

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THE KEEPERS OF THE FLAME

There is a deep philosophy underlying the earliest worship in the world, that of the Sun and of Fire. Of all the Elements known to physical science, Fire is the one that has ever eluded definite analysis.... What says the esoteric teaching with regard to fire? “Fire,” it says, “is the most perfect and unadulterated reflection, in Heaven as on Earth, of the ONE FLAME. It is Life and Death, the origin and the end of every material thing. It is divine ‘SUBSTANCE.’”... The Rosicrucians, among all the mystics and Kabalists, were those who defined Fire in the right and most correct way. Procure a six-penny lamp, keep it only supplied with oil, and you will be able to light at its flame the lamps, candles, and fires of the whole globe without diminishing that flame. If the Deity, the radical One, is eternal and an infinite substance... and never consumed, then it does not seem reasonable that the Occult teaching should be held as unphilosophical when it says: “Thus were the Arupa and Rupa worlds formed: from ONE light seven lights; from each of the seven, seven times seven,” etc., etc.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 120-22

In one of his letters Mr. Judge addressed his correspondent as “holder of the flame.” “Holder of the flame” or “keeper of the flame” — each one can ask himself if either term applies to him.

In “A Curious Tale,” published by Mr. Judge under his pen-name of Bryan Kinnavan in the December 1888 issue of *The Path*, he told how a young acolyte in ancient Ireland had allowed a fire, that should have burned eternally on its tall tower, to languish and then die, with fateful consequences. The story was reprinted in our pages in February 1938. The tower was an old one, one of several in Killarney. It was

used by the immediate descendants of the white Magicians who settled on Ireland when England's Isle had not arisen from the sea. When the great Masters had to go away, strict injunctions were left that no fires on these towers were to go out, and the warning was also given that, if the duties of

life were neglected, if charity, duty, and virtue were forgotten, the power to keep these fires alive would gradually disappear. The decadence of the virtues would coincide with the failure of the fires, and this, the last tower, guarded by an old and a young man, would be the last to fail, and that even it could save the rest if its watchers were faithful.

The youth who shared the trust with the old man had recognized the seriousness of his responsibility, for he alone of all the young disciples was permitted to help the old man in the task. He had come late that evening to relieve his elder and the latter, feeling a strange misgiving as he turned over the charge to the youth, had warned him solemnly not to let the fire go out. Nevertheless he was diverted from his watch at the crucial moment by being told that the fires on the other towers were dying out. Rushing in dismay to the parapet to see if this was true, he let his own fire die.

The other fires indeed had failed but his could have burned on, bearing eloquent but silent witness to the high souls who first had kindled it, and to their teachings. A long line of faithful tenders of the flame had kept it burning down the intervening years, a gleam in the increasing darkness of the age—a line which ended with his momentary lapse. A small cause to produce calamitous effects? It was betrayal of a trust accepted, whatever the extenuating circumstances.

None can appreciate better than our Zoroastrian brothers the seriousness of allowing a sacred flame to expire; these know how zealously the flame in their own temples is tended night and day. But everyone who reads "A Curious Tale" must feel on his own pulses the anguish and the sickening dread felt by the young attendant who, despite his good intentions, had proved faithless to his trust.

Each one associated with the Theosophical Movement shares the responsibility for guarding its sacred flame. Madame Blavatsky wrote in a letter quoted in "She Being Dead Yet Speaketh":—

Have you so little faith as to need constant stimulus, as a dying fire needs fuel! . . . Would you let the nucleus of a splendid Society die under your hands like a sick man under the hands of a quack? (*She Being Dead Yet Speaketh*, p. 11)

The United Lodge of Theosophists makes no demands on its Associates for any help in money, time or work to keep its beacon light of pure Theosophy alight, its Lodge doors open several times a week for all to come who will; while accepting gladly from all such freely offered help as each may wish to give. It recognizes that the way of progress in the human kingdom is by self-induced and self-devised efforts. This policy seems to be in line also with the Master's words: "...nor are we especially anxious to have anyone work for us except with entire spontaneity" and that "in the fields

of Theosophy *none is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity will permit him.*" It is left to each to "cast the lot . . . into the lap of Justice," fully confident that its response will be absolutely true.

In joining the U.L.T. each, in fact, specifically disclaims on the Associate's card any responsibility other than that which he himself determines. But who that has experienced the illuminating and regenerating power of pure Theosophy in his own life can fail in pity for the multitudes who grope in darkness?

There is no privilege, self-earned though it be, that does not carry its implied responsibility. In proportion to what Theosophy means to us should be our sense of obligation to keep its life-giving teachings accessible to all in their pristine purity. There is encouragement for those who feel that what they have to give is limited — and who must not feel that, in contrast with the shoreless ocean of immemorial wisdom? Those who feel that they need help themselves and fear to offer help to others can take comfort in Mr. Judge's reassurance:—

It is not high learning that is needed, but solely devotion to humanity, faith in Masters, in the Higher Self, a comprehension of the fundamental truths of Theosophy and a little, only a little, sincere attempt to present those fundamental truths to a people who are in desperate need of them. That attempt should be continuous. (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 104)

There can be few students of Theosophy so ill-grounded in its Teachings that they cannot correct flagrant misrepresentations of them; none who cannot point out to inquirers where its light shines forth. And every student who applies Theosophy in his own life teaches it, however silently, while keeping alive in his own heart the flame of aspiration and devotion kindled by contact with its message or with another who exemplified the Teachings in his own life. The flame is passed thus from a blazing torch to torches yet unkindled.

We are assured that the feeblest glimmer of the true Tathagata Light within any human being is noted by the gracious Masters and that it is Their law to approach the one in whom it shines, illuminating the surrounding darkness, though so far but at candle strength. Those who show the gleam become Their special care, not for their own sake but as potential servants of the race and sharers in Their labours for the common good.

The task of the aspirant-devotee is to prepare an altar in his heart and sacrifice thereon his selfish aims and passions, sparing none. His task also to lay with care the fuel — knowledge of the Teachings, gratitude to Those who place that knowledge within the reach of men, concern for all who tread their way in darkness,

It is the law that when the task is done in appreciable measure, and all made ready for the quickening flame, no man shall wait in vain.

Few men can say what hour the altar fire bursts into blaze within; but by its effects its presence may be known. He in whom it is alight finds his mind-understanding of the Teachings gradually grow; his gratitude to Those who guard the Truth down the ages flowers in devotion to Their purposes; his interest in human weal becomes at last a vast and all-embracing love, compassion for the pitiable state of mankind, the Great Orphan, which leaves him no rest but in service.

Not without effort is the prize ours. The fire if left untended may, nay must, go out. Like a candle in the wind that Light flickers in the gusts of emotion. It is quenched by self-seeking like a torch dipped in water. The heart-light must be tended, its flame fed by sacrifice renewed from day to day, and the lower nature purified until the light within shines forth, lighting the way for all, and kindling ready hearts to fervent flame.

What an inestimable blessing to have rest upon oneself, were it but for a moment, "the patient, spiritual eyes which bring peace and enlightenment"! To retain Their benignant notice, however, we must with altruistic motive study, apply and share, trying to make ourselves fit channels through which Their help can flow. The Masters have preserved the Teachings down the ages, but we can help to spread them in the world today. Is it not obvious that if we would know the Masters we should study Their philosophy? And how can we serve Them better than by serving Their humanity and trying to make ourselves ever better able to do so? By effort along those lines we can become capable of "such action...as makes of each one a centre for good, a force that makes 'for righteousness,' and that is guided by wisdom," and so become true keepers of the flame.

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It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

—A CHINESE PROVERB

## PLANETARY INFLUENCES

[The following talk by Robert Crosbie was first published in *Theosophy*, Vol. IX, pp. 69-72, for January 1921.—Eds.]

The philosophy of Theosophy covers all things in manifestation and points out the relations of each thing to every other. Our personal purview extends over our own interests, over our religion, or our system of thought, or our ideas; and moving along those lines within narrow limits, we finally reach the place where we are living entirely for ourselves, making use of all the efforts, thoughts, and ideas of others solely that we, ourselves, may benefit by them. We need to raise our eyes and our minds to the greater view of what the great universe itself is.

This Earth is a planet, as we all know. But there are also other planets quite as likely to be inhabited as is this planet. So, too, this solar system of ours is but one of innumerable solar systems in the universe. All are parts of the vast whole; all are consequently related. There was a time when the knowledge of these relationships existed — when they were taught in the ancient temples as part of the Great Initiation. That was the true Astrology, but not the Astrology of the present day, which has lost the ancient knowledge just as the true meaning of religion has become lost in the course of time. And just as there are some sorry remnants of religious knowledge in the world today, so the remnants of astrological knowledge are almost entirely applied to the personality in physical life, considering with chart and table effects of planetary influence merely upon the physical affairs of men. The physical is but one line of effect, and the only line, if we believe planets to be mere physical embodiments. But there are other sides to the nature of planets, and these we must understand, if we are to get any true idea of planetary influence.

All beings and all forms of every kind are constituted of many different "principles." For instance, connected with man himself there is his body; there is the mind that he uses; there are powers which he exercises; and there is himself — the perceiver, the knower, the experiencer, who through his mind, his powers, his body, learns. It is apparent, then, that there are other departments of our body than the physical to be affected by any influence; and, if there is a physical effect of planetary influence, as there must of necessity be, we shall have to inquire also into its effect upon *all* these departments of our nature.

Not only is man constituted of seven distinct principles, but also all planets are septenary in their natures. There is a spiritual "something," a psychic "something," an intellectual "something," an astral "something," and a physical "something," in every planet. Planets are not merely physical things, any more than we as human beings are merely bodies. There are beings of various classes which

constitute the planet and its inhabitants, just as this planet is constituted of the various beings belonging to the four kingdoms, from which it derives its own peculiar influence. Let us, then, consider something of the nature of these planets with which we are most intimately connected, if we would gain any idea as to the real meaning of planetary influence.

