice of and quotation from it by other periodicals. One exceedingly valuable assistance to both it and Theosophy is private subscription on behalf of Public Libraries. It would be well if every such Library, willing to give it a place, was supplied regularly with *The Path* by private subscription. About 13 are thus supplied at present, and no one can calculate the missionizing influence thereby exerted. Well-to-do

Theosophists can order it sent to their poorer brethren also, not as a benefaction to the Editor, but to them and to the Cause. For the *life* of a movement is largely in its literature, and its literature is epitomized in its magazines.

The Ancient Wisdom and its Restatement

The history of Theosophy down the ages is the history of the cyclic attempts made by the Preservers of the Wisdom-Religion, the one Religion which underlies all the now existing creeds, to present it to a world in need of it. Theosophy is declared by Them to be as old as thinking man; *i.e.*, it has existed on this earth since the time man became a self-conscious chooser, over 18 million years ago.

The ultimate purpose of evolution in the macrocosm is that each globe become a man-bearing globe. There are in the entire cosmos two types of globes: (1) those on which there is no human evolution proceeding as yet, and (2) those on which self-conscious, intelligent beings are evolving. Our Earth is not the only man-bearing globe; there are others as well. With the attainment of self-consciousness, then, an important stage was reached in the drama of evolution on this earth.

Before the lighting up of Manas, Theosophy, the Eternal Wisdom, was in the custody of those Beings who had already passed through the man-stage and perfected themselves in prior fields of evolution. Theosophy thus is primordial and was revealed directly to humankind by its progenitors and informing Egos. The knowledge of Theosophy does not exist in the lower kingdoms because in these lower forms there is no mind to perceive it. There are two ways in which the wisdom of Theosophy manifests: First, in the form of intimations which arise spontaneously from within; although one may be unaware of the existence of Theosophical records, each possesses certain innate ideas and can, by exercising his power of thought and reasoning, arrive at a recognition of the three basic truths concerning the universal, divine, impersonal deific Principle; universal, just and impersonal law; and the brotherhood of all manifesting, evolving beings. Secondly, it manifests in the form of knowledge derived from facts observed, checked and verified by a constantly growing body of students and devotees.

The unadulterated teachings of Theosophy are given out openly at certain times, taking advantage of special cycles. At other times the teachings have been given out in a veiled or more or less concealed fashion. Sometimes the ethical or application aspect has been more emphasized, as for example in the Buddha's exoteric teachings; the teachers of the ancient Upanishads, on the other hand, expounded the metaphysical side of the Esoteric Philosophy. It is very rare to find the two given out together. Theosophy as given out by H. P. Blavatsky for us of this era is as complete a system of ethics and metaphysics as this present cycle was ready for, and this cycle is a special one. There are indications that the coming years will be very important and that events will move rapidly; this is a characteristic of the Kali Yuga, the first

5,000 years of which ended towards the close of the last century. The teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita, which Krishna gave out at the beginning of this *Yuga*, contains the ethics and the metaphysics which are suited to this entire Kali-Yuga cycle of 432,000 years.

So, it is according to the needs of the cycle that the supply of ethics, or of metaphysics, or of both, is made. It is we human beings who make the cycles and the Masters of Wisdom respond if we make the necessary efforts.

As said above, Theosophy as a system of knowledge, of laws, of facts in Nature, was first given out on this globe some 18 million years ago. It is called in H.P.B.'s Secret Doctrine the "ancient Atlanto-Lemurian Wisdom," the Wisdom belonging to the Third and Fourth Root Races, whose descendants we find in the seed of the Fifth Race, the earliest Aryans. When Manas was lit up, the first great instalment of this Wisdom was presented. This Universal Wisdom antedates the Vedas. The story of the degradation and loss of these original teachings is the story of that madness which pride engenders. The Atlanteans went mad with pride and brought about the downfall of their civilization. The few who were saved from the cataclysm that destroyed Atlantis set themselves apart so to say, one million years ago, to spend their time, not in teaching, but in learning and verifying the system of ancient cosmogony and in perfecting themselves, and it is these Wise Men who became the Instructors of the early Fifth, the Aryan Race. It is here that we must look for the source of the ancient teachings of what later came to be called Hinduism, the earliest of the extant religions. These teachings were first taught orally and only much later recorded in writing as the hymns of the Vedas. The original, pure Hinduism thus sprang from the Atlanto-Lemurian Wisdom.

Those saved from the last great series of cataclysms and shifting of continents originated two great efforts; the tree of the Ancient Wisdom branched into two: one took root and flourished in India; the other in Persia. There was a time when greater India included areas stretching out to sections of China and extending as far south as Borneo. A study of the languages which these two branches developed, Sanskrit and Avesta, reveals that they are two sister languages, born of the mother, Senzar, which is now lost to the outer world. Of these two branches, of the Avestan sacred texts only a few fragments are now extant, and one cannot reconstruct a whole system out of these. Fragments obtained from Babylon, Chaldea and Egypt are all subsidiary presentations derived from this branch.

In *Isis Unveiled* (II, 123) H.P.B. has written:

We can assert, with entire plausibility, that there is not one of all these sects—Kabalism, Judaism, and our present Christianity included—but sprang from the two main branches of that one mother-trunk, the once universal religion, which antedated the Vedic ages—we speak of that prehistoric Buddhism which merged later into Brahmanism.

H.P.B. wrote further:

The religion which the primitive teaching of the early few apostles most resembled—a religion preached by Jesus himself—is the elder of these two, Buddhism. The latter as taught in its primitive purity, and carried to perfection by the last of the Buddhas, Gautama, based its moral ethics on three fundamental principles. It alleged that (1) every thing existing, exists from natural causes; (2) that virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment; and (3) that the state of man in this world is probationary. We might add that on these three principles rested the universal foundation of every religious creed; God, and individual immortality for every man—if he could but win it. (Ibid., II, 123-24)

The Buddhism that is referred to here is not the religion of Gautama Buddha, but "Bodhism," "that religion signifying literally the doctrine of wisdom, and which by many ages antedates the metaphysical philosophy of Siddhartha Sakyamuni" (Isis Unveiled, II, 143). In its essence it is "certainly identical with the ancient wisdom-religion of the sanctuary, the pre-Vedic Brahmanism" (Ibid., II, 142). It is from this primitive source that the multitudinous religious faiths of mankind have sprung. In fact all knowledge, ancient and modern, is derived from this ancient source.

