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"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SELF-EDUCATION

The selfish devotee lives to no purpose. The man who does not go through his appointed work in life — has lived in vain.

Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain. Exhaust the law of Karmic retribution. Gain Siddhis for thy future birth.

—*The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 38-39

With world conditions as they are, it seems almost impossible to reform large numbers of the populace, and only individuals, a man here and a woman there, are inspired sufficiently so that they take themselves seriously in hand and endeavour to purify their morals and to enlighten their minds. The snares of the *Kali Yuga* are many; the evil influence of the Astral Light is very powerful. But individuals can and do free themselves from their passion-self.

What is most needed today are living Centres of Beneficence, nuclei of earnest men and women who are radiating the purity and intelligence gathered by the exercise of right morality and the acquirement of correct knowledge. Those who are educating themselves for the life of the soul and are making adequate use of the *siddhis*, soul powers, gained through such education, are the saviours of mankind in this day and generation.

What is required of us is not the doing of something remote from the duties with which we are born, but the discharging of those very duties by a different method. Over and over again we are advised that we must take our evolution in our own hands, that no outside power, no known or unknown forces of nature will help us, that he who conquers himself is greater than the conqueror of worlds.

Self-education is fourfold: education of the mind, of the emotions, of the body, including the senses and the brain, and of the soul. Very few in our age, when life has become a contest of minds or a struggle for existence on the plane of economics and of the body, recognize the fact that they are souls. Concentration, intelligence, efficiency, capacity, the power to do things well, at times even character — these are demanded

in the educational sphere, in the competitive world of business; but the soul is rarely taken into account, and when it is accorded a place it is generally a secondary place.

Mind without soul guidance is bound to go astray, and is only too likely to produce the atheist or the agnostic. Emotional expression without guidance from the soul is also bound to go wrong, as when it produces such an artist as is creative at times, and the rest of the time a parasite and worse. Physical education without soul guidance will produce an athlete; as mere brain and sense education, it may produce a fine business man and competitor in the struggle of life, who will know how to overthrow his rivals in the same field of business or of life.

More than half of our troubles arise because our education is incomplete. Mostly education is dual — of the body and of the intellect. Culture of the emotions and soul culture are very largely neglected. The fourfold education of soul, mind, feelings and body is possible for all, for every man has this fourfold nature. One need not wait; a beginning in self-education can be made wherever we are in space and time — in the home, in whatever country we live, and whatever the age of the body.

What will it profit a man to undertake this education? Time was when people asked, "Is it profitable to be educated in 'the three R's'?" Some of the people for whom compulsory education had been introduced rebelled against it — and later fought for it. Similarly, only those who have gone through the discipline of self-education are qualified to speak of its worthwhileness.

Self-education means, first and foremost, taking stock of what we are, not of what we are not; trying to find out, not how weak and mean we are, but how strong and noble we are or can be.

Secondly, each one lives in a particular environment and is responsible for the performance of his own duties in that environment, duties to himself, to his kith and kin and to the wider universe, in ever-expanding circles. No one can live an isolated life, for through our body, our emotional or feeling nature, our mind and our soul we are all the time affecting the whole wide world, which we need to understand and to penetrate. In terms of our knowledge of the beings who make up the universe, human, sub-human or super-human, the universe takes on a different meaning for us. Self-education is that process of education of the incarnated aspect of the soul which enables that soul to discharge its obligations to the great intellectual universe, to the great moral universe, to the great universe of form or of matter.

The soul's reaction to the universe determines its duties. In our bodily aspect, in our feeling or moral aspect, in our intellectual aspect, we are reflecting the powers of the soul. Each one finds himself in a certain set of circumstances because of the necessities of the soul. One man is poor, another is rich; one man is intellectually advanced along one line, another is intellectually advanced along another line, and a third is not intellectually advanced at all — all find themselves where they are under Karma and for the purposes of the soul.

Recognition needs to be gained not only that we are what we are because we *deserve* it, but also that our *desires* in the past have created our present environment, both inner and outer. Our congenital duties are the effects that proceed from what we have desired in the past. We may not desire at the present moment to be where we are, but to try to change our environment by any forcible methods is to invite on ourselves unhappiness and suffering, mental, moral, bodily. The only right way to change our environment is by learning from it the best we can, and, in making use of it, we can begin to alter it in terms of our own energy or desire in the present.