The Sun is the life-giver of our particular solar system. The Sun shines on all the planets, but the effects received differ for each planet according to the conditions presented. The Sun is the central store of our system and the focus for physical life, but it has also other constituents which apply to our intellectual or psychic, astral and spiritual constituents. At one and the same time, we might say that it is the giver of life physical and life spiritual, if we understand that we are not speaking of the mere physical Sun, which is, correspondentially, just what our bodies are — only that principle of it which we perceive objectively. Yet all the other principles are there, their influence flowing out upon us; from them we get whatever we are able to take. So we see there is not only a direct influence of the Sun on the Earth itself, but also upon us as peoples of it.

The Moon, the nearest planet to us, influences us physically, astrally and psychically, for of like nature are the forces in the Moon. Even the phases of the Moon have their particular influence upon us, as noted in the case of "lunatics," who are rendered more insane at certain phases. The Moon's influence is observable also in the lower kingdoms — the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal, as well as on ourselves — self-conscious beings.

Other planets still nearer to the Sun, as Mercury, for example, have still greater influence. Mercury receives seven times as much light from the Sun as the Earth, and has seven times as much — other things. Venus, standing next in order of nearness to the Sun, receives twice the light that Earth receives and also shines by her own light. It is not a wise conclusion of our scientists that, because any given planet is nearer the Sun than we are, its climate and conditions would make the sustaining of life thereon impossible. Life always adjusts itself to whatever conditions exist. Hence, bodies and ideas connected with the state of matter due to the nearness of the Sun would exactly fit those existing conditions. Thus we may look upon the various planets as brothers of our own — members of one great humanity scattered in different portions of the great universe — belonging to the same family, and only working under different conditions. All have their effects upon us, the influence of one planet predominating over another in accord with the angle of position. Some planets are beneficial in their influence; others are called malevolent in their effects upon man. But we stand as individuals in the midst of a great mass of beings

in every direction in our solar system and beyond — all moving in the same direction, all springing from the same Source — however much the *path* of each humanity and of each individual differs — the Source and Goal the same for all.

We are influenced by other planets just as we are influenced by other people in our daily walks in life. What is it that causes others to influence us against our own good will, our own right perceptions? Nothing but our mistaken ideas as to what we are, and our suppositions that we can be thus affected — our attitude towards ideas, towards people, towards things, towards life in general. We think that conditions and circumstances bring us to whatever state we are in. That is not true. It is not the conditions nor the circumstances, but the attitude we hold toward them, which matters; the true attitude held with regard to our own natures gives us the power to withstand any influence whatever. According to our attitude, and according to our understanding that all things material and physical evolve from and are ruled by the spiritual, will we — the real Thinkers — receive the effect of any planet. Neither good nor evil can come to us unless there is good or evil within ourselves. If we are good, no evil can touch us. If we are evil, then for the time no good can touch us. All states are within ourselves, as we ought to understand by seeing that one gets good effects and another bad effects from precisely the same set of circumstances. So, we are not the victims of circumstances save as we make ourselves the victims.

A true understanding of planetary influence would involve an absolute realization of man's nature in all his constituents, in every principle and every element, which are those of the solar system to which he belongs. Each one of us is a copy of the great universe. Each one of us is connected with every class of beings. We have within us every form of consciousness and every state of substance, and if we understand ourselves, we can move in accord with all the rest, every influence coming our way, or even perceptible to us, only an aid by which we may do good to others. Then we shall be neither oppressed nor elevated by any influence; we can be repressed or oppressed only by our own erroneous thought, will, feelings and actions. We have established a daily tabernacle which has its peculiarities, but it is our own establishing — built by our own thoughts and doings and by no one else's. It was not imposed upon us by any "Being," nor, in fact, was it necessary, except as we were ignorant, and effects flowed through our ignorance. Now, we can either *learn*, or maintain the condition through continued ignorance.

Being at any given time or place subject to certain beneficial or malevolent influences, being born as persons at a certain time and place, under certain conjunctions of the planets, are only fulfilments of Karmic law. We could not have come through any "holes in the sky" except those we had made for ourselves; we could not

have made a place of entrance at certain conjunctions of the planets, except the conditions for us were there at that time and at no other time. Planetary influences express our *tendencies*, yes; but there is no "God" above to compel us, and there is no possibility of our being pushed into the following of certain wrong tendencies unless we want to be pushed. If we have made up our minds not to be so influenced, then we cannot be. We simply do not follow those tendencies in ourselves which we have discovered to be wrong, and so, we make another kind of birth possible.

So-called astrological prognostications of the present day relate chiefly to the body and its environment, and on that basis people seek only for good, try to dodge sickness and evil. On the basis of our own true natures we should not seek for good, nor even to *be* good. We should seek to *do* good, and then, we can see we *are* good. We are not trying for any reward, but trying only to make ourselves efficient ministers of good to others. So, we do not have to avoid evil because we are not creating evil. Wherever and whenever we give forth evil we receive the effects of evil; wherever and whenever we give forth good we receive the effects of good. Each one is absolutely and unconditionally responsible for the condition in which he finds himself. To blame planetary influences for this or that condition is as foolish as to blame the water for drowning a man whose own carelessness, and not the water, was responsible for the drowning. But the same laws govern other planets as ours, and we do make of ourselves magnets which draw to ourselves like things in operation at any given time anywhere. If we are subject to despondency in ourselves, for instance, we shall certainly receive all the effects that despondent conditions anywhere put upon us. This is the nature of our interdependence and interrelation with every other being in our solar system.

It remains for man to see and *realize* that he has within him all the elements of the great ocean of Life. It remains for him, in that realization, to *act* as one who understands all the rest, and who sends out benefit in every direction for those knowing still less than he does.

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A man who wholly belongs to himself cannot belong to anything else. Man has the power of self-control, and no external influences can control him if he exercises this power.

—PARACELSUS

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN—AN APPRECIATION

Saviours of nations such as . . . Lincoln . . . owe their elevation, their singular power, and their astonishing grasp upon the right men for their purposes, not to trained intellect or long preparation in the schools of their day, but to . . . unseen Adepts, who crave no honours, seek no publicity and claim no acknowledgment.

—W. Q. JUDGE

Real greatness is indeed difficult to define. Wherein lies the true worth of a man? What are the features that leave indelible "foot-prints on the sands of time"? Does greatness inhere in the loftiness of ideal and in the strength of will necessary to attain to it; or in unselfishness of motive and scrupulousness of action; or in the breadth and power of the intellect? It does not require much effort of thought to realize that all these three aspects of human nature must needs be developed and manifested, and this not only in public crises but also in the daily humdrum of personal life.

It has been said by James Bryce that Abraham Lincoln

had not the brilliance, either in thought or word or act, that dazzles, nor the restless activity that occasionally pushes to the front even persons with gifts not of the first order. He was a patient, thoughtful, melancholy man, whose intelligence, working sometimes slowly but always steadily and surely, was capacious enough to embrace, and vigorous enough to master, the incomparably difficult facts and problems he was called to deal with.

As suggested here, the Civil War President of the U.S.A. did reveal through his words and deeds alike all the three characteristics of greatness outlined above.

An understanding of the character of Lincoln is the key to an appreciation of his life and his achievements; and, surprising as it might appear, the over-all picture that emerges is one of complexity. What has usually been stressed by Lincoln's biographers is the essential simplicity of the man. While it is true that simplicity is the keynote of most of his utterances, whether in the form of speeches or letters or casual remarks, a closer examination invariably reveals that behind the directness of speech and forthrightness of manner lie intense study, reflection and assimilation of the problems he was tackling and analyzing. In essence, then, the most important feature of his utterances was *simplification* of the subject-matter and not mere simplicity of diction.

This might be illustrated by two of his very famous pronouncements on what constitutes democracy. The first is a little paper jotting of 1858:—

As I would not be a *slave*, so I would not be a *master*. This expresses

my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy.

The second is a fragment of the Gettysburg address, wherein democracy came to be defined as "government of the people, by the people, for the people."

These deceptively simple words embody perhaps the most complete apprehension of this form of government. But they are the product of lifelong ratiocination on the most practically ideal form of society and of government that any country could have, towards the achievement of which he was leading the U.S.A., and which succeeding generations of humanity have adopted and attempted to apply in the formulation of their nation's political structure.

At other times, however, Lincoln deliberately eschewed simplicity of statement, though never his sincerity of approach. Under the caption "The President's Last, Shortest and Best Speech," he himself gave to the press (in 1864) his almost subtle and sarcastic remarks to the woman who pleaded for her husband — a prisoner of war — on the ground that he was a religious man. He said:—

You say your husband is a religious man; tell him when you meet him, that I say I am not much of a judge of religion, but that, in my opinion, the religion that sets men to rebel and fight against their government, because, as they think, that government does not sufficiently help *some* men to eat their bread in the sweat of *other* men's faces, is not the sort of religion upon which people can get to heaven.

These harsh words, directed against the often inhuman and unchristian stand taken by the orthodox church of his times against freedom and equal rights for the Negro, provide a clue to Lincoln's character and reveal the intimate blending of his religious feelings and his political aspirations.

Lincoln, like Gandhi, was a deeply religious man, using the word "religious" in its wider, more philosophical and less sectarian sense; and it is on an understanding of his religion that rests the true appraisal of the character of Abraham Lincoln, the man. Such an understanding is of importance to the student of Theosophy, and Lincoln's own words are the best guide in this direction. As early as 1846, when he stood for the U.S. Congress, he declared:—

That I am not a member of any Christian Church, is true; but I have never denied the truth of the Scriptures; and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any denomination of Christians in particular. It is true that in early life I was inclined to believe in what I understand is called the "Doctrine of Necessity" — that is, that the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind itself has no control.

Herndon, Lincoln's colleague at law and his first biographer,

has further elucidated Lincoln's views on Karma, though none of them ever used that word, and brought out his deep-rooted faith and understanding of the law of causality in man and in nature. Herndon wrote:—

Mr. Lincoln believed in laws that imperiously ruled both matter and mind. With him there could be no miracles outside of law. . . . There were no accidents in his philosophy. Every effect had its cause. The past to him was the cause of the present, and the present, including the past, will be the cause of the grand future, and all are one, links in the endless chain, stretching from the infinite to the finite.