...the secret doctrines of the Magi, of the pre-Vedic Buddhists, of the hierophants of the Egyptian Thoth or Hermes, and of the adepts of whatever age and nationality, including the Chaldean kabalists and the Jewish *nazars*, were *identical* from the beginning. (Isis Unveiled, II, 142)

This Wisdom-Religion, "that prehistoric Buddhism which merged later into Brahmanism," thus existed long before the Rig-Vedic hymns were chanted.

We repeat again, *Buddhism is but the primitive source of Brahmanism*. It is not against the primitive Vedas that Gautama protests. It is against the sacerdotal and official state religion of his country....Gautama Buddha's philosophy was that taught from the beginning of time in the impenetrable secrecy of the inner sanctuaries of the pagodas. (Isis Unveiled, II, 169)

Buddhism as taught by Gautama was a protest against Brahmanical orthodoxy. He gave out the original and pure philosophy, the Universal Religion, and taught further that it was the universal heritage of all men, and that it could be contacted and learned without any intermediary. From India Buddhism spread to the East and the West.

The king of Eastern Hindustan, Asoka, had embraced the religion of Siddhartha, and sent missionaries clear to Greece, Asia, Syria, and Egypt, to promulgate the evangel of wisdom. The Essenes of Judea and Arabia, the Therapeutists of Egypt, and the Pythagorists of Greece and Magna Graecia, were evidently religionists of the new faith. The legends of Gautama superseded the myths of Horus, Anubis, Adonis, Atys, and Bacchus. These were wrought anew into the Mysteries and Gospels, and to them we owe the literature known as the Evangelists and the Apocryphal New Testament. They were kept by the Ebionites, Nazarenes, and other sects as sacred books, which they might "show only to the wise"; and were so

preserved till the overshadowing influence of the Roman ecclesiastical polity was able to wrest them from those who kept them. (Isis Unveiled, II, 491-92)

It is the sects named above that Jesus contacted and learned from. Decay of the original Teachings is bound to take place in the course of time, and for their restoration periodic attempts are made by the Great Lodge of Masters in the last quarter of every century. The teachings of H.P.B. constitute the latest attempt to bring the Ageless Wisdom once again into the world.

The Secret Doctrine is the common property of the countless millions of men born under various climates, in times with which History refuses to deal, and to which esoteric teachings assign dates incompatible with the theories of Geology and Anthropology....It is only by bringing before the reader an abundance of proofs all tending to show that in every age, under every condition of civilization and knowledge, the educated classes of every nation made themselves the more or less faithful echoes of one identical system and its fundamental traditions—that he can be made to see that so many streams of the same water must have had a common source from which they started. What was this source? If coming events are said to cast their shadows before, past events cannot fail to leave their impress behind them. It is, then, by those shadows of the hoary Past and their fantastic silhouettes on the external screen of every religion and philosophy, that we can, by checking them as we go along, and comparing them, trace out finally the body that produced them. There must be truth and fact in that which every people of antiquity accepted and made the foundation of its religions and its faith. (S.D., II, 794)

Inner Change

All schools of thought today recognize the influence, as deep as it is universal, of the environment. For children in schools and for youths in colleges, for clerks in offices and for labourers in factories, for every man and every woman, at work as in recreation, a suitable, congenial environment is of great help in bringing forth that which is the best from within the individual himself.

Each one has an outer environment. Necessary as it is to try to make that external environment as clean, beautiful, peaceful and cheerful as possible, it is much more important to understand that it is possible for us to improve our inner environment. What is more, no change of external environment without a corresponding appropriate transformation in the mind and the attitude of the individual himself or herself will be of lasting benefit. This intimate environment goes with us wherever we go, as the shadow follows the body wherever the body moves.

It is important to recognize that a change of outer environment will not by itself bring about a change in the inner environment. We carry the latter in our brain, in the active cerebrum or the passive cerebellum, in our very blood. We ourselves are responsible for the quality of the grooves in our brain as well as for the quality of our blood, because as we think and feel we are impressing our brain and making it more pure or less pure, more sensitive to spiritual truths or less responsive to universal principles. And the same is true of the quality of the blood; it is the way we feel that determines that quality. We need to get rid of the wrong notion that it is our birth that determines the quality of our blood, that because we are born in a certain community or in a certain family, therefore our blood carries certain inherent tendencies. What is the birth of the body compared to the reality of the Soul within the body? The body is but an instrument of the Soul, the *Dehi*, the Dweller in the body.

Therefore it is necessary that we recognize ourselves, not as the body, not even as the moral character, not even as the mind or the intellect; first and foremost let us ask ourselves, "What are we? We have bodies, characters, minds; but we are not the body, not the character, nor the mind; we are above and beyond these tools through which we are working, and as we work through them we improve them or cause them to deteriorate.

Do we not know of people who live in beautiful surroundings, who have everything that the world can give in the way of comfort and of possessions, but who themselves are imprisoned by fear or anxiety, by the wants of their body, by their thoughts, their prejudices, so that in spite of the beauty and the harmony of their outer surroundings, within themselves they live in a mean, narrow, petty environment? And do we not know that in the slums of the city a beautiful flower can grow, that diamonds lie buried in the dark depths of the earth, just as sometimes Diamond Souls live buried in the underworld of the cities? That is recognized more and more by our social reformers. A look at the statistics will reveal that slum-clearance enthusiasts often do succeed in removing the slums, but that if there still exist slum minds and characters they will build other slums with their own peculiar difficulties.

So the inner environment has to be changed. Men and women have to become sufficiently self-reliant—reliant on themselves as spiritual Souls—and have to see for themselves that they can change the contents of their own minds and the quality of their own moral characters. And then the external environment can be permanently changed, improved, purified, harmonized. But the beginning must be made from within, for all things in nature move from within without. All have had problems, difficulties, pricks of conscience; a change of external environment will not help us to forget or to evade these. The only way in which a particular difficulty or a particular pang of conscience can be overcome is by facing it and trying to learn the lesson that it contains. For the most part, when we say that we know that the inner is more important than the outer, that misery and happiness are states of consciousness and that we ourselves make them, it is a superficial recognition. When the dark hours really descend we begin to blame external conditions, other people and circumstances, instead of turning within to ask ourselves whether perchance we ourselves are responsible for the darkness of the hour and whether we cannot do anything for the quieting and the tranquilizing of the inner turmoil.