To feed, clothe and shelter the body is one aspect of our congenital duties. Next, each one has certain mental-moral duties. We have duties to our immediate surroundings, to our friends, to our work, to our city, to our country, to the world at large. Our daily life consists of a thousand things. How shall we learn to do them so that the soul, the mind, the moral character, the body with its senses and its brain, may gain for themselves the utmost advantage? No man is superior or inferior to another, from the soul point of view, by reason of the work he does. But a sweeper who performs his own duty well is, spiritually speaking, superior to a king who neglects his obligatory duties. There is no necessary work that is not honourable if the performer is an honourable person. All drudgery, if rightly performed, in the right spirit, becomes divine.

One of the things required of us in our present civilization is to perceive divinity in all tasks. We speak of efficiency, of the power of concentration necessary for successful business and in many other spheres of life. We cannot have these unless we have the right moral viewpoint that concentration develops most easily in those affairs that comprise our natural duties. Unhappiness is the outcome of not seeing that man's proper function is the performance of his own duties by a particular method.

What is that method? All of us live in space and in time and we are all the time making causes. Our relationship to space, to time and to causation leads us to the consideration of three fundamental laws which should govern all actions. Once these three laws are understood and made part of ourselves, self-education becomes a continuous process.

First, in reference to space, there is the law of accuracy. Every significant or insignificant act of ours is performed in space. Accuracy in space sounds simple enough, yet innumerable difficulties present themselves once we begin to apply this basic law. All our laws, programmes, policies, methods of what we call efficiency in all walks of life are based on the idea enshrined in that simple-sounding phrase, accuracy in space.

Every action, moreover, has to be done not only accurately but also at the right time, and so punctuality in time is another fundamental law. We see its operation in all nature, and it is not difficult to conceive of the chaos that would result if the functioning of the natural order of things were based on anything but the law of punctuality. Man alone can and often does break that law — and he and often others also have to bear

the resulting repercussions.

Whatever we do, whether it be the act of waking up or of going to sleep, of speaking or of listening, we are generating causes. The generation of a cause with a pure motive, or purity in causation, is the third fundamental law. In thinking, feeling, speaking, performing deeds, let us ask ourselves, "Is my motive pure?"

He who is not accurate, punctual and purely motivated in what he does is not educating himself, or is educating himself wrongly. He is generating discord, disharmony, and the resulting effect is not contentment and joy but suffering and pain. It is not what we do but how we do the least thing that really matters. It is not an ambition to do something different, but the ambition to do what we are doing in a still better way that will result in soul progress. By striving to do better and better till we become perfect in the particular line of our endeavour, we build for ourselves a more propitious environment for the future. It is this that constitutes self-education.

The performance of duty makes way for further growth. The soul comes to a realization of its own innate, divine nature in such a way that it awakens to a new life. The inner peace and bliss that are born of knowledge unfold, not through the pursuit of some kind of psychic practice or some kind of peculiar meditation, but by the performance of the daily duties of life accurately, punctually and with all the purity of thought, feeling, word and deed that we can command. That is the way of gaining new soul powers. The powers of the soul manifest themselves in a discordant, disharmonious way when the lower constituents of our being are not trained and controlled by the soul. No one ever entered the spiritual life save by the purification of the mind, the emotions, the senses and the body.

Just as the serpent tamers seize the serpent and remove its fangs, without killing it, so must we render harmless the serpent of the lower nature that exists in each one of us. We often feed it with honey and cake and think that by and by its poison will drain away; but it will not. There is only one way to remove that poison — by not giving quarter to the whisperings of the lower self. We shall not succeed at once; many will be the setbacks; but he who picks himself up each time and goes forward is on the right road.

Let each aspirant to the spiritual life learn to use the talisman named Duty. Let hopes for progress, desire for uncalled for service and all else be made subservient to the performance of duties — the small plain duties of life — but duties performed with knowledge of Theosophical principles, and applying that very high standard of morality to each act. Thus will the soul be educated and strengthened. We have to perceive the real inwardness of the saying that "the Chohan in his place, and the atom in its place, do what they can — no more." This perception results from the discharge of one's own duties by the light of the Message of the true Saviours of the Race.