To the attributes of greatness that we named at the beginning of this essay, must now be added this other quality, that of seeing the concatenation of cause-effect-cause in unbroken continuity, in one or many fields, through one or many eras. Whether explicitly expressed as in the life of a sage such as a Confucius, a Shankaracharya or a Plato, or whether poetically stated as in the words of a Wordsworth, a Shelley, or an Edwin Arnold, or whether manifested in the policy of a Lincoln or a Gandhi, this perception of the operation of Justice born out of an understanding of the Self of all creatures appears to be a hall-mark of greatness.

Generations of wise men have not reiterated the ancient injunction "Man, Know Thyself" without reason. Without an inkling of the true nature of oneself how could anyone "learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men"; and, in the absence of this essential requisite, how could a leader of men establish rapport with his subjects, and without this contact how could he govern them? To become even a good politician requires an appreciation of the needs of the populace, but to act as the moral conscience of a nation, to be its educator, social reformer and political leader, demands not only unselfishness of motive but also that depth of understanding of human nature which is conferred by self-knowledge. As the history of his own days records, and as posterity has recognized in still better perspective, Lincoln fulfilled these criteria. His was indeed the compassionate mind yoked to the intelligent heart; without this combination he could not have grappled with and found an honourable solution to the surpassingly complex problems that faced the country.

The two major issues at the core of these problems were Negro slavery and the preserving of the national union. The perfect and poignant logic which Lincoln displayed in demolishing the claims of superiority of the "White Race" as it was then coming to be called is as profound as it is simple to read. What a strong champion of the first of the three objects of the Theosophical Movement he was!

This question of the enslavement of one group of human beings by another was indissolubly linked with the larger issue of a possible

split in the growing nation that was the United States of the 1850's. Lincoln saw, like many other thoughtful men of his age, how slavery was acting as the thin end of the wedge and dividing the country into two opposing groups; but, unlike most others, he could foresee clearly the dangers of such a situation. He felt that he could not let the South with its slaves and slave owners secede from the Union, and he declared long before he became President that he would not permit the fissiparous tendencies to proceed to fruition. In the electrifying speech of June 1858 which made him famous and respected, he said that the agitation for slavery

*will not* cease until a *crisis* shall have been reached, and passed. A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half *slave* and half *free*. I do not expect the Union to be *dissolved* — I do not expect the house to *fall* — but I *do expect* it will cease to be divided. It will become *all* one thing, or *all* the other.

He became the man of the hour for the nation. In his subsequent words and deeds he proved himself to be not only an outstanding patriot but a strong champion of human brotherhood.

In this year of the sesquicentennial anniversary of his birth, it is fitting that all right-thinking men — all human beings who are interested in the welfare of their fellows — should take note of the import of the life of Abraham Lincoln. This does not imply a cataloguing of the events of his worldly career, of the hardships of his youth, of his quick rise to political power, of the battles lost and won under his leadership during the American Civil War; but it involves an attempt at understanding the Man, his motivations and aspirations, his adherence to principles in his dealings with people, his dedication to his duty. Of the latter he had a very clear conception, and a purely personal consideration never marred the situation. His extreme fairness to his opponents was proverbial. Theosophically speaking, it was a mature soul that walked the earth as Abraham Lincoln, and that shouldered excessively heavy responsibilities and dealt ably, "with malice towards none, with charity for all," with the confused social, political and humanitarian issues of the day, thereby rendering a great service to human brotherhood and saving the unity of his nation.

The springs of the strength of a great man run deep, and of Lincoln it has been very aptly said:—

If environment was the determining factor, a Lincoln would be impossible; if heredity alone were sufficient, he would be a "miracle"; if education made the man, Lincoln would have lived and died a farmer or a shopkeeper. But Lincoln was more than these externalities. He moved through heredity, environment and education as any strong soul moves through them, as a trained swimmer meets and conquers the tide.

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# STUDIES IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

## VIII.—THE MESSAGE FOR TODAY

[The following article, reprinted from *Theosophy*, Vol. XI, pp. 364-69, for June 1923, is the last of the first series of these Studies. With the next issue we shall commence the second series.—Eds.]

In our last study we were able to draw the conclusion that H.P.B.'s Message was of the nature of Shruti for our civilization. We will now proceed to quote from her writings and show that she herself regarded it as such.

The SECRET DOCTRINE is not a treatise, or a series of vague theories, but contains all that can be given out to the world in this century. (S.D., I. xxxviii)

Here is a definite period mentioned, and the explanation thereof is to be found in the following:—

Every century an attempt is being made to show the world that Occultism is no vain superstition. Once the door permitted to be kept a little ajar, it will be opened wider with every new century. (S.D., I. xxxvii fn.)

But I must tell you that during the last quarter of every hundred years an attempt is made by those "Masters," of whom I have spoken, to help on the spiritual progress of Humanity in a marked and definite way. Towards the close of each century you will invariably find that an outpouring or upheaval of spirituality — or call it mysticism if you prefer — has taken place. Some one or more persons have appeared in the world as their agents, and a greater or less amount of occult knowledge and teaching has been given out. If you care to do so, you can trace these movements back, century by century, as far as our detailed historical records extend. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 243)<sup>1</sup>

The messengers sent out periodically in the last quarter of every century westward — ever since the mysteries which alone had the key to the secrets of nature had been crushed out of existence in Europe by heathen and Christian conquerors. . . . (*Lucifer*, March 1890 — "The Cycle Moveth." Reprinted in *Theosophy*, February 1916)<sup>2</sup>

Thus it becomes clear that within what are called historical times in the last quarter of every century an effort has been made by the Custodians of the Original Teachings to give some direction to the Original Impulse by means of the Original Method, and to keep the Fire of the Wisdom burning. An accredited messenger charged with a message, whose extent and influence was properly determined,

<sup>1</sup> Indian ed., p. 304 —Eds., T.M.

<sup>2</sup> THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, December 1934.—Eds., T.M.

appeared in the world, though often he was not seen and his message was not heard or heeded.

H.P.B. and Theosophy were the Messenger and the Message, and they appeared in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In more than one place she has said that in the twentieth century more knowledge will be given out, and some misguided people in their haste and carelessness have misunderstood and misinterpreted her carefully worded sentences. Thus:—

In Century the Twentieth some disciple more informed, and far better fitted, may be sent by the Masters of Wisdom to give final and irrefutable proofs that there exists a Science called *Gupta-Vidya*; and that, like the once-mysterious sources of the Nile, the source of all religions and philosophies now known to the world has been for many ages forgotten and lost to men, but is at last found. (*S.D.*, I. xxxviii)

If the present attempt, in the form of our Society, succeeds better than its predecessors have done, then it will be in existence as an organized, living and healthy body when the time comes for the effort of the XXth century. (*Key*, p. 243)<sup>3</sup>

These and similar statements of H.P.B.'s have confused the minds which had in them the capacity of confusion. First, let us point out that in this as in all processes of Nature, the great law of demand and supply, of action and reaction, works. The aspect of contract of the Law of Karma has to be applied for a proper grasp of the method by which the Masters operate in the last quarter of every century. The work of the century is divided into two parts: first, the Masters supply the demand and then wait to see what happens; second, humanity's response to Their Work, the use the Message is put to, becomes the object of observation on Their part. We do not think we will be wrong in saying that a quarter of the time is utilized by Them in Their Labour of Love, and that for the remaining seventy-five years of the century humanity is left alone to learn, mark and inwardly digest what has been given out, what it has been taught. The Message impels — for it has the nature of the Original Impulse in it — the mind of the race to seek for corroborative testimony on the physical plane for the metaphysical truths conveyed in the Message. This is really what underlies such statements as these:—

In the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas. . . . This is no pretension to *prophecy*, but simply a statement based on the knowledge of facts. (*S.D.*, I. xxxvii)

After manifesting what was essential, the direct action of the force of the Impulse stops and an indirect line is followed, the

<sup>3</sup> Indian ed., p. 304.—EDS., T.M.

nature of which is difficult for the lay mind to comprehend. The direct action may be likened to the discovery of the Electric Power, which, once understood, enabled many people to invent an hundred devices to use that power; this second may be compared to the indirect line which the Masters adopt in Their continuous work. But just as all inventions for the use of electric power are rooted in the original discovery, so also all that comes forth as a result of this indirect work must be based on the direct action manifestation.

In leaving this subject we will quote another pregnant sentence of H.P.B.'s from the *Preliminary Memorandum* quoted in *Theosophy*, Vol. I, p. 455. This sentence should be read as supplementing the assertion that all that can be given out in this century has already been given out. Here it is:—

No Master of Wisdom from the East will himself appear or send anyone to Europe or America . . . until the year 1975.

This will be regarded as sufficient to show the *shruti*-nature of H.P.B.'s writings. It is likewise necessary to draw the reader's attention to the fact which emerges in the following two statements that what has been given out is ancient and is regarded as very precious:—

The outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the Archaic ages is now permitted to see the light, after long millenniums of the most profound silence and secrecy. (*S.D.*, I. xxii)

Think you the truth has been shown to you for your sole advantage? That we have broken the silence of centuries for the profit of a handful of dreamers only? (*Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*)

Add to these the quotation from H.P.B. in our last study, to the effect that the unbroken oral teachings have reached her unaltered, and this part of our study is completed.

This completion, however, brings us to the subject of the Messenger. The nature and character of the Messenger are inseparable from those of the Message. They stand or fall together. H.P.B. claims for herself the place of neither an author, nor the inventor, nor even the full discoverer of the Message; she is a transmitter. It is unnecessary in these studies to examine the status and the claims of H.P.B. It has been done such justice as this magazine is capable of in the *History of the Theosophical Movement*, in Vols. VIII to X. The opening sentence of *Isis Unveiled* refers to her "somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern Adepts and study of their science." The Preface of *The Secret Doctrine* says: "The sole advantage which the writer has over her predecessors, is that she need not resort to personal speculations and theories. For this work is a partial statement of what she herself has been taught by more advanced students,

supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation"; and the Introductory says that "she now transmits that which she has received and learnt herself to all those who will accept it."