Recognition that the inner environment is more important than the outer must be followed by attempts to improve that which is closest to us, namely, the quality of our own thoughts and feelings. Shall we not do anything about the outer environment? We shall, we must, but since it is more important to change the inner let us see a few simple facts in reference to that inner change. We all know that we have certain limitations, that there are certain weaknesses and blemishes within our own natures. But we have the power to remove them. Until we test that power we shall never know whether it exists in us or not. The reality of a thing becomes clear only to the one who has tested the power of that reality within himself, in his own consciousness. So what shall we do with our mind, our likes and our dislikes?

The first thing to be noted is that there is something in us that can direct our mind and transform our character. What shall we do in order to improve the mental air that we breathe? When our body is ailing we are ordered to take the body away to some health-resort where the air is pure and will give the body an opportunity to regain health and vitality. When our mind is suffering from psychic or from mental fever, let us raise it from the plane of petty, mundane thoughts, above the clash and the turmoil of personal problems, and let the mind breathe in the pure air of universal and fundamental ideas. What is more, let us not wait till our mind is in a feverish state before taking it to the plane of universality. It is recognized that to preserve health is better than to cure a disease after it has already precipitated. Let us train the mind to detach itself from that which is petty and narrow, taking the help of such great spiritual truths as are contained in the scriptures of the ages. Daily reading from sacred and devotional books will help the mind to dwell on a higher plane and absorb something of the purity of the ideas upon which it reflects.

Is it too much to give a little time each day to devotional reading? Many will say that they have no time, that there are too many duties! It is a sham excuse. Do we not find time to feed our bodies three times a day or more? And is it not more important from the inner point of view to feed the mind? Let us feed the mind on the spiritual currents of truth itself, and elevate the heart. Let us give a little time to feeding that which is above and beyond the mind, and we shall then find that the Soul is a reality. It sounds like a very simple exercise, but it has to be put into practice regularly, and lack of time is no excuse. It will bring greater understanding, greater compassion for others, and greater strength to be strict with the weaknesses that manifest within ourselves. Our horizon will widen, our point of view will become more impersonal, and that will enable us to have a better inner environment.

Let us resolve to find that in us which can control both the inner and the outer environments. Let us seek inspiration in the compassion of the Great Ones, and guidance in the knowledge that They exist and give Their spiritual knowledge for the benefit of the whole of humanity. All of us as Souls can drink the waters of life which They draw from the Source of pure wisdom and pure compassion. Then we shall be in a position to live at peace in a world full of strife, live purely in a world full of impurities, live with love in our hearts and radiate that love in a world which is so full of hatred.

The Lure of the Occult

Once the desire for Occultism has really awakened in a man's heart, there remains for him no hope of peace, no place of rest and comfort in all the world.

—H.P.B.

While the world is plunged in gratifying the desires of the senses, there are not a few of our race who are goaded by mental desires—great knowledge, power over the hearts of men, serenity to pursue one aim or another; and some among these are attracted by the lure of the Occult. We are not referring to those who run after astrologers and palmists, gypsies and psychics, fakes and faquirs, but to those serious-minded men who perseveringly follow the search of higher knowledge. H.P.B.'s remark quoted above applies to such earnest minds.

Among the records of the Great Lodge there are the life-stories of abject suffering, or varied experience of such men, resulting in many failures and a few successes. The Adepts of the Great Fraternity, possessing full knowledge of the Law of Cycles and knowing that in this era an increase of psychism was due, helped H.P.B. to warn, to advise and to offer suitable explanations so that men and women drawn by the lure of the Occult might save themselves much trouble and suffering. Several of the articles reprinted in the book *Raja-Yoga or Occultism* show this very clearly, and among them is "Occultism versus the Occult Arts" from which the above quotation is taken. Among students of Theosophy there are many who have come to U.L.T. goaded by the lure of the Occult; some have already learnt the wisdom of this article; others fancy that somehow not all that is said is applicable to them!

As the human will is weak, generally speaking, and remains to be developed, there is real lack of sustenance of the right kind for such men and women. Unless the will to gain knowledge becomes natural and manifests in the habit of learning the lessons of life, no progress is made. Unless a child acquires the habit of going to school regularly, he never learns; so with these men and women who desire to know, to gain *siddhis*, to possess power; unless they develop a will to go to school, they will not learn, they will not grow. And for almost all such it is well that their will to go to school is weak. For, as H.P.B. points out, "His heart is too full of passion and selfish desire to permit him to pass the Golden Gate."

There is misunderstanding about the nature of Will, its movements and manifestations. Theosophy teaches that the main characteristic of real will is that it flows steadily all the time, is steadfast in all events. It is an inner steadfastness and without it real progress is not possible. In the olden days, among Hindus, sage instructors instituted the elaborate exercise of *Sandhya-Puja*, and people went through it every day at dawn and twilight. This ritual accustomed the elemental lives of the personality to move with and in rhythm and thus helped the consciousness to turn inwards: this dual process developed the spiritual will. But such elaborate exercises are not suitable for men and women of our era. Cyclic conditions and their influence require very different means. In previous yugas the rites of sacrifice, *yagna*, were elaborate; at the dawn of Kali Yuga, Krishna inaugurated a mighty change; he introduced simplicity: "A leaf, a flower, or fruit, or water." Two thousand five hundred years later, Gautama,

the Buddha, took men's minds a step further; in confirming the Gita teachings, he emphasized the inner ritual as real, outer sacrifices of objects to God and Gods as dangerous and futile; and in our own times H.P.B. carried on the mission of making men and women reliant on the Self within, transforming all life-actions into sacrifices, because all deeds are to be infused with the pure thoughts of the indwelling Ego.

Theosophy teaches its votaries to cast off outer formalism—not only the formalism of creed and caste, but every type of formalism. Our actions devised by the reasoning mind in which is induced the light of the Wisdom-Religion have to be made sacred. When the Esotericist is asked to make his psycho-mental luggage ready for the journey to the Temple of Occultism, he is called upon to cast off what is not really needed and to secure that which is necessary. What specialized actions, such as sacrifice, were intended to achieve in the olden days can now be achieved by a more subjective method, in the hourly affairs of life. Through right performance of duty, the inner spirital will can be developed.