RE-CLASSIFICATION OF PRINCIPLES

[H. P. Blavatsky's reply to T. Subba Row's argument for four, instead of seven, human principles having appeared in *The Theosophist* of April 1887, under the title "Classification of 'Principles'" (see the last issue of THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for the reprint of this article), Subba Row continued the controversy, and the first part of his rejoinder, entitled "The Constitution of the Microcosm," appeared in the May *Theosophist*. He imputed to H.P.B. the authorship of the sevenfold classification given in A. P. Sinnett's book, *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883), and held her likewise responsible for statements in another work, *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History*. H.P.B.'s reply to these and other charges, and her clarification of her position, is reprinted below from the July 1887 *Theosophist* (Vol. VIII, pp. 651-55).

Subba Row continued his argument in the August *Theosophist*, taking an ever more uncompromising position. He was unable to assert that there is no such thing as the septenary classification, but maintained that "the real esoteric sevenfold constitution of the microcosm" was not the one given out by H.P.B. "I make this assertion," he wrote,

without the slightest fear of contradiction. The real classification has all the requisites of a scientific classification. It has seven distinct principles, which correspond with seven distinct states of Pragna or consciousness. It bridges the gulf between the objective and subjective, and indicates the mysterious circuit through which ideation passes. The seven principles are allied to seven states of matter, and to seven forms of force. These principles are harmoniously arranged between two poles, which define the limits of *human* consciousness.

H.P.B., having made clear her stand, thought it best not to continue the controversy further.

The short contribution from W. Q. Judge, "Theosophical Theories of the Microcosm," which we reprint following H.P.B.'s article, appeared in the Correspondence section of *The Theosophist* of August 1887 (Vol. VIII, pp. 712-14) and brought to a close the controversy on this subject of the number of principles in the human constitution. Mr. Judge's suggestion for the use of the learned Brahmin's great intellectual ability and of his familiarity with the ancient Aryan Philosophy, remained, however, unheeded.

While Subba Row's expositions of Indian metaphysics were unequalled, he held a strong unwillingness to divulge teachings which had for long centuries been the secret possession of the Brahmins. He seemed unable to relinquish this attitude although the time was ripe for "the outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the Archaic ages" to be "permitted to see the light, after long millenniums of the most profound silence and secrecy" (*S.D.*, I. xxii). Subba Row's animus toward *The Secret Doctrine* (published the following year, 1888), perhaps because it

further outraged his sense of secrecy as a Brahmin, made complete his estrangement from the Theosophical Movement.—Eds.]

In the May *Theosophist* (1887) I find the first part of a long explanatory article, by Mr. Subba Row, in which the able author has gone to the trouble of dissecting almost everything I have written for the last ten years upon the subject under review.

My first thought was to leave his "answer" without reply. Upon reading it carefully over, however, I have come to the conclusion that perhaps it would not be safe to do so. The article in question is a manifesto. I am not allowed to labour any longer under the impression that it was only an apparent disagreement. Those members and ex-members of our Society who had *rejoiced* at Mr. Subba Row's remarks were consequently right in their conclusions, and I—wrong. As I do not admit—in our case, at any rate—that "a house divided against itself" must fall, for the Theosophical Society can never fall so long as its foundation is very strong, I regard the disagreement, even if *real*, as of no great or vital importance. Yet, were I to fail to answer the strictures in question, it would be immediately inferred that I was silenced by the arguments; or, worse, that I had expounded a tenet which had no basis.

Before I say anything further upon the main subject, however, I must express my surprise at finding the learned author referring to me continually as his "critic." I have never criticized him, nor his teachings whether orally or in print. I had simply expressed regret at finding in *The Theosophist* words calculated, as I then thought, to create false impressions. The position assumed by the lecturer on the *Gita* was as unexpected as it was new to me, and my remarks were meant to be as friendly as I could make them. Nor am I actuated even now by any other feelings. I can only regret, and nothing more, that such new developments of ideas should occur just now, after nearly seven years of *tacit*, if not actual, agreement.

Nor do I find on page 450 of the April *Theosophist* in my footnote¹ anything that should imply, even remotely, least of all "probably," that I endorse the view that "a slur was thrown on the original teachings." I had said that "some (Theosophists) argued that it looked like a slur." As for myself, I have too much reverence for the "original" TEACHERS to ever admit that anything said or done could ever be "a slur" upon their teachings. But if I, *personally*, am made out "the original expounder," there can be no slur whatever. It is, at the worst, a disagreement in personal views. Everyone is free in the Theosophical Society to give full expression to his own ideas—I among the rest; especially when I know that those views are those of *trans*-Himalayan esotericism, if not of *cis*-Himalayan esoteric Brahmanism, as I am now told squarely—for the first time. The words written by me in the footnote, therefore—"Of course those who do not hold to the old school of Aryan and Arhat Adepts