The above dovetails with and corroborates the thoughts expressed in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and in the *Mandukyopanishad* which we examined in our last study. The decay of the Original Teachings in course of time continued to take place, and for their restoration periodic attempts are made by the Great Lodge of Masters. This periodic attempt is spoken of as taking place in the last quarter of every century — it takes place in that quarter in accordance with the law of cycles. Just as what we call winter takes place at a particular period in the revolution of the earth around the Sun, so also the psychical and spiritual revolution of our humanity around the spiritual sun causes a cycle whose duration in terms of human time is a century. The beginning of this cycle of a hundred years coincides with the last quarter of what is called the Christian era. Human mind is prone to see Nature adjusting her phenomena to our local arrangements. Seasons change not, though human calendars do. It is very probable, for instance, that the Iranian New Year at one time in the far away past fell on the 21st of March — *i.e.*, on the day of the Spring Equinox. Such is not the case now with the descendants of the old Iranians, though unchanging Nature celebrates her periodic birth on that very day every year. Some have naively asked why the Great Custodians of the White Lodge did not begin in a methodic order in the first quarter of every century! It does not seem to have occurred to them that the Lodge and its work have been in existence for more than two thousand years; that the Christian and other eras are men-made phenomena while the Lodge follows Nature-Plans; that the Masters did not choose to initiate and engender spiritual movements in terms of the Christian era, but that when that era came into being, *it* happened to fall in a particular part of that Cycle of Nature which the Lodge was observing and working with. Therefore, if instead of taking a "Christian Century" we were to take, say, a "Muslim" one, the period of the spiritual activity would *not* fall in its last quarter, but in altogether another quarter.

The Original Impulse manifests itself as recurrent impulses, and this manifestation is aided and assisted by the Masters. Perhaps for some it would be a helpful suggestion if we say that the Impulse uses the Masters — Impulse is the Spirit which so energizes the Minds of the Masters that They *have* to work for It. Along this line of thought will be found the explanation of the theory of Avataras or Incarnations. The very mysterious and occult doctrine of Incarnations of great forces — good and bad, Christ and anti-Christ — has never been fully explained. For the intuitive student, however, a careful reflection on the doctrine of Original Impulse

recurrently manifesting itself will open more than one avenue of understanding and interpretation thereof. Extraordinary incarnations of human impulses and instincts and thoughts and desires are the makers of history; but the student should differentiate between these and the Word made Flesh, the Great Incarnations of the Wisdom which is Love and the Sacrifice which is Bliss. That Wisdom-Sacrifice is a Mighty and Intelligent Force which energizes and ultimately ensouls emancipated Beings who become embodiments of It. This energizing and ensouling process is the Original Method whereby that Force of Original Impulse manifests the Wisdom-Sacrifice which makes up the Original Teachings, of which we spoke in our last study.

From all this the preliminary work of the earnest student becomes clear. Let him prove to himself (he can hardly prove it to others unless they, like him, are willing to take pains) that periodic incarnations of the Wisdom-Sacrifice, however varied and different in their manifestations, emanate from One Source, are rooted in One Soul. These incarnations, being not of an imperfect science, but of a perfect system of thought, are like the Avatars of Vishnu, and are not the incarnations of Mr. Jack Black who became John Brown and Mary Green and Tom White, and evolved into a great scientist or pious preacher — still evolving. Let the student note that the diversity of manifestation is immense: Vishnu as the Fish, the Tortoise, the Boar, the Man-Lion, the Dwarf, Parshurama, Ramachandra, Krishna, Buddha are more different from one another than Mr. Jack Black is different from Charles Darwin. On the other hand, in the many incarnations of the Perfect Vishnu there is a constancy and a consistency — a working out of plan, an harmonious unfolding of a perfect scheme which takes place.

As students our task is not to be misled by the apparent diversity, and secondly, to perceive the constancy and the consistency, the harmony and the dovetailing of all incarnations of the Wisdom-Sacrifice.

Let us prove to ourselves: (1) that the component parts which make up the manifestation of the Original Impulse in our day and generation are constant and consistent; (2) that this manifestation is in full accord and harmony with all previous manifestations; which means that we have been able to perceive not only the pearls, each one in itself, but the string on which they were all threaded together.

Sometimes it is said that it is impossible to prove this second consistency, as there exist in the world many philosophies and systems of thought. It is very difficult, we admit, but not impossible; further, we opine that at one time or another in his career each student of the Wisdom-Religion will have to undertake this task. What has to be done is to study ancient and modern religions,

philosophies and sciences, and to sort out doctrines, propositions, teachings which when put together make a complete synthesis—a veritable mosaic. When this attempt is made it will be found that the Original Teachings under the influence of recurrent impulses of the Original Impulse incarnate by definite and purposeful method; further, that the structure of the synthesis is indicative of what should be and must be accepted as true and genuine and what has to be rejected as false.

This work will lead us to the Source, the Soul, the Original Teachings.

What is it? In a clear and unequivocal style H.P.B. has put it forward in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, and with that we will close this series. We set out to inquire if there was Absolute Knowledge, and examining the proposition of Relative Knowledge found ourselves entering the world of archetypes wherein we found sitting in patient serenity the Goddess of Secret Wisdom, who from time to time for the establishment of Dharma unveiled her Sacred Face and revealed the blessing of Its Memory which has so often been defiled. We found the existence of that Absolute Knowledge, of the Pathway of the Archetypal which leads to it; we found that in our day and generation the treading of that Path has been made possible, and it remains for us to follow the Guide of the Secret Doctrine and come to the “uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers.” Says *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 272-273):—

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system: *e.g.*, even in the exotericism of the Puranas. But such is the mysterious power of Occult symbolism, that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain, in the bewildering series of evolutionary progress, are all recorded on a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form. But modern science believes not in the “soul of things,” and hence will reject the whole system of ancient cosmogony. It is useless to say that the system in question is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals. That it is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one early race to another, of the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity. That for long ages, the “Wise Men” of the Fifth Race, of the stock saved and rescued from the last cataclysm and shifting of continents, had passed their lives in *learning, not teaching*. How did they do so? It is answered: by checking, testing, and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions of great adepts; *i.e.*, men

who have developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organizations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions — so obtained as to stand as independent evidence — of other adepts, and by centuries of experiences.

—B. P. WADIA

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You dismiss H. P. Blavatsky rather too easily as “hocus pocus.” Nobody ever affected the thought of so many able men and women by “hocus pocus.” The real source of her influence is to be found in *The Secret Doctrine*, a book on the religions of the world suggesting or disclosing an underlying unity between all great religions. It was a book which Maeterlinck said contained the most grandiose cosmogony in the world, and if you read it merely as a romantic compilation, it is one of the most exciting and stimulating books written for the last hundred years. It is paying a poor compliment to men like Yeats, Maeterlinck, and others, to men like Sir William Crookes, the greatest chemist of modern times, who was a member of her society, to Carter Blake, F.R.S., the anthropologist, and the scholars and scientists in many countries who read H. P. Blavatsky’s books, to assume that they were attracted by “hocus pocus.” If you are ever in the National Library, Kildare Street, and have a couple of hours to spare, you might dip into “The Proem” to *The Secret Doctrine*, and you will understand the secret of the influence of that extraordinary woman on her contemporaries. I found in a publication of the Oxford Press, *The Thibetan Book of the Dead*, a statement made by Samdip Lal, who was the greatest Sanskrit and Thibetan scholar in the world, that H. P. Blavatsky was one of the very, very few Europeans who have a mastery over Indian philosophy and mysticism. You should not be misled by popular catchwords about “hocus pocus,” but try to find out the real secret of H. P. Blavatsky’s influence, which still persists strong as ever, as I have found over here [in London] among many intellectuals and well-known writers.

—A.E.

## FOR OLD SOULS IN YOUNG BODIES

### JUDGE NOT!

“Oh come on, Ganesh! We need another to make up the team. We’ve got to win that match.”

“Honestly I’d like to, fellows, but I can’t!”

Ganesh flushed painfully as he walked away, followed by “Spoilsport!” “Killjoy!” “Old Grind!” and “He hasn’t a bit of school spirit!” “He wants to come first in the exams and the school’s cricket can go hang!” The last taunt, shouted bitterly by Narayan, the captain of the team, whom Ganesh shyly but ardently admired, made him blink hard to keep the tears back, but on he strode, back straight, chin up, till he was out of sight.

It wasn’t the first time his resolute avoidance of the playing field had been resented by the other boys, but Narayan’s gibe had gone home. Ganesh *was* studying hard. He *had* to get a scholarship; so much depended on it for his family! “I don’t blame them,” he told himself. “They don’t understand and I can’t tell them.”

As he neared the shabby little house at the edge of the town where he and his mother had brought the younger children a few months before, when they had had to give up their home, three boys and a small sister who were playing in the compound rushed to the gate to welcome him with gleeful shouts. Ganesh paused only to run in to greet his mother before he ran out to set the children to their tasks. “Come on, now, Mahadevan and Seshadri! Half an hour to water the vegetables and then out you go to the woods to pick up sticks and twigs for Amma’s<sup>1</sup> fire. And mind you come back in another half an hour to do your lessons!” “Sampath, you and Gita come over here with me and we’ll put in the seeds in this new bed that we all dug up yesterday. We have to get the place giving us plenty to eat and have it looking fine when Bapu<sup>1</sup> comes! You carry the packet of seeds, Sampath, and give Gita one to put in every hole I make with this stick as I walk along.” The children all accepted happily and with a sense of importance the roles assigned them by their elder brother. When he went in to study his own lessons the little ones resumed their play.

The first few days there had been many questions from the children about Bapu, questions which their mother and Ganesh, who was her confidant, had answered reassuringly if rather vaguely. “He’ll be coming some day! He’ll be loving us and thinking of us all and when he comes he must find every one of us doing his very best, as he would like to have us do.” The smaller ones slipped more easily into absorption in the present, but Mahadevan and Seshadri often spoke of Bapu and of showing him this and that when he came. “It

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<sup>1</sup> Many Indian children call their mother “Amma” and their father “Bapu.”

will please Bapu," Ganesh would remind them, "if he finds we have done well in school," and they tried hard to follow his example of zealous tackling of their home work. "For Bapu's sake" became the watchword of the little family, holding them all to the performance of their *dharma* or duty, which Bapu had impressed upon them.