Next, Theosophy points out that there are those who have laboured along this line in past lives and whose will to know the secrets of Mother Nature has awakened. For such, the almost frightening statement is made: "There remains for him no hope of peace, no place of rest and comfort in all the world."

It is the "desire for another world" which makes this one reposeless, comfortless. It is this desire for another world which stirs the slumbering elementals of a certain kind. The veil between the visible and the invisible is loosened and, unknown to himself, the student is influenced and impressed by the denizens of the invisible. Elementals or *devatas*, gods or *devas*, *Sapta Rishis* and others, as well as Mahatmas, Boddhisattvas and Nirmanakayas live in the infinitudes of space. The student-aspirant draws to himself the influence therefrom according to the Law of Consubstantiality. If he is not careful and watchful to walk strictly the path shown by the Masters or H.P.B., he is bound to go wrong. Enough has been said in our books about the dangers of the elemental forces; but these are not the only tempters. The student needs to reflect on this statement of H.P.B.'s: "Those who fall off from our *living* human Mahatmas to fall into the *Saptarishi*—the Star Rishis, are no Theosophists."

What precaution should the student take? In what particular way should he behave so that he shall not fall off? Once the Path of Life and Light is entered, there cannot but be contact with the invisible realm where dwell a vast host, from Masters of Life and Light to Magicians of the Black Art and of Soul Death. For the novice, there is protection in his pure faith which must without delay be strengthened by true Knowledge. Knowledge alone cannot save, but salvation cannot be attained without knowledge. Application follows, and therefore needs, knowledge. If we examine our habits, methods of doing things, modes of thought and speech, we glimpse what corrections we need to make. The way we talk, the way we walk, the way we eat, the way we do things—small, plain things—affect astral forms in the Astral Light, because behind and within all physical actions there is our thought-energy. The Astral Light is both lower and higher, and our deeds, words, emotions and thoughts attract and imprison elementals of the lower or become channels of the influence which flows from the higher.

The nature and flow of our magnetism undergo a change with our thought-feeling, and the latter modulates the tone of our speech and the harmony of our actions. For the man devoid of the desire for Occultism, confined to the three-dimensional world of gross matter, his manners and methods matter little; but for one whose desire for Occultism has awakened and made him touch the World Invisible, they matter enormously.

H.P.B. mentions the passing of the Golden Gate. There are several golden gates, which the strength of our purified and radiant magnetism or *prana* enables us to unlock and pass. The Wisdom of Virtues holds the keys. As a string vibrates and gives forth an audible note, so the nerves of the human body vibrate in correspondence with various emotions under the general impulse of the circulating *prana*, thus producing undulations in the psychic aura of the person which result in chromatic effects. Therefore it is written in the Mirror of Magic:

Man is a Musician, his body a Vina, his nerves its strings. They thrill with *raga* and out flows the music, sad and pensive or genial and cheery; exciting or becalming. Radiant love or blackening lust streams forth to gladden the hearts or pollute the ears of all who hear. Beware, O Musician, what thy Vina intones.

Thought makes the whole dignity of man; therefore endeavour to think well, that is the only morality.

—Blaise Pascal

A Sense of Direction

The needs of our Spiritual Nature can never be met by other than spiritual happiness.

—H. P. Blavatsky

As far back as 1881, a great Indian Sage wrote: "Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy—therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics."

Much has happened since then in the realms of science and technology. Almost phenomenal progress has been achieved in every branch of scientific knowledge; yet the position on the basic issues of morality, virtue, and philanthropy has not altered.

A suffering and bewildered humanity is still groping in the dark, seeking for the meaning of human life, for a solution to the numerous and diverse problems it faces and the seriousness of which increases with every passing day.

The fundamental assumption of materialism is still the chief characteristic of science, and the scientist in his all-absorbing search for more and more knowledge remains aloof from and unconcerned about human affairs. Rightly has he been accused of living "apart," indifferent to human behaviour, accepting no responsibility for the social ills of our times.

And yet too many still confuse progress with the advance of science and the multiplication of mechanical inventions. They continue to look to science for guidance, blind to the fact that science itself cannot answer the question, "Whither Science?" since it has no answer to the question, "Whither Man?" One is reminded of the conversation between Alice and the Cat in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*:

"Cheshire Puss," Alice began, "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat.

Where indeed do we *want* to get to? How many among the scientists or among laymen can answer the question, "Where do I want to get to?" And if we do not know where we want to go, have we not lost our way? Are we not walking aimlessly without rhyme or reason? Nay, more—are we not in danger of losing ourselves?

A few here and there are beginning to suspect that science is *not* the answer. Science is after all an abstraction in one sense; its power is wielded not by it, but by Man. It is Man and only Man who can give science a sense of direction. To do this the scientist must first orient himself. He must know where he wants to go and where he wants mankind to go. We fear very few among our scientists could answer the question Puss put to Alice!

There are, however, a few among our men of science who have awakened to their own responsibility. A most welcome and promising sign is the discussion taking place already in several scientific circles as to whether or not the scientist has the right to disclaim all moral and social responsibility for the misuse of scientific knowledge. Does not the very fact that he knows more increase his responsibility as an individual?

After all, when all is said and done, a scientist is a Man before he is a scientist and to be a Man is to be a morally responsible being. Divest Man of his individual moral responsibility and you have destroyed him. Man has ceased to be man and has become a mere animal.

The dehumanization of Man is the greatest threat, the most serious danger we face today. The machine enthroned by man may now usurp altogether his place. This is no mere fancy or exaggeration, but an actual possibility. In fact, it is positively shocking to find that some are already speculating seriously on the development of computers so perfected and so skilful that they may altogether replace the human mind. Man need no longer think or initiate action: the

computer will direct and tell him what he should do! This nightmare, formerly only a theme for the writer of science fiction, is now seriously discussed by intellectuals. The day is envisaged when computers will have become "guides, philosophers, and friends" to human beings and the latter will willingly submit to being the passive instruments of a machine! This is alarming indeed, and it is high time that we recognized the error of equating scientific and technological progress with the progress of Man.

Let Man once renounce his most precious prerogative, the power to think and to choose, and his evolution will be at a standstill. More—since nothing can ever remain still, a downward movement will set in; retrogression will commence and Man will be ultimately annihilated. For that which makes man human is his capacity to think and to determine his own course of action.