¹ See THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT of September 1962, p. 408, footnote.—Eds.

are in no way bound to adopt the septenary classification" — were never meant for Mr. Subba Row. They applied most innocently, and as I thought liberally, to every and each member of our Association. Why my friend, Mr. T. Subba Row, should have applied them to himself is one of those mysterious combinations — evolved by my own *karma* no doubt — which pass *my* comprehension. To expect a Brahmin, a Vedantin (whether an occultist or otherwise), to accept *in their dead letter* the tenets of Buddhist (even if Aryan) adepts, is like expecting a Western Kabbalist, an Israelite by birth and views, to adhere to our Lord Buddha instead of to Moses. To charge me on such grounds with dogmatism and a desire to evolve "an orthodox creed" out of tenets I have tried to explain to those who are interested in Buddhistic occultism is rather hard. All this compels me to explain my past as well as my present position. As the second portion of Mr. Subba Row's *reply* can hardly contain stronger charges than I find in the first, I ask permission to state that:—

I. Neither the original "Fragments of Occult Truth"² nor yet *Esoteric Buddhism* were ever meant to expound *Brahmanical* philosophy, but that of the *trans-Himalayan* Arhats, as very correctly stated by Mr. Subba Row in his "Brahmanism on the Sevenfold Principle in Man"—"... it is extremely difficult to show [to the profane H.P.B.!] whether the Tibetans derived their doctrine from the ancient Rishis of India, or the ancient Brahmans learned their occult science from the adepts of Tibet; or again, whether the adepts of both countries professed originally the same doctrine and derived it from a common source.... However that may be, the knowledge of *the occult powers of nature* possessed by the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis was learnt by the ancient adepts of India and was appended by them to the esoteric doctrine taught by the residents of the sacred Island (Shambha-la). The Tibetan adepts, however, have not accepted this addition to their esoteric doctrine...." Thus, the readers of *The Theosophist* were told from the first (in 1882) that they "should expect to find a difference between the two doctrines." One of the said "differences" is found in the *exoteric exposition*, or form of presentation, of the sevenfold principle in man.

II. Though the *fundamental* doctrines of Occultism and Esoteric Philosophy are one and the same the world over, and the secret meaning under the outward shell of every old religion — however much they may conflict in appearance — is the outcome of, and proceeds from, the universal WISDOM-RELIGION — the modes of thought and of its expression must necessarily differ. There are Sanskrit words used — "Jiva," for one — by *trans-Himalayan* adepts, whose meaning differs greatly in verbal applications from the meaning it has among the Brahmans in India.

III. I have never boasted of any knowledge of Sanskrit, and, when I came to India last, in 1879, knew very superficially the philosophies of the six schools of Brahmanism. I never pretended to teach Sanskrit

² Reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, November 1953 to February 1955.

or explain Occultism in that language. I claimed to know the esoteric philosophy of the *trans*-Himalayan Occultists and no more. What I knew again, was that the philosophy of the ancient *Dwijas* and Initiates did not, nor could it, differ *essentially* from the esotericism of the "Wisdom-religion," any more than ancient Zoroastrianism, Hermetic philosophy, or Chaldean Kabbala could do so. I have tried to prove it by rendering the technical terms used by the Tibetan Arhats of things and principles, as adopted in *trans*-Himalayan teaching (and which, when given to Mr. Sinnett and others without their Sanskrit or European equivalents, remained to them unintelligible, as they would to all in India), in terms used in Brahmanical philosophy. I may have failed to do so correctly, very likely I have, and made mistakes — I never claimed infallibility — but this is no reason why the sevenfold division should be regarded as "unscientific." That it was *puzzling* I had already admitted, yet, once properly explained, it is the right one, though, in transcendental metaphysics, the quaternary may do as well. In my writings in *The Theosophist* I have always consulted learned and (even *not* very learned) Sanskrit-speaking Brahmans, giving credit to every one of them for knowing the value of Sanskrit terms better than I did. The question then is not whether I may or may not have made use of wrong Sanskrit terms, but whether the occult tenets expounded through me are the right ones — at any rate those of the "Aryan-Chaldeo-Tibetan doctrine" as we call the "universal Wisdom-religion." (See *Five Years of Theosophy*, 1st note to Mr. Subba Row's "Brahmanism on the Sevenfold Principle in Man," pp. 177-79.)