The news that came from the distant sanitarium was not cheering and Amma told her younger children only that Bapu had sent them his love. But, after all the others were asleep, she would pour out to Ganesh her anxieties and fears and he would straighten his young shoulders and give her all the comfort and reassurance that he could. "Never mind, Amma, I'll take care of you and the children," he would say. And she would take courage from his young strength and devotion.

"Come back soon, son," she would say as he left for school. Is it surprising that Ganesh found no time or inclination to join in the school games?

The captain of the team was waiting for him one morning as he walked to school. "Look here, old Sobersides," he began, as he fell into step with Ganesh. "Didn't you ever hear that 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy'?"

"Of course I've heard it, and I don't blame you for thinking me a dull boy. Probably I am, but honestly, Narayan, I don't have time to play. It isn't that I'd not enjoy doing it."

"You have 24 hours a day, the same as the rest of us, don't you? Cut out some of your ambition and you'll find time," Narayan urged. "Don't you have any feeling at all for the school?" he asked.

"If you mean, wouldn't I like the boys to win games, why, yes; but don't you think, Narayan, that each one has to decide what is right for him to do? That's what my father always told me."

"I suppose that's so, but why can't you be satisfied with passing marks? Why try so hard to get ahead of all the rest of us?"

"Look, Narayan, it isn't that I want to outshine the others; truly it isn't. But you don't know how important it is for me to get a scholarship!"

"There you go," cried Narayan. "Selfishness again! Do as you please, then! Let the team go hang and get your scholarship!" And with a scornful look that hurt Ganesh worse than the words and tone did, Narayan ran ahead to join some other boys.

Ganesh's stricken look, however, went with his self-appointed judge. Hard as he tried to, Narayan could not dismiss that look from his mind or forget Ganesh's question, "Don't you think that each one has to decide what is right for him to do?" Nothing went right all day, from his lessons to team practice after school, when he felt that he was bungling. His conscience was giving him no peace and he thought he would feel better if he looked up Ganesh and told him he was sorry that he had gone so far. He knew that Ganesh lived at

the very end of the street the school was on and he found the place without any difficulty.

A tired-looking lady in a torn sari opened the door. Yes, she said, Ganesh was at home, but he had a headache and a little fever and was lying down. "I think something had hurt him very much today, but he wouldn't tell me what had happened; I only saw that he was unhappy. You see," she went on with a sudden burst of feeling, "he has such a lot of responsibility on him for a boy of his age; he never complains, but I think sometimes it's just too heavy for him!" Perhaps the sympathy in Narayan's face encouraged her, and she went on. "His father is in a sanitarium, very sick, and Ganesh is doing his best to take his father's place with the younger children, four of them. And when I'm worried — I do get very much worried — he tells me he will take care of all of us. But how can he ever do that and get the children educated unless he gets a scholarship himself? That's what we're hoping for; and every minute Ganesh isn't working in the garden or hearing the children's lessons he's working at his own, except when he eats and sleeps. I don't know any of the boys he's met at school. I think that you must be a friend he's made there?"

"I hope so, Amma, but I don't deserve to be," Narayan said with a humility new to him. "Will you tell him, please, that Narayan said that he was very sorry — he'll know what I mean — and that all of us will be happy when he wins his scholarship; and I'll be seeing him tomorrow?" He put his hands together in a parting greeting. "*Namaste, Amma!*"

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### THE STAR OF PAIN

The night I glimpsed the coruscating cluster  
 That blazes on the austere brow of Pain,  
 I spread in vain my heart to catch the lustre  
 Which only sparkled briefly in my brain.

My selfish heart lay all unfecundated  
 Till, drenched at last with others' tears like rain,  
 It gained unsought the boon so long awaited;  
 There sprang in it a lovely star of Pain.

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## THE THEOSOPHICAL CONCEPT OF FREEDOM

All forms of existence work towards the goal of individual freedom. Man's persistent task is to create that environment which will provide freedom from poverty and fear, freedom of thought and of conscience, of expression and of action. All men in varying degrees long for this freedom. This desire is expressed in the silent yearning of the unawakened slave of ignorance and false concepts, as it is in the mighty proclamation of an Avatar. All, in some degree, worship Truth, Knowledge, Freedom. The greatest Cause is the Cause of Human Freedom. The greatest service is the service of Freedom's Cause. The true leaders of mankind have always consecrated their lives to helping others to find freedom. They found their freedom by fighting for the freedom of others. They came to break their binding chains by working to release their fellow men from their confining bonds.

Freedom is never a gift. It is the "pearl of great price" in anguish won. Only in the heart where glows the fire of true love can freedom's flame be lit, for freedom is the child of love. Abraham Lincoln, one of the earth's great emancipators, once said, "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a Master"; for, as the slave is restricted by the Master, so the Master is encumbered by the slave.

Social, political and economic freedom can only arise out of true individual freedom. This is demonstrable in any age. In this age of darkness, the strife for individual freedom is too often prompted by the unholy desire for power. All too often those who fight for freedom do so because they resent their position as subordinates, while envying the power of a superior. When such obtain liberty of action, they hasten to impose fetters upon their fellow men as once these were imposed on themselves, thus perpetuating the vicious cycle of enslavement.

Those who would be free must strive to stand on their feet, must come out from the herds of men and be separate. This means maintaining a spirit which will not be coerced but will always desire ardently to co-operate. To be an individual in this sense means to have the desire and the resolve to judge each situation on its own merits. It means being able to stand alone, depending on nothing save on our own understanding of and love for our fellow men, which must extend to those with whom there is disagreement and even to those who look upon us with suspicion and enmity.

It is relatively simple to define the nature of freedom and the qualifications and the responsibility of the individual who would be free. The attaining of these conditions and qualities is the purpose of all true ethical systems. To be anything more than a nominal Theosophist one must have the ability to exercise some degree of independent thought. H. P. Blavatsky declares this qualification as basic in her article "What Are the Theosophists": "Be what he may,

once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought — Godward — he is a Theosophist." He need not necessarily be a student of Theosophy. Thus the first step in the acquisition of conscious individuality and self-development is the assertion of independent thought.

But we should be sure of our course and not pursue independence of thought just for the sake of asserting our liberty. Independence of thought and of action is not an end in itself. Independent thinking and action can be either constructive or destructive, iconoclastic or reverently creative. We may seek freedom of thought in order to sacrifice our talents on the altar of service. So we must understand and learn to use certain techniques.

The first and indispensable quality, the only one that will guarantee success, is a genuine love and sympathy for our fellow men. This will express itself as a tolerant, sympathetic, forgiving attitude towards all those we contact, regardless of their shortcomings. This quality comes from the heart and inspires the mind with an understanding of the fact that "he does good who knows how to do good." Where is the room for condemnation in either word or deed if we know that our associates act according to their ability based on their knowledge? When they know better, they will act better. Meanwhile, we must stand ready to meet them at the level which provides a common ground.

We must distinguish between theoretical knowledge or information and its application. Most of us possess a considerable amount of information. We may *know* what to do, but our ability actually to apply the facts at our disposal is limited. We have been unable to assimilate all these facts and transform them into faculties; they have not yet become part and parcel of our emotional, mental and spiritual make-up. For instance, most of us are unable always to respond to the demands which tolerance and kindness place upon us. We find ourselves constantly under emotional stress and strain because of this conflict between what we think ought to be done and what we actually accomplish.

It is necessary that we develop the ability to take the guiding precepts and apply them to our own situation, our own internal and external environment. Just as an aircraft captain is familiar with every detail of his ship and periodically makes minute inspection, so should we understand our psychological nature and inspect it regularly. But it is of even greater importance that we develop the ability to keep to the right course in order to reach our destination — true individual freedom. This requires skill in the use of certain navigational instruments, chiefly the compass. The compass for our flight through the low visibility provided by sensate existence consists of our emotional reactions. These reactions we must learn to read

with complete objectivity, if we are to check our course constantly and accurately.

The analogy of the aircraft can be carried further. The first item necessary for flight is a chart, a map, of the course to be travelled. This compares to the teachings of the Philosophy, particularly the devotional precepts. Next in importance is the ability to read the navigational instruments. For the student, this means the ability to interpret properly his emotional reactions. This is an extremely complicated procedure. It calls for complete objectivity, which is almost impossible for many at the present time.

To illustrate further: in learning to wield instruments used in navigating an aircraft, the pilot's main difficulty is the psychological conflict between his mind and his emotions. In flying through conditions of poor visibility he is absolutely dependent upon the instruments. The mind must constantly interpret the readings. One instrument shows any deviation from straight and level flight; another tells the height of the aircraft; another indicates whether it is going up or down. Now to follow the indications of the instruments is a simple matter, provided the emotional and mental faculties of the pilot are properly trained. Then all that is necessary is to keep the instruments properly co-ordinated and the aircraft will fly straight and on the right course. There is, however, the all-important psychological factor.

All his life the pilot has been trained to depend on his senses for locomotion — walking, driving, etc. His sight, the sense of direction, the relative position of objects, the sense of balance, all these are the product of the sense mechanism. Now, during flight in bad weather he does not have all this to depend upon. He has no sense of direction because he has no reference points; he cannot see either sky or earth and at this point it might prove fatal to rely on his senses and feelings. They cause him to feel as though he was going up when he is going down. He may be in a spin and feel that he is going straight. Many aircraft crashes occur because of the pilot's inability to depend on his mind for direction. The feelings are so strong that they overpower the mind, resulting in a crash.

Does this not suggest the experience of any individual in his attempt to travel the path of psychological control and spiritual development? Our emotions and instincts, interpreted objectively, will give us a true sense of direction. By observing our reactions to our environment we shall surely know whether we are ascending or descending in relation to our goal. After accepting the Teachings of the Sages and deciding to make these the controlling factor in our lives, the next step is to learn to interpret the meaning of our emotional reactions through the use of the higher mental faculties, developed by our knowledge of the philosophy. Let us consider a few examples of the method which can be used in checking

our emotional position.

Probably the most prevalent negative emotion is that of fear. This emotion is the product of incorrect knowledge; for, when we know, we cannot fear. Now what causes fear? Of course any number of external conditions can incite fear. They do so because we consider such conditions dangerous to either our present position or a desired end. When we experience this fear reaction we should immediately make a check. Our compass is giving a signal that we are going off the course. How can we correct the error?