Shankaracharya, commenting on the Taittiriya Upanishad, asks: "In what does the pre-eminence of man consist?" And having raised the question, a basic one, he gives the answer. Man's pre-eminence lies in his free-will and knowledge, *jnanakarmadhikarah*.

Therefore the true philosopher views with growing concern the present trends in science which increase automation and mechanization and threaten to rob man of his humanity.

Verily, all that deprives man of his individual freedom, all that makes for regimentation and uniformity, all that dehumanizes man, is injurious to his progress and should be strongly opposed by all who have at heart the welfare and the evolution of humanity.

At this dark hour in the history of Man, when the individual is in danger of being submerged altogether, when he is threatened by ultimate extinction, it is more necessary than ever before to proclaim the true nature of Man. To the scientist and the social reformer, to the politician and the educationist, to the professional worker and to the manual labourer, to the artist to the mechanic, we must cry out: "Pause and look within. Know yourself before it is too late!"

Again and again it has been said that the crisis the world is facing today is a crisis of character. If so it can be resolved only through a change of heart. The individual holds the key to the regeneration of humanity. But if we persist in abdicating our free will, if we continue to hold a mechanistic view of Nature and of Man, if we accept a behaviouristic philosophy of life, we shall hasten our downfall. We have adopted false values, material instead of spiritual, quantitative instead of qualitative. We must change our viewpoint and learn to see Man as more than his physical envelope.

Man is neither animal nor angel, but both; and much more than either beast or *deva*. His position is unique. He alone is aware of his identity; he alone is a Thinker; he alone has the power of speech. "The Soul is everything," said Aristotle. But we have forgotten the Soul and allowed the flesh to rule; and, as if that were not bad enough, we now want to be governed by a machine!

To those who fear that by giving Man his rights as an individual we sow the seeds of disunion and of anarchy, we must explain that this is so only when we overlook that the individual is part of a larger Self, that as individuals we are all united in the One Self. Only a materialistic concept

of Man can result in anarchy. The Perennial Philosophy teaches non-separateness: unity in diversity. This is true of the Universe as of Man. The unity of Man lies in Being and his diversity in Becoming. We are one in Being; we are different in Becoming. Being is the power to become. In Being is the potency to unfold, to grow, to progress, and for Man this means self-effort, self-induced ways and means.

When it is said that "all men are created equal" it is really meant that in every man there is the same potentiality that is also in all men. And yet in the process of becoming, every man is different from every other man. This is why the individual must be given full respect. "No man may be used only as a means by another. Each is himself an end," stated Kant.

That is the first principle to be understood. All men are integral parts of an indivisible Whole; yet each is an individual who must exercise his own freedom to think and to determine.

Man is for ever caught up between the two poles in him: the divine and the demoniacal, the spiritual and the material, the godlike and the animalistic. This duality in everyone has been dramatically portrayed in Chapter XVI of the Gita. It is the eternal conflict between the Self of Spirit and the self of matter, between Unity and separateness, between Light and darkness. Each one is free to choose one or the other. When he identifies himself with the body and believes he is but a biological phenomenon, he exhibits the demoniacal side. Such gross and brutal materialists are described by Sri-Krishna thus:

...they know not purity nor right behaviour, they possess no truthfulness. They deny that the universe has any truth in it, saying that it is not governed by law, declaring that it hath no Spirit; they say creatures are produced alone through the union of the sexes, and that all is for enjoyment only. (Bhagavad-Gita, XVI, 7-8)

What a true portrait of our civilization! And the root cause is indicated: namely, the denial of the Spirit, the belief that there is no truth and no moral order in the Universe. If that be at the root of all the ills that assail humanity today, the cure lies in restoring to mankind the perception of the reality of the Spirit and of the existence of a Moral Law. We can never despair of humanity, for the Divine is also there in every man, and, once we succeed in reawakening his spiritual intuition, every man will be a revelation to himself and able to transform his lower or demoniacal nature into the pure gold of his inherent divinity.

Let once man's immortal spirit take possession of the temple of his body, drive out the money-changers and every unclean thing, and his own divine humanity will redeem him, for when he is thus at one with himself he will know the "builder of the Temple."

May we subdue the self of matter and seek guidance from the Self of Spirit! May the Divine Self guide our every thought and action, that we may help dispel the present darkness and usher in a brighter morrow!

Nothing is stationary in the universe. Everything is constantly changing, in motion, becoming something else. — Heraclitus

The Basis for Union

Do we not try to attain unity in the wrong way? What is unity? H.P.B. tells us in The Theosophical Glossary that brotherhood is a fact, physically and spiritually; but it must become so intellectually. Is this a hint as to how unity can be attained—unity of minds and of ideas?

Robert Crosbie applied this idea in the Declaration of the U.L.T. The only basis for union, he said, was "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching." Any one or two of these is not sufficient for real union; all three must be present. This lies at the root of the old teaching: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." This means, not isolation, but union with those having the same aim, purpose and teaching.

Unity *per se* can never be worked for. It exists or it does not exist; it is an unseen inner bond, a magnetic similarity. What we have to do is to recognize it as such "intellectually." We may all have a common aim and purpose, but unless we agree as to the teachings, *i.e.*, those ideas by which we live, we cannot in truth be magnetically united, however much we may pretend to be.

But among those who have the same aim, purpose and teaching there is often disunion as to the *methods* to be employed to further the aims, or as to the actual understanding of "purpose." The United Lodge of Theosophists pays no attention to differences of individual opinion. Why? Because, as W. Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie pointed out, anyone must be allowed, and even aided, if his purpose is right, to use methods which others do not agree with. All efforts made in the right spirit will bring good results, even though they be different results than those expected. There must be differences of opinion as to methods; but, as the Masters have declared, there cannot be among Them any differences as to Teachings. There cannot be two opinions on a Truth. There cannot be two opinions as to whether 2+2 equals 4, but there may be many ways of using this knowledge or of teaching it.

So long as the pure and unadulterated Teachings are taught, their understanding must be left to each student, for he will, as The Secret Doctrine states, always judge "from the standpoint of his own knowledge, experiences and consciousness, based on what he has already learnt." Unity grows as essentials are embodied. It does not have to be striven after; it is there when the right conditions prevail. What we need is to recognize it and increase its depth. The way is open to all to work for the *conditions* of unity.