IV. When saying that the sevenfold classification of principles is *absolutely* necessary to explain *post-mortem* phenomena, I repeat only that which I had always said and that which every mystic will understand. "Once we pass from the plane of pure subjective (or metaphysical, hence purely *theoretical*) reasoning on esoteric matters to that of practical demonstration in Occultism, wherein each (lower) principle and attribute has to be analyzed and defined in its application to the phenomena of daily and especially of *post-mortem* life (that of spooks and *pisachas*) the sevenfold classification is the right one." These are my words, which every spiritualist will understand. Vedantin metaphysicians, denying as they do objective reality or importance even to our physical body, are not likely to lose their time in dividing the lower principles in man, the compound *aspects* and nature of the *phantom* of that body. *Practical* occultism does; and it is one of the duties of those Theosophists who study occultism to warn their brethren of the dangers incurred by those who know nothing of the real nature of those apparitions; to warn them that a *shell* is not "*spirit*." This statement of mine I find qualified as "simply absurd." Having never regarded as *absurd* anything said or written by Mr. Subba Row, I could not retaliate even if I would. I can only pronounce the epithet, let us say — *unkind*, and demur to the qualification. Had the author to face "practical demonstration" in spiritual phenomena and "*materializations* of spirits," so called, he would

soon find that his four principles could never cover the ground of this kind of phenomena. Even the *lower aspect* of the principle of *manas* (physical brain, or its *post-mortem* auric survival) and of *kama rupa* are hardly sufficient to explain the *seemingly* intelligent and spiritual principles (*bhut* or elements) that manifest through mediums.

V. It is not consistent with fact and truth to charge me, "the original(?) exponent herself," with changing my conceptions about the nature of principles. "I have never changed them, nor could I do so." In this I claim my right too, as Mr. Subba Row does, to my evidence being "the best and most direct evidence available as regards *my own states of consciousness*." I may have used wrong Sanskrit expressions (and even wrong and clumsily put English sentences, for the matter of that) while trying to blend the Arhat with the Brahmanical occult tenets. As to those conceptions, my "four principles" have to disintegrate and vanish in the air, before any amount of criticism can make me regard my ten fingers as only four; although, *metaphysically*, I am fully prepared to admit that they exist only in my own *mayavic* perceptions and states of consciousness.

VI. Mr. Subba Row, taking hold of *Esoteric Buddhism*, "The Elixir of Life" and *Man*, is pleased to father all their sins of omission and commission on the "Original Expounder." This is hardly fair. The first work was written absolutely without my knowledge, and as the author understood those teachings from letters he had received, what have I to do with them? "The Elixir of Life" was written by its author under direct dictation, or *inspection*, in his own house, in a faraway country, in which I had never been till two years later. Finally *Man* was *entirely rewritten* by one of the two "chelas" and from the same materials as those used by Mr. Sinnett for *Esoteric Buddhism*; the two having understood the teachings, each in his own way. What had I to do with the "states of consciousness" of the three authors, two of whom wrote in England while I was in India? He may attribute to the lack of *scientific* precision in the "original teachings," there being "a jumble." No one would accuse Mr. Subba Row's *Bhagavad-Gita* lectures of any such defects. Yet, I have already heard three or four intelligent persons among our members expounding the said three lectures (those which have already appeared) *in three different and diametrically opposite ways*.

This will do, I believe. *The Secret Doctrine* will contain, no doubt, still more *heterodox* statements from the Brahmanical view. No one is forced to accept *my* opinions or teachings in the Theosophical Society, one of the rules of which enforces only mutual tolerance for religious views. Our body is entirely unsectarian and "only exacts from each member that toleration of the beliefs of others which he desires . . . in regard to his own faith."

Most of us have been playing truants to this golden rule as to all others: more's the pity.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THEOSOPHICAL THEORIES OF THE MICROCOSM

The greatest schisms often come about through the supporters of one cause disputing over mere terminology. Mr. Subba Row, in his able addresses on the *Bhagavad-Gita*, condemned "the sevenfold classification" which has come to be very largely accepted among Theosophists all over the world, and declared that, as that particular classification seemed to him unscientific and misleading, he preferred to adopt another. This brought out a reply which was published in *The Path*,¹ and one which H. P. Blavatsky wrote for *The Theosophist*. As editor of the first named magazine I saw no occasion to enter into any part of the small contest, although at the time the first reply was not really on its face an argument newly propounded for the theory, but rather one pointing out possible inconsistencies in Mr. Subba Row's position. In the May *Theosophist* Mr. Subba Row goes at more length into the matter, and it seems that if his two articles are taken together a way out of the difficulty may be found.