The first thing we should do is to view the problem not emotionally but mentally. We need firm decision and this in turn calls for courage and determination. If the factors involved in a problem are beyond our control, worry is senseless; if we can do something about them, again worry is illogical, for then we should proceed to do what we can and rest content. This is simple to state but difficult to apply.

We must endeavour, through constant practice, to resolve our emotional problems on the plane of the mind. This is the first step in our struggle for freedom.

The greatest source of difficulty is our relation and association with others. The proper interpretation of our reactions to these associations affords the best opportunity we can have of acquiring an understanding of our self, that is, of our kama-manasic or emotional nature. The attempt to understand these emotions in proper context produces a very difficult and subtle psychological problem. This is because it is extremely difficult to realize that in most cases our emotional reaction to the actions of others is a reflection of our own attitudes, hopes, fears, desires, covetousness, ambition; in short, of the whole range of our kama-manasic impulses.

Supposing we are associated with an individual who ignores or snubs us, or whose words and actions express a condescending attitude. Our first feeling or reaction will probably be that of resentment. When this resentment is felt we should know that our psychological compass is indicating that we are off the course. We should immediately ask the question, why is this attitude resented? Analysis will show that resentment develops because the associate's attitude makes us feel inferior. This in turn indicates that we ourselves desire to seem superior. Now if one desires to seem superior he must inevitably resent anybody who implies or declares him to be inferior. So it appears that resenting others for whatever reason is but an expression in us of the very quality we resent in others.

If the qualities our associate displays are actually superior, his actions will not display a supercilious attitude, and yet it may arouse in us a feeling of resentment or of jealousy. If we persist in our attitude of irritation, then further emotional reactions may develop in the form of hate, vengeance, desire for retaliation and the whole com-

plex array of soul-destroying emotions, with attending mental obscuration, false justifications and rationalizations. Obviously, therefore, the real evil is not the attitude or action of our associate, but our own uncontrolled lower nature.

It becomes evident that, with encumbrances such as these, the road to freedom of thought and of action is a difficult one indeed. Were it not for principles of action and of understanding other than the rationalizations produced by kama-manas our position would be hopeless indeed. Those completely ignorant of the deceptions of kama-manas appraise the actions of others on the basis of the distorted image they see in their emotional mirror, entirely unaware of its defects. But those who are attempting to free themselves from the enslaving distortions of their emotional nature are increasingly aware of the deceptive reactions they experience. They know that it is necessary to mistrust their senses, for they are false. To correct their emotional defects they must be prepared to impose upon themselves some degree of mental discipline. They must, first of all, become like the seasoned desert traveller who, seeing a mirage, will not be deluded by it but will keep to the right course.

This course, if perseveringly maintained, will eventually require the aid of the higher mental and spiritual faculties of man's nature. This is accomplished by providing a firm and stable mental attitude which then acts as a focal point for the manifestation of the inspirational influence of the Higher Mind.

The course we are trying to hold will eventually bring us to an important destination — INTEGRATION. The emotional "off course" reactions will eventually bring us to a condition of disintegration. Who is an integrated individual? An individual is integrated to the extent that he is guided by a compassionate mind and an intelligent heart.

The compassionate mind will examine things positively. It will always try to find the causes for the actions of others in terms of broad principles, not narrow prejudices. The compassionate mind will always ask the question, "Am I in possession of sufficient facts to pass a judgment? Of course we are often in possession of sufficient facts to judge routine matters, but are we ever in possession of sufficient facts to know what has motivated an act and to pass moral judgment? The compassionate mind will never do so. It will always remember: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord [LAW]." A mind so motivated is *integrated*, is saturated with Law, Love, Beauty. It has no misshapen or distorted conception, for it recognizes that "all is soul and spirit ever evolving under the rule of law which is inherent in the whole."

The intelligent heart is the other side of our ethical coin. The heart is associated with our feelings. These must always be under the control of the mind if they are to be made intelligent. Motiva-

tion of any kind is a product of the heart, the feelings. The greatest care must be taken to determine the true basis of our motives. As we have seen, at the average stage of development kama-manas is the principal source of motivation, often finding justification for the most selfish and personal emotions. We may have a good motive, one which unquestionably should stimulate us to charitable action; but even this motive must be checked by the mind to determine the method and time of its application. If we look about we shall recognize innumerable incidents involving misery, suffering and injustice because otherwise kind hearts fail to protest against those evils because of the fear of consequences to themselves. Slavery is possible basically because of the sin of omission. Dictators and ruthless rulers are possible because a majority of the people fear to act according to the dictates of their conscience, and by this default they lose their freedom. Thus we see that the road to freedom begins with each individual.

We insist upon the exercise of our free will, our freedom to act as we choose, but the vast majority of our actions are nothing more than rationalized emotions, impulses.

H.P.B. proclaimed that the future of society depended upon the clear sight and action of Theosophists. In their hands indeed are the tools with which to break the bonds of their own slavery to the wiles of the lower nature. How can we help others to free themselves unless we first win our own freedom? How can we be free of fear and other undesirable emotions unless we observe and understand carefully the signals our emotions flash upon the panel of the mind? How can we claim freedom if we stand mute and fearful in the face of injustice and oppression?

We must have the courage to affirm, as did the Founding Fathers of America: "We pledge our lives and fortunes" in the cause of freedom, and then proceed to do precisely that by making every necessary sacrifice to obtain liberty. The courage of a Gandhi is not acquired in a moment of sentimental urge, but over a period of lives engaged in continuous effort to overcome the rationalizations of the lower nature. This is continued until sufficient personal freedom from the restricting illusions of kama-manas is gained to permit participation with the Lords of Light in Their enduring vigilance and efforts, to make of man a potent rather than a potential God; a true, fearless ruler of himself, capable of helping those who are less progressed. What are the basic ingredients of this great endeavour? An aroused spiritual and social consciousness, an honest mind and a desire to face the issue without reservation or regrets.

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## TO ASPIRANTS FOR DISCIPLESHIP

One of the tasks of the Theosophical Movement was and is to re-awaken some of the ideas which were impacted into the mind of early humanity and which have now been forgotten and lie dormant. One of these ideas was that there exist not only sciences which enable us to understand and master physical matter but also a science to help us to solve the mystery of the occult or hidden side of nature and of man. Implicit in this is the idea that there are in man not only physical senses and organs, which would help him to an understanding of the physical sciences, but also organs and instruments transcending these which can be used to learn the science of the inner and spiritual universe. The study and practice of the occult science brings the knowledge of what is good to do, gives the right discrimination between good and evil, and leads man to that power which will enable him to do the good he desires.

Just as one needs a teacher in the physical sciences, so a teacher is needed in order that one may develop the necessary faculties to understand the occult science. Hence the opportunity brought to humanity at this cycle to learn of the existence of the Teachers of this science and that They are willing to teach. To the few who have reached a certain stage of development this teaching is given personally; and the relation of Guru to Chela is a very definite one. To those who aspire to this relationship it is pointed out that after the necessary preliminary work on themselves they can bring themselves under the notice and finally the tuition of a Guru.

On one point H.P.B. was very clear, though aspirants often ignore it. She said that the intention must be entirely pure and unalloyed. To reach to this condition self-effacement in thought and act is essential. Only thus can the Chela be in a condition in which he feels complete trust and loyalty towards his Guru. Perhaps this is why H.P.B. said that "to offer oneself as a candidate for Chelaship is easy enough, to develop into an Adept the most difficult task any man could possibly undertake."

As regards the qualifications for Chelaship, she has told us that all those mentioned in "Chelas and Lay Chelas" (reprinted in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*) "must have been more or less developed in the inner nature by the Chela's UNHELPED EXERTIONS, before he could be actually put to the test." That is our initial task — to be performed *unhelped*. As the Third Fundamental Proposition tells us, it is by self-induced and self-devised ways and means that we must progress. There is no other way. How can there be? Each man alone can know his own deficiencies if he will search for them. He alone can deal with them by means of the well-known rules which he must apply to his present conditions. It is the first step towards practising what we have learnt theoretically. It implies getting rid of our vices ourselves, practising of virtues ourselves, learning to see our vices and virtues

not as ourselves but as instruments for use or disuse. The all-important virtue of selflessness means, first, learning to live at peace with our surroundings — adapting ourselves to them, to the people, to the ideas that others hold.

So often do would-be chelas ill treat or discount the physical body and its organs that it is salutary to note what H.P.B. has said:—

That which makes one mortal a great man and of another a vulgar, silly person is . . . the quality and make-up of the physical shell or casing, and the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real, *Inner man*; and this aptness or inaptness is . . . the result of Karma. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 13*, p. 3)

It is therefore necessary for us to pay attention to improving the brain and the body so that they will be able to transmit and give expression to the Light of the Inner Man.

We are told that the cells of the body are open to two influences, the psychic and the noetic, *i.e.*, to impulsive and to thought-engendered influences. Our lower mind acts on our physical organs and their cells, our higher mind influences the atoms interacting in those cells (“Psychic and Noetic Action”: *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*). As the organs respond to the passions and impulses, it is primarily the passions and impulses that have to be controlled. This cannot be done by the lower mind, which affects the cells and the physical organs, but must be accomplished by the higher mind which affects the atoms interacting in the cells. It is taught that this interaction alone is capable of exciting the brain to a mental representation of spiritual ideas. We have to free ourselves from the rule of impulse to which we have subjugated ourselves in past years and lives and give a different slant to those impulses, transforming them into thought-produced and thought-controlled actions. It is by constant practice that anything can be accomplished. We have to learn to act and then put our knowledge into practice. This is fairly easy. All of us have some experience in exercising control over impulsive actions; we can do this more often and make it more thought-engendered.

But when we consider “the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real, *Inner man*” we meet with more difficulty. It is the brain that must transmit, and the body (personality) that must give expression to what is transmitted by the Inner man through the brain. The brain can be trained by constantly dwelling upon spiritual and philosophic ideas; it can, as W. Q. Judge says, be made porous to higher influences. But the brain functions throughout the body and therefore the organs of action must be such that they can transmit only the higher qualities of the brain. That is why the practice of virtues is necessary, for they purify the personality and its organs. (We know how vices can work as a destructive force upon the physical organs and even the brain;

therefore why not see that virtues improve the organs?)