This does not mean that the U.L.T. need change its established "tradition" for the carrying out of its policy and programme. When someone feels there ought to be a change in the Lines laid down, it were better he tried to accustom himself to these Lines, worked wholeheartedly adhering to them and watched the results. Otherwise chaos results and different opinions sow the seeds of disunity and discord among the students themselves, so that the real "centre" of activity is lost.

Modern science recognizes matter as "living" and "dead," "organic" and "inorganic." and "Life" as merely a phenomenon of matter. Occult science recognizes, "foremost of all,

the postulate that there is no such thing in Nature as *inorganic* substances or bodies. Stones, minerals, rocks, and even chemical '*atoms*' are simply organic units in profound lethargy. Their coma has an end, and their inertia becomes activity." (Secret Doctrine, Vol. I, p. 626 fn.) Occultism recognizes ONE UNIVERSAL, ALL-PERVADING LIFE. Modern science recognizes life as a special phenomenon of matter, a mere transient manifestation due to temporary conditions. Even logic and analogy ought to have taught us better, for the simple reason that so-called "inorganic" or "dead" matter constantly becomes organic and living, while matter from the organic plane is continually being reduced to the inorganic. How rational and justifiable, then, to suppose that the capacity or "potency" of life is latent in all matter!

—W. Q. Judge

The Ashwattha Tree in the Gita

The setting of the Bhagavad-Gita in the great epic, the Mahabharata, of which it forms a part, is precise. The Gita is the concentrated essence of an entire universal Philosophy, and its setting leads up naturally to the important position it occupies. That which develops in the grand epic, in effect, centres round this core. Therefore, not only should each chapter in the Gita be studied for its practical ethics and morality, but also other details within it ought to be carefully considered.

Looking, for instance, at Chapter XV, we see that it may be divided into three parts: verses 1 to 6 give a universal setting, or basis; verses 7 to 15 place man in his environment, internal and external; and, finally, verses 16 to 20 deal with the exercise of will through the process of self-determined progress by individual men, who, working together for the universal good, unite for collaborative effort. This results in the victory of the perfected man: *Purshottama vijaya*.

From the universal viewpoint, the Ashwattha, the sacred tree, is an emblem of the "Tree of Life," the symbol of the never-ending universe. Here we have an instance of progress from universals to particulars. This tree has (1) "its roots above," (2) "its branches below," (3) "the lesser shoots," (4) "the leaves," and (5) "those roots which ramify below." Commencing in the unknown, the universal, the beginningless and endless, the Rootless Root of all-being, the Tree is thus reversed. The "roots above," generated in Heaven, represent the "First Cause," the Logos, that links manifestation to *Purusha*-Spirit-SELF. In The Secret Doctrine (I, 406) H. P. Blavatsky writes: "One has to go beyond those roots to *unite oneself with Krishna*, who, says Arjuna (XI), is 'greater than Brahman, and First Cause...the indestructible, that which is, that which is not, and what is beyond them.'" As the tree extends into the world, its branches are said to go "downwards." This is Nature or *Prakriti*—invisible in essence, but visible objectively.

Nourished by the three *gunas* or qualities of which all phenomena are made, the branches spread both upwards and downwards, for the actions which are the result of past deeds throw

down rootlets which issue again in actions—representing the ceaseless cycle of birth and death and birth again. The "lesser shoots" are the ensnaring objects of sense. This multi-branched expanse is "below," inasmuch as it belongs to the plane of manifestation.

Prof. Ranade, in his Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, compares the Ashwattha with the tree Igdrasil in Scandinavian mythology, described in Carlyle's picturesque language in his "Heroes":

Its boughs with their buddings and disleafings—events, things suffered, things done, catastrophes—stretch through all lands and times. Is not every leaf of it a biography, every fibre there an act or word? Its boughs are histories of nations. The rustle of it is the noise of human existence, onwards from of old. It grows there, the breath of human passion rustling through it....It is Igdrasil, the Tree of Existence. It is the past, the present and the future; what was done, what is doing, what will be done: the infinite conjugation of the verb *to do*.

The conjugation of the verb *to do* is the eternal bondage of Karma or ever-recurring death, if man will not open his eyes to the imperishable Root above which is deathlessness.

The leaves of the Ashwattha are said to be the Vedic hymns, representing the sacred scriptures of all times, which are but reformulations by men of portions of the eternal verities. These formulations are properly symbolized by "leaves," for they perpetually renew themselves.

This Ashwattha tree with its deeply-embedded roots has to be hewn down with the strong axe of detachment-dispassion from sense-objects. He who has freed himself from the mire of sense-life can hope to win that haven from which there is no return to compulsory rebirth, for he has found refuge in the Primeval Spirit "from which floweth the never-ending stream of conditioned existence"—a graphic underlying statement of fact. It is "never-ending," it is a "stream" of emanations, or "rays," covering every type of "conditioned existence."

Man alone, freeing himself by aspiration, study and *will* from the "pairs of opposites" and from the influence of the three "gates of hell" (desire, anger and covetousness), can realize the state of Krishna—the Higher Self—as unconditioned, called the "highest place," or state. There, neither the light of the sun (the human Monad, *Atma-Buddhi*) nor the "fire" (the human Mind-*Manas*), nor the "moon" (the fourfold human personality) is to be found. The goal of universal evolution is displayed to us—man, the microcosm, widening and becoming Man, the Macrocosm.

In verses 7 to 15, the disciple's relation, as an Individual, with other forms and kingdoms, through the *skandhas*, is traced; the individual gain, and the sharing of experience, as consciousness and as perception, is shown. The "deluded" can change themselves, through discrimination and effort, into those who have the "eye of wisdom." Man should transmute his lower, personal self, involved in the world of sense-objects, into a being of refined, transmuted matter, fit for use by his Higher Self—the "Krishna" within. The inner astral senses and organs

and their relation with the outer physical ones, and with all beings, is implicit in this second section of the Chapter. This the "Hall of Learning" of The Voice of the Silence.

In the third division, we may consider three factors: first, the "divisible" or perishable—beings made up of sentient "lives"; and, second, *Kutasha*, the unaffected, the indivisible, the Spiritual Being. In the psychology of the human microcosm, they are known, respectively, as the personality (made up of divisible, mortal principles—body, astral body, *prana-jiva, kama*), and the individuality, the *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*, three-in-one, the human Monad, who is called in the chapter "he who standeth on high unaffected." Above the divisible and the undivisible is, of course, Krishna, the transcendent, who says: "therefore am I known as the Supreme Spirit." This original Macrocosmic Man is *Purushottama*—the *Uttama Purusha*—the Superior, Perfected Man. That which is the Supreme Spirit, *Paramatma*, becomes *Purushottama*, the Superior Man, the Universal Man. This is the aim end of human evolution.