As his articles appeal to my eyes and mind, the real difficulty seems to be, not with *any* and *all sevenfold* classifications, but with the *particular sevenfold classification* found in *Esoteric Buddhism* and other theosophical works. He has in many places given his adherence to the number *seven* as a perfect number, but that does not necessarily bind him to the sevenfold division of *Esoteric Buddhism*. And although I have been an adherent of the Theosophical Society longer than our brother Subba Row, as well as an admirer and supporter of H. P. Blavatsky for many years and am still, yet I cannot adopt the manner in which the terms in the equation of man have been allotted by the author of *Esoteric Buddhism*. I have all along thought that that allotment was more or less tentative, but still have always believed that man—taken as a whole—could be called a sevenfold composition. While the changes of position given to the various "principles" have been going on, I have preferred to stick to the threefold division of *Body, Soul* and *Spirit*, leaving it open to me to say whether or not I would adopt a fourth—that is, the whole three together.

On page 506, May *Theosophist*, I find Mr. Subba Row saying: "I am yet to be convinced that the sevenfold classification we have adopted was the *real sevenfold classification of this ancient school of occultism*." (The italics are mine.) From this we must conclude that he believes the ancient school did have a sevenfold classification, but that ours is not the same. In this—if it be his position—I agree with him. But we should never quarrel over mere words or numbers. If one should say, "I believe in duality, and not in the septenary," he would be right so long as he admits that one of two making up the duad was not perfectly

¹ A letter from Countess Wachtmeister, comparing Subba Row's earlier articles with his "Notes on the *Bhagavad Gita*," had appeared in *The Path* of April 1887.—EDS., THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

known to him in all its parts; for in the duality could be found every one of the seven or the nine, or the twenty-five principles into which some other philosopher chose to divide the human subject. So for the present, I say I believe in the *ternary* division, that being one more easily comprehended by the minds of this Kali-Yuga.

This brings us to the question: "Is it possible for the mind of this Yuga — or perhaps of this part of it — to thoroughly comprehend a psychological enumeration which includes seven numbers?" We can grasp seven easily enough in lower things, such as mathematics, the days of the week, and so on, but I doubt if the undeveloped man can, with his unregenerated mind, grasp *seven* when applied to the unknown quantities of the higher nature. The more especially is this difficult when one considers the poverty of the English language in psychological things.

It is a language that has come up out of piracy, brigandage and war. Very true that it has taken over words from almost all languages, but for what purposes? To suit the uses of nations bound on the path of self-aggrandizement, of mere money-getting, of individualism. How could European minds understand the statement that there may be an astral body and an astral shape also, each distinct from the other, when they have always known that *body* is a thing due to accretions from beef and beer? And if one were to tell them that upon approaching the hall of Brahman a point is reached where the flavour of Brahman is perceived, while at another point the glory of Brahman becomes apparent, they would understand the flavour as something due to seasoning or sauce, and the glory to be a mere effulgence or wide extended fame. But it was necessary to direct their minds to the fact that there is more of man than mere body, and therefore such books as *Esoteric Buddhism*, *Zanoni* and others came before them. And in Mr. Sinnett's book some division had to be adopted that Western minds could grasp until they were able to go higher. But for my part I have never understood that his book was gospel truth. The great basis of our Society would be undermined by any such doctrine, just as much as his own progress would be retarded did he fancy that the views expressed by him were his own invention. In his work he has been careful to show that his teachers hold that a comprehension of numbers is coincident with a development of certain inner senses or principles in man; and as he says that our "fifth principle" is only in germ, it must follow — under the law of correspondences — that it is impossible for the present man to grasp an equation, relating to these higher states, which includes more than five terms. The result then is that when we deal with these matters we will have to use the unknown quantity x , and leave everyone who deals intellectually with the problem to his own manner of placing the different terms. Those who investigate the subject, however, by means of the inner guide, will discover, upon attempting to convey their experiences to their intellect-using fellows, that it is not possible to put their hearers into complete possession of the information gained in that way. But even if both of these classes in the West are left to their own devices, many decades will pass