Having seen what to do, it is the exercise of the will that is needed. "There is no impossibility to him who WILLS." But what a task it is to exercise the will in the right direction! Therefore the struggle is said to be between the Chela's Will and his carnal nature. All we have to do is to get rid of the dross of our nature. Within we are "pure gold." But just as it is difficult and tedious to get rid of the effect of atmosphere and dirt on the gold that has been exposed to these for years, so it is difficult to remove the dross that has covered the gold of our real natures, perhaps for lives.

One further point: It is by means of self-induced and self-devised methods that we improve, working unhelped. But when Chelaship begins (and before, when we start preparing our "mental luggage"), we are no longer free to be self-ruled. Being under a Teacher, it is his methods that we have to adopt, not ours. Hence we must realize that whereas formerly we were free, now "the chief and the only indispensable condition required in the candidate or chela on probation, is simply unswerving fidelity to the chosen Master and his purposes." We need to understand and to dwell upon the idea that

a real Guru is always an Adept in the Occult Science. A man of profound knowledge, exoteric and esoteric, especially the latter; and one who has brought his carnal nature under subjection of the WILL; who has developed in himself both the power (*Siddhi*) to control the forces of nature, and the capacity to probe her secrets by the help of the formerly latent but now active powers of his being. ("Chelas and Lay Chelas": *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*)

Another very important point: The Adepts are subservient to the time-honoured laws and rules of the spiritual life and the Occult Science and are all of one mind, one will, one aim and one purpose.

Let us therefore right at the outset try to learn what is good to do, to discriminate between good and evil. Let there be no hostile thought in our hearts, no feeling of separateness from our "other Selves." It is often forgotten that we must be united as the fingers on one hand; we must have gentle thoughts, do good deeds, speak kind words, for "good will to all and entire oblivion of Self, are the most efficacious means of obtaining knowledge and preparing for the reception of higher wisdom" ("Practical Occultism": *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*). Diseases of the body arise so often from our feeling nature. Let us not put ourselves into the position of one who, by hostile thoughts, injures another. The body is like "an Æolian harp, chorded with two sets of strings, one made of pure silver, the other of catgut."

Every human organ and each cell in the latter has a key-board of its own, like that of a piano, only that it registers and emits sensations instead of sounds. Every key contains the potentiality of good or bad, of produc-

ing harmony or disharmony. This depends on the impulse given and the combinations produced. ("Psychic and Noetic Action": *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*)

Each of us is an artist; both artist and tool must be well in tune. Each human being is a part of the great orchestra that is humanity; and it, in turn, is but a part of the grand orchestra of Nature, visible and invisible, manifested and unmanifested. Let us consciously and willfully take up our place in that orchestra by tuning and then using our instrument according to the laws of harmony, helped by the Conductor who unites the whole into one vast, magnificent sound.

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Shri C. Rajagopalachari's pertinent reflections on "The Province of Religion" appeared in the quarterly *Quest* for July-September 1959. While recognizing that human behaviour has to be controlled, he writes that control imposed by the majority in a democracy is no less irksome to the individual than the commands of a monarch or an oligarchy. He names self-control, which India's great ancient scriptures stress, as the supreme discipline for all intelligent men. "We get this self-control accepted and practised with the least pain and the maximum satisfaction," he believes, "not by law but by the force of religion," defined in this aspect as consisting of "the behests of revered dead men."

Especially topical is Shri Rajagopalachari's demarcation between the legitimate fields of science and religion. While conceding to scientific research its proper sphere, he maintains that

the use to which science is to be put is not a matter of science but a question of right conduct which must fall within the bounds of ethics and therefore of Religion. The nature of bacteriological or nuclear poison is a matter of science. But the use of it in war would be an ethical or religious question. . . . *The ethical restraints of human conduct cannot be treated as something different from worldly affairs, to be kept apart from human conduct itself.* [Italics ours]

Recognizing nations as collectivities of individuals, he properly denies to them freedom from the ethical restraints placed on their units. His call for brave acceptance of the hazards of unilateral action to dissolve hatred and suspicion is a demand for applying, on the international level, the Buddha's prescription for overcoming enmity which He described as *Dhammo Sanatano*, Ancient or Eternal Law:—

In this world never is enmity appeased by hatred; enmity is ever appeased by Love. This is the Law Eternal.

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## THE U.L.T. AND THE ASSOCIATE SOME REFLECTIONS

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. Students of the U.L.T. are familiar with this form, which is described as a clause of great significance, a solemn statement. A person, say, subscribes to this clause and becomes an Associate as many have done. What should be his ideation? What his reflections? What teachings will be helpful to him to become a working partner in this great enterprise of the Spirit instead of remaining a mere drone or a liability?

The very first factor to be realized is that the earnest students of today have not contacted Theosophy for the first time. As Mr. Judge tells us, "No one was ever converted into Theosophy. Each one who *really* comes into it does so because it is only 'an extension of previous beliefs.' This will show you that Karma is a true thing." There are instances of persons who lived on the first floor of a building where study classes were being held twice a week on the ground floor for months on end, and yet never energized themselves to drop in or make enquiries. But all of a sudden, because of Karmic precipitations, for one reason or another they came into intimate contact with the individuals who had taken up the responsibility of running the study group, started attending the meetings and became Associates. Another person may be attracted by an intriguing announcement of a meeting on the notice board of the U.L.T. — "After Death — What?" — may attend the Lodge meetings, feel impressed and become an Associate. There are those who may have come because of curiosity. Persons come and go, but a few always remain to become fortune's favoured soldiers. As Sri Krishna says in the seventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, "Among thousands of mortals a single one perhaps strives for perfection, and among those so striving perhaps a single one knows me as I am."

The thing to remember is that it is not by chance that one becomes an Associate. The signing of the Associate card is the ripened fruit of Karma. We should give it the importance it deserves. It should not be likened to the signing of the application for membership in a club or some other association. It is an important event, a milestone in our spiritual life.

Before proceeding to consider the responsibilities of the Associate, let us dwell on what the U.L.T. is and what it stands for.

"U.L.T." is a name given to certain principles and ideas; those who

associate themselves with those principles and ideas are attracted and *bound by them only* — not by their fellows who do likewise or who refrain or who cease to consider themselves so bound. The DECLARATION, with its signature by the Associates, is a wide departure from anything that exists as an organization. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 366)

The U.L.T. is far-reaching and universal in scope. In the second clause of the Declaration there is a clear enunciation of the work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view, which ultimately lead us to “a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.”

To reach this glorious end we have to cross a vast ocean. Fortunately we have a chart to guide us, *viz.*, the Declaration of the U.L.T. Our path is planned. We have constantly to bear in our minds and enshrine in our hearts the original *lines* laid by H.P.B. and W.Q.J., namely, *Unity, Study and Work*. We can follow the path indicated by them although we may not, at our stage of evolution, be able to follow them or their path. But, to do this effectively, Theosophy has to become an urgent and compelling necessity in our lives. Many of us want to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds and gather a little Theosophy in the bargain. But Theosophy is only for those who want it. Do we really want it? Has Theosophy become a necessity for us?

When a person is so busy earning his bread and butter that he has no time to study, Theosophy has not become for him a necessity. When tired after his day's hard work he must perforce seek recreation in the open air or in a closed cinema theatre, Theosophy has not become for him a necessity. When Lodge meetings are sacrificed to social calls, though they be dubbed “duty,” Theosophy has not become a necessity. When we have gold mohurs to spend on food and raiment and only silver offering for Theosophic work, Theosophy has not become a necessity for us. Many students give to Theosophy after giving themselves everything desired. Why not give first to Theosophy and then buy ourselves other necessaries of life? If Spirit is the basis, energizer and renovator of mind and matter, spiritual wisdom or Theosophy is a greater necessity than food for the body, or ordinary knowledge and culture for the mind. (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. VIII, p. 7)

“That power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men,” says *Light on the Path*. While it is good that we should possess the prodigious strength of a giant and offer it all in the service of the Movement, we should not look forward to any reward or recognition of our work and worth. We have to learn not to push ourselves to the fore. In this we have the shining example of Robert Crosbie, the exemplar of Impersonality. He left no name to conjure with but was one of the self-effacing and determined soldiers in the army of those who live to benefit

mankind. We read in *The Friendly Philosopher*:—

The policy and methods of U.L.T. were instituted to avoid personalities altogether and make the effort dependent upon a body of students who desire no recognition for nor of themselves, thus putting the Teaching directly in the hands of those who would know, to be studied and applied; hence the “anonymity.”

Another critic once said that U.L.T. was “hiding behind Theosophy.” The reply was, “That is much better than standing in front of it and hiding Theosophy.” The U.L.T. does not “hide” behind anything; it is simply holding Theosophy up so that all can see without let or hindrance. (p. 190)

As this principle of Impersonality is an important feature of the working of the U.L.T., let us hearken to the words of the friendly philosopher, Robert Crosbie. He says:—

Impersonality means freedom from personality, but none of us are going to attain that, right away; we are doing well enough if we are persistently, albeit slowly, overcoming.

For practical purposes: if we are developing the child-heart; if we are learning to love things beautiful; if we are becoming more honest and plain and simple; if we are beginning to sense the sweet side of life; if we are getting to like our friends better and extending the circle; if we feel ourselves expanding in sympathy; if we love to work for Theosophy and do not ask position as a reward; if we are not bothering too much about whether we are personal or impersonal — this is travelling on the path of impersonality. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 127)

W.Q.J. gives us sage advice as to how we should make of ourselves useful and efficient instruments for the furtherance of the Movement. He says that we have to attain to a firm conviction that there is that in us, however latent, which desires to be of use to the world. We should realize at least intellectually that all is not well with this world and that it requires intelligent and compassionate hearts and minds. We have to work for the redemption of humanity sooner or later. Of course we shall soon find out that it is not going to be smooth sailing. There is another part of our nature which is absolutely indifferent to the world or its future. We should not give up this self-imposed task. Care and interest should be cultivated. It may take years and lives, but so long as we are at the job there is nothing to despair about it. No work is too small and no time is too short in this great endeavour. Study, practice and promulgation, and time, money and work, are the channels through which our energy should be made to flow.