When we, as seekers, cut through the veils of matter, of sense, of form, of limited and limiting desire, and learn to know the Krishna within us in His aspect of *Purushottama*, then we are able to perceive the deific aspect of LIFE "under every form and condition," and thus are able to attune ourselves to its laws and purposes.

No *new* philosophy is set up in the The Secret Doctrine, only the hidden meaning of some of the religious allegories of antiquity is given, light being thrown on these by the esoteric sciences, and the common source is pointed out, whence all the world-religions and philosophies have sprung. Its chief attempt is to show, that however divergent the respective doctrines and systems of old may *seem* on their external or objective side, the agreement between all becomes perfect, so soon as the esoteric or *inner* side of these beliefs and their symbology is examined and a careful comparison made. It is also maintained that its doctrines and sciences, which form an integral cycle of universal cosmic facts and metaphysical axioms and truths, represent a complete and unbroken system; and that he who is brave and persevering enough, ready to crush the *animal* in himself, and forgetting the human *self*, sacrifices it to his Higher Ego, can always find his way to become initiated into these mysteries. This is all the Secret Doctrine claims. Are not a few facts and self-evident truths, found in these volumes, truths *already proved practically to some*, better than the most ingenious "working" hypotheses, liable to be upset any day, than the *unexplainable* mysteries of religious dogmas, or the most seemingly profound philosophical speculations?... No "philosopher" who views the spiritual realm as a mere figment of superstition, and regards man's mental perceptions as simply the result of the organization of the brain, can ever be worthy of that name.

—H. P. Blavatsky

In the Light of Theosophy

For millennia, large numbers of people have been killed, persecuted and ill-treated in the name of religion; and this is going on even today. The Millennium World Peace Summit of leaders representing all religious traditions held recently at the UN headquarters in New York has been called "a meeting of minds." There is a growing realization that if lasting peace among peoples and nations is to become a reality, then the defences of peace have to be built first and foremost in the minds of men and women worldwide. Almost every speaker at the summit stressed that the ethical and spiritual core of every religion can and must provide the basis to banish fear and want and the debilitating scourge of intolerance from the hearts of people everywhere.

From Anglicans to Zoroastrians, the Peace Summit participants sent out the message that "all religions are equal," that truth, salvation and redemption are not the monopoly of any organized religion, of any sect, of any particular brand of clerics. The seeker is free to drink at whichever source he chooses. The Times of India (September 1) commented editorially:

The messages that emanated from the summit might sound naive to ears attuned to the cacophony of diplomatic mumbo-jumbo and the rhetoric of realpolitik. But the very fact that Muslim clerics, Hindu priests, Jain munis, Christian prelates, Buddhist monks and many others speaking from within a variety of other faiths were able to affix their signatures to a document that affirmed the equality of all religions, condemned all forms of violence in the most unambiguous terms, upheld gender equality, lambasted poverty and gave pride of place to environmental protection should demonstrate that religion need no longer be the opium of the masses.

How far religion will contribute to world peace will depend to a large extent upon how far the religious leaders themselves exemplify the policy of peace and brotherhood in their own life and action, and upon the extent to which their example is followed. The realization of brotherhood is the essence of all true religions. Without the spread of that realization, the orthodox in all religions will continue to be fanatical followers of their respective creeds, and mutual intolerance and recriminations and worse will persist.

Darwin suggested that natural selection operates not only among individuals but also among groups of organisms. A group of people who are kind and helpful to one another may not do so well individually, but as a team they may do better than other groups of people, and so the tendency to work as a team spreads through the population. The group selection idea has had its opponents and was at one stage rejected, but at present it is experiencing a revival. It is now generally admitted that evolution is more caring and sharing than hitherto believed.

In New Scientist (July 8) Lynn Dicks, ecologist and science writer based at the University of Cambridge, speaks of the power of the team spirit not only among humans but in all evolution:

The newly emerging view of evolution, proposed by John Maynard Smith from the University of Sussex and Eors Szathmary from the University of Budapest, Hungary, describes the entire development of life as a series of major transitions in which successively more complex levels of organization have become dominant. Each transition was a point when individual entities began working together in a group and natural selection kicked in at a higher level. When cells joined forces to make multicellular organisms, for example, cells that co-operated fared better than cells that exploited the resources of the group, because all the cells in an organism have a single, sealed fate. In this new "multilevel selection" view of life, group selection is a natural progression....

If it is simple to do in the lab, then who's to say that many features of ecological communities have not evolved by group selection in nature? There are countless examples of natural populations that are structured in discrete groups—from communities living on microscopic particles in the sea to patchy populations of plants. The best example is parasites, which live in groups of hundreds of thousands confined inside the bodies of their hosts....

Chris Boehm of the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, believes, like Darwin before him, that morality evolved through group selection because it acts as social glue sealing the combined fate of the group....The key to changing the level at which selection operates lies in suppressing the interests of the individuals that make up the groups.

Co-operative behaviour has existed throughout nature, since the beginning of life. Altruism and co-operation have proved a successful strategy for species to get through very long stretches of evolutionary time in the presence of numberless other creatures with whom they are obliged to interact. Humans are a conspicuous exception. We have tended to exploit and to cheat whenever such behaviour seems to provide a short-term advantage. This is our worst mistake, for we are delaying and putting obstacles in our own evolutionary march. "United we stand, divided we fall," is a principle of life and applies at all levels of the evolutionary process.

There is growing evidence that humans have been using fire for an incredibly long time. This, say palaeoanthropologists, calls for radical revision of current scientific thinking about human evolution.

The popular theory of human mental evolution, writes John McCrone (New Scientist, May 20), paints our early ancestors as nothing more than smart bipedal apes. It was only around 40,000 years ago, goes the theory, that they made major advances in lifestyle, tool use and vocal communication, and were transformed into modern *Homo sapiens*, a species driven by language and culture. Even throughout the 1980s and 1990s palaeoanthropologists denigrated early humans at every turn. But now a more detailed picture has begun to emerge and the theory of "dumb ancestors" has been turned upside down. Evidences of their knowledge of the

use of fire have been uncovered by several researchers, and only intellectually advanced humans could have been capable of that.

A major breakthrough came this April when at the annual meeting of the Paleoanthropology Society of Philadelphia Brian Ludwig from Rutgers University reported the results of an exhaustive analysis of flint artefacts and the debris of tool-making. He personally inspected around 40,000 pieces from over 50 sites in Africa, some going as far back as 2.5 million years. There were clear signs of intense heat being applied to these tools, which considerably broaden the claim for early fire.

Other scientists say that if early humans had enough mental development to control fire—whether for warmth, protection, cooking or tool-making—they must also have had communicative skills which require the use of language. Language was needed to transform their daily activities "from the duly practical into something where every slightest act became socially expressive and personally meaningful."

The Secret Doctrine states that early man was not left to his own resources but had his Instructors—more evolved beings from other spheres who became his guides and put him in the way of his mental evolution. Among the first things taught by them was the use of fire and the methods by which it could be kindled (S.D., II. 373). Fire was never "discovered"; it existed on earth since its beginning, and the earliest humans knew its uses. "The assumption that primitive man lived ages on earth before he was made acquainted with fire, is one of the most painfully illogical of all." (S.D., II, 523-24)

H.P.B.'s very first work, *Isis Unveiled*, furnishes sufficient proofs that in various spheres modern knowledge has little or no reason to boast originality. "Whenever in the pride of some new discovery, we throw a look into the past, we find, to our dismay, certain vestiges which indicate the possibility, if not certainty, that the alleged discovery was not totally unknown to the ancients." (I, 526)

Who invented the telescope? According to Bob Temple, the Greeks knew of it more than 2000 years ago. This is one of the many provocative conclusions in his recently published book, *The Crystal Sun*, a thoroughly researched study of the ancient science of optics. Temple reviews the massive archaeological and literary evidence for the use of lenses in antiquity—for burning, magnification and correcting short sight.

Isis Unveiled further informs us:

Some modern writers deny the fact that a great mirror was placed in the light-house of the Alexandrian port, for the purpose of discovering vessels at a distance at sea. But the renowned Buffon believed in it; for he honestly confesses that "If the mirror really existed, as I firmly believe it did, to the ancients belongs the honour of the invention of *the telescope*." (I, 528)

For centuries, India's Untouchables, now known as Dalits (literally, "broken people") have had a raw deal. In the Hindu caste system, they are at the very bottom of the social scale, and are often victims of humiliation, harassment and violence from the upper castes.

Newsweek for July 3 carries a special report on this caste struggle. Carla Power writes:

The Indian Constitution long ago outlawed discrimination against Dalits. India has a Dalit president and more than 100 Dalits in Parliament. But despite quota systems in government jobs and education, members of the upper castes like Brahmins and Kshatriyas have a monopoly on power; they dominate business, the media and government.

After centuries of suffering from intense discrimination, they're beginning to fight back. The Dalits have begun their own civil-rights struggle. Inspired by the liberation campaigns of American blacks and South Africans, Dalits are beginning to use the vote, civil disobedience and even violence of their own to claim their rights. Their new assertiveness has angered the powerful and triggered an increasingly bloody struggle....

Grass roots are gaining strength....Despite the dangers, Dalits are taking risks to free themselves from rural traditions....A new generation of activists has emerged.

The struggle continues. It is not enough to pass legislation condemning caste distinctions to root out the evil. It is necessary first of all to sweep away the "cobwebs" from men's minds through right education. And let no one plead the virtues of the original caste system now; for caste based on the birth of the body is far indeed from the *varnashramadharma* of ancient India. Justice demands the wiping out of these false distinctions, which Gandhiji rightly regarded as "the greatest blot on Hinduism."

In the early years of the Theosophical Movement in India, the courage shown by Damodar K. Mavalankar, while still a youth, in obeying the dictates of his conscience and coming out of his Brahmin caste to be "worthy of being called man" and to make "the perfection of his spiritual self a grand object of his efforts," is worthy of emulation by young people today. Damodar's statement explaining the reasons for leaving his caste appeared in *The Theosophist* for May 1880 and was reprinted in U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 4, He wrote:

The glimpse I have got into the former greatness of my country makes me feel sadly for her degeneration. I feel it, therefore, my bounden duty to devote all my humble powers to her restoration....

The study of Theosophy has thrown a light over me in regard to my country, my religion, my duty. I have become a better Aryan than I ever was....This study makes every man respect his religion the more....

I found that instead of a love for his contrymen, the observance of caste distinction leads one to hate even his neighbour, because he happens to be of another caste. I

could not bear this injustice. What fault is it of anyone that he is born in a particular caste? I respect a man for his qualities and not for his birth. That is to say, that man is superior in my eyes, whose *inner* man has been developed or is in the state of development....The peace of the land was disturbed. People could not unite with one another for good purposes....I do not by this mean to blame my ancestors who originally instituted this system. To me their object seems to be quite a different one. It was based in my opinion on the qualities of every person. The caste was not then hereditary as it is now.

Involved as we are with the outside world, few among us have given thought to the value of mindfulness. Because of this, we do not know how to subdue or ignore the constant reactions that spring up in the mind. In the August issue of *Mira*, Nergis Dalal writes:

Mindfulness is the cure for this unthinking manner of living. It is, in fact, a continuous 24-hour meditation. It means living with alertness, being aware of and fully conscious of every experience, moment by moment. And at the same time, while being alert and watchful, mindfulness means to be non-judgemental. Mindfulness is attention free of evaluation.

In mindfulness one becomes a witness to whatever is happening, without either feeling censure or approval. While actions, speech and the flow of thoughts and feelings are closely monitored, it is done with calm attention, with a total quietness of mind and heart. This is not only external quietness. One can be silent and yet find the mind chattering nonstop. Thus internal chatter is even more destructive than speech. The mind can only be healed, calm and receptive to meditation, when the incessant chatter inside has come to a stop.

Throughout the day reactions spring up into the untrained mind. If these reactions are carefully watched, it will be seen that not one of them is useful, important or helpful. They are merely thought patterns which help to condition us. When there is a slow and gradual purification of the mind, there is an internal as well as outward silence....

Paying total attention to the whole situation is mindfulness. In this condition the Self is one with everything. There is no separation. The body and mind are brought back into unity, into the present moment, which is the only moment.