away, and many false as well as ridiculous systems will arise, grow up and disappear, before the whole truth will be known. But if that object of our Society which calls for a demonstration of the value of the ancient Aryan philosophy and psychology is sedulously pursued, we may hope for an earlier dawn of a better day. Who then are to be foremost in this? Our brothers who now possess Hindu bodies! They are within reach of the material; they are now in bodies that have grown on Indian soil; they are charged with a debt to the great sages of the past. Let them faithfully translate those books into English, explaining the terms as nearly as possible in every case, and not go on with mere transliterations of words that do not exist for the West. Thus the power and energy of the West will be wedded to the metaphysics and spiritual inheritance of the East, while both will be saved from a greater darkness. If this is not done, the day will come when the Hindu of today will find that he has failed to help his Western brothers who were in reality once themselves Hindus. Mr. Subba Row can very easily — owing to his mastery of English — enlighten us all by giving us better translations, or if his time will not allow that, by inducing many Brahmans in India by whom he is held in high esteem, to act upon suggestion of his in that direction.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

“Three spirits live and actuate man,” teaches Paracelsus; “three worlds pour their beams upon him; but all three only as the image and echo of one and the same all-constructing and uniting principle of production. The first is the spirit of the elements (terrestrial body and vital force in its brute condition); the second, the spirit of the stars (sidereal or astral body — the soul); the third is the *Divine* spirit (*Augoeides*).” . . . Man is a little world — a microcosm inside the great universe. Like a foetus, he is suspended, by all his *three* spirits, in the matrix of the macrocosmos; and while his terrestrial body is in constant sympathy with its parent earth, his astral soul lives in unison with the sidereal *anima mundi*. He is in it, as it is in him, for the world-permeating element fills all space, and *is* space itself, only shoreless and infinite. As to his third spirit, the divine, what is it but an infinitesimal ray, one of the countless radiations proceeding directly from the Highest Cause — the Spiritual Light of the World?

—*Isis Unveiled*, I. 212

THE QUIET PLACE

Who is there, whether he dwells in crowded tenement or spacious mansion, who does not sometimes feel the urgent need of seeking sanctuary in an inviolable spot, a retreat secure against dissension and argument, against the pressure of demands from others upon his time and energy, and also against the conflict in himself between his aspirations and his less worthy thoughts and desires, not necessarily evil in their nature but centred in "the personal, the transitory, the evanescent and the perishable"?

Countless followers of the Enlightened One down the centuries have sought their refuge in the ideal exemplified and taught by Gautama Buddha and in the Order He established for his earnest followers, but in what Sangha or its equivalent in other faiths have there been perfect harmony and peace? What class of ordinary mortals like ourselves can claim with truth to have transcended woe and risen beyond the reach of pain while still in earthly bodies?

Theosophy proclaims the availability to everyone of a secure retreat, ever at hand and readily accessible whenever needed, if we but turn our consciousness within, silence the mental and emotional pressures and conflicts and listen in the sanctified solitude of our own heart for the promptings of the still, small voice in which the spiritual consciousness in us speaks to the human consciousness.

Mr. Judge has written of that place of peace within in letters to his friends and students and has done so in words that not only encourage but inspire, not only averring its existence but also showing how to reach it and to point the way to it to others.

"Calmness," he has written, "is the one thing necessary for the spirit to be heard." And again:—

The great struggle must be to open up my outer self, that my higher being may shine through, for I know that in my heart the God sits patient, and that his pure rays are merely veiled from me by the many strivings and illusions that I bring on outwardly. . . .

The work upon which all disciples are employed is that of rendering the body more porous, more fluidic, more responsive to all spiritual influences which arise in the inner centre, in the soul which is an undivided part of the great Soul of all, and less receptive of the outward material influences which are generated by the unthinking world and by those qualities which are in nature.

It is no light task to which he calls us:—

We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and the good from other spheres from beyond the earth.

And yet it is, he tells us, to be achieved by means that strike us as so easy as to be applicable by the simplest earnest mind, the humblest heart:—

By gentleness, detachment, strict attention to duty, and retiring now and then to the quiet place bring up good currents and keep back all evil ones. . . . A steady mind and heart stands still and quiet until the muddy stream rolls clear.

The great Stoic philosopher, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, described the inner retreat in the Fourth Book of his *Meditations*, though he ascribed it to “nothing else than the good ordering of the mind.” He wrote:—

Men seek retreats for themselves, houses in the country, sea-shores, and mountains; and thou, too, art wont to desire such