Let us turn out to be “good stuff.” “Good stuff,” says Robert Crosbie,

means just that many Warriors for the restoration of the Theosophical Movement to its original lines. Many thousands are needed, but as the

body grows, it takes care of itself. The struggle will be fierce — as we face it, not knowing the outcome — but the struggle is for us, or we would not have it. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 396)

We have the encouraging assurance of Robert Crosbie that all sincere students are surrounded by an “invisible escort,” provided our paths are set toward the goal and we remain staunch to the Masters and Their programme. They do not spoonfeed us at every step because They want us to be Self-reliant. By thinking that Masters have deserted us we belittle Them, for it implies ignorance and ingratitude on Their part. It is said that realization comes from dwelling on that which is to be realized. Let us dwell on the Masters and Their programme and try to realize Them, but everything depends on our sincerity. If we are not sincere let us ask: “Why not?”

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## REVIEW

On August 20th, the first anniversary of the passing away of Shri B. P. Wadia, the Indian Institute of World Culture at Bangalore published, under the title *Thus Have I Heard*, a series of essays from his pen, as a tribute to his memory. All the 115 essays included in the book had appeared as leading articles in *The Aryan Path*, from 1949 to the time of his passing, under the significant pen-name — “Shravaka” (Listener).

Deriving his inspiration from the eternal verities taught by the Sages of old and restated for our generation in Theosophy, the author was a profound student of life in its manifold aspects, as is borne out by these essays. With the key that Theosophy offered, he could write with deep insight on subjects as varied as the message of the Great Ones of all time and social reforms, universal ethics and the problems of our day-to-day existence, the world situation and the Gandhian way.

The title he chose for this series of essays — “Thus Have I Heard” — gives an inkling of his real nature — unassuming, unobtrusive, laying no claim to “originality” of ideas, though having a deep insight into the problems of our time and of all times. As a true Shravaka, he lent his ear to the Voice of Wisdom that has been reverberating through the eras and the ages and translated the melody he heard into words which have quickened aspiration in many a mind and heart.

The volume contains food for thought for the Theosophical student and for all others desirous of acquiring noble ideas and living the higher life, and of getting light on the manifold problems of life.

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Mechanical devices, or "lie detectors" as they are called, for testing a person's honesty have been in use for some years and are slowly emerging from the experimental stage to routine employment as an aid in crime detection. In an article condensed from the *Chicago Sunday Tribune Magazine* in the *July Science Digest*, William Leonard describes "How the Lie Detector Works." Its efficiency is based on the discovery that the person who consciously tells an untruth is unable to prevent certain telltale physiological reactions. Changes in breathing, in the behaviour of the heart, etc., are believed to reflect the psychological strain of making statements which the subject inwardly knows are not true.

John Reid, who has interrogated thousands of suspects with his lie-detecting apparatus, declares that he has "yet to meet the man who could honestly answer 'No,' if he were asked: 'Did you ever tell a lie?'" His polygraph, a lie-detecting machine which he helped develop, takes five readings simultaneously, "recording on a moving sheet of graph paper the subject's pulse and blood pressure, his rate of breathing, the psychogalvanic reflex of his skin, and movements of his arms and legs." Reid is quoted as saying:—

Every effort is made to put the subject as much at ease as possible. The lie test of today is no ordeal. It never includes more than 11 questions, and none of those questions is a surprise, for our examiners show the suspect the written list of queries before the questioning begins. No test ever takes more than 3 minutes. Most of them don't last that long. . . . Before starting the lie test we have a cool, deliberate, man-to-man discussion of the case, the facts already verified, and the questions about to be asked. We try to calm the questionee as much as possible. If he's excited, his readings are likely to be subject to distortion. This pre-test discussion period is just the opposite of the old-time "third degree."

Headlines have accrued to Reid in recent years because of the sensational confessions he has wrested from murderers, rapists, arsonists and other criminals. But such cases are said to have actually a small place in his work.

It is probable that the naive awe which most persons feel for anything "scientific" is responsible for a substantial part of the success of the lie detector in extracting confessions from the guilty. How can a simple criminal cope with the magic of science? He loses his nerve and confesses.

With subnormal persons and hardened criminals, in whom the link between the real man and his instrument has been weakened or broken, the lie detector is useless. It finds no physiological tensions to measure because their cause, the moral perception of the ego, is absent. In the case of "normal" persons taking such a test, some

may deliberately school their psychological reactions in order to fool the lie detector, and, successful or not, the conscious character of such an effort makes it a long step on the path to moral ruin. The seeds of moral reform lie not in mechanical devices but in the internal "lie detector," the voice of conscience or the "still, small voice," which in many is all too still and small.

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Particulars of the incident mentioned at the close of Chapter V in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, when "the great seer Swedenborg saw houses burning in the city of Stockholm when he was in another city many miles off," are quoted by Dr. Ian Stevenson in his article on "The Uncomfortable Facts About Extrasensory Perception" in the July *Harper's Magazine*. He quotes the following account from the writings of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, a considerably younger contemporary of Swedenborg, who had verified, through an agent, from witnesses of the episode, the clairvoyance exercised by the Swedish seer on that occasion. He is said to have returned from a trip to England and to have been dining with friends in Göteborg in Sweden. Kant's account follows:—

About six o'clock, Swedenborg went out, and returned to the company quite pale and alarmed. He said that a dangerous fire had just broken out in Stockholm, on Södermalm (where his house was) and that it was spreading very fast. He was restless and went out often. He said that the house of one of his friends, whom he named, was already in ashes, and that his own was in danger. At eight o'clock after he had been out again, he joyfully exclaimed, "Thank God! The fire is extinguished, the third door from my house." On Tuesday morning (three days later) the royal courier arrived at the Governor's with the melancholy intelligence of the fire, of the loss which it had occasioned, and of the houses it had damaged and ruined, not in the least differing from that which Swedenborg had given at the very time when it happened, for the fire was extinguished at eight o'clock.

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In the same article, Dr. Stevenson cites a psychical episode from the 19th century involving three participants. A Mr. Wilmot was on a voyage from Britain to rejoin his wife in the U.S.A. One stormy night he dreamt that his wife visited his cabin, hesitated at the door and then came in and kissed him. When he awoke, his cabin-mate, whose upper berth was set farther back than the lower, to conform with the vessel's sloping side, reproached him for having a woman visit him, describing Mr. Wilmot's wife exactly as he had himself seen her in his dream. The rest of the story is given in Mr. Wilmot's own words (perhaps from records of the Society for Psychi-

cal Research). Describing what happened after he had landed and had met his wife, Mr. Wilmot said:—

...almost her first question when we were alone was, "Did you receive a visit from me a week ago Tuesday?" "A visit from you?" said I. "We were more than a thousand miles at sea." "I know it," she replied, "but it seemed to me that I visited you." "It would be impossible," said I. "Tell me what makes you think so." My wife then told me that on account of the severity of the weather and the reported loss of the "Africa" ...she had been extremely anxious about me. On the night...when the storm had just begun to abate, she had lain awake for a long time thinking of me, and about four o'clock in the morning it seemed to her that she went out to seek me. Crossing the wide and stormy sea, she came at length to a low, black steamship, whose side she went up, and then descending into the cabin, passed through it to the stern until she came to my stateroom. "Tell me," she said, "do they ever have staterooms like the one I saw where the upper berth extends further back than the under one? A man was in the upper berth looking right at me, and for a moment I was afraid to go in, but soon I went up to the side of your berth, bent down and kissed you and embraced you and then went away."

The reciprocal dream experience alone would defy explanation on any materialistic basis. The additional testimony of the independent observer to the presence of the astral visitant makes this an exceptionally interesting case.

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Dr. Stevenson, who heads the Department of Psychiatry in the University of Virginia's School of Medicine, observes in the same article that "parapsychological studies show that the mind can function without the physical senses," which he recognizes opens (or reopens) "the possibility that the mind can also function without the brain or body to which those senses are attached." Truly, as the after-death conditions show.

The parapsychologists are advancing slowly, but they could go by leaps and bounds by taking as working hypotheses some of the teachings of ancient psychological science restated in modern Theosophy. It is hopeful that, as he tells us,

some students of the subject have theorized that current human capacities for extrasensory perception are a faint residue of a once much stronger power which has gradually diminished with evolution — being displaced by the known sensory capacities which can locate the origin of stimuli and thus may serve man better in his adaptation to his current environment.

Why not take the next step and admit hypothetically the existence of astral senses capable of functioning independently of the

physical ones? As Madame Blavatsky has said,

*the whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter. (The Secret Doctrine, II. 149)*

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A high-level committee, with Shri Sri Prakasa, Governor of Bombay, as Chairman, has been appointed by the Union Education Ministry to report on the question of moral and spiritual instruction in schools and make suitable recommendations for its provision (*The Times of India*, July 31st). The committee has been set up in accordance with a recommendation made by the Central Advisory Board of Education at its last meeting.

The question of providing religious and moral instruction in educational institutions is said to have been considered by the Board for well over a decade. In 1946 it resolved that religious teaching was the responsibility of the home and the community to which the pupil belonged, not of the schools. The University Education Commission, set up by the Government of India in 1948, disagreed with the views of the Board and stressed that "the child is robbed of its full development if it receives no guidance in early years towards a recognition of the religious aspects of life." The Secondary Education Commission (1951-53) also dealt with the subject and said that "the whole purpose of education is not fulfilled unless definite moral principles are inculcated in the minds of India's youth."

There was a general desire at the last meeting of the Central Advisory Board that the question of moral and religious instruction in schools should be inquired into by a high-level committee because of "the complexity of the problem."

If by religious education is meant bigoted sectarian instruction, then it would be a flagrant defiance of the Constitution to introduce it in schools in any part of the country. Dogmatism in any direction — the attempt to enforce one's ideas willy-nilly upon another — is reprehensible. If a sound basis for ethics is laid by spreading broadcast the eternal verities about the indwelling God, Karma and Reincarnation, the developing mind of the race will have something true to lay hold of. Character cannot be developed by moralizing. An urgent need in the India of today is to direct school discipline toward training and forming the character for practical life, toward inculcating love of one's neighbour, altruism, mutual charity and unselfishness, which are the true objects of education.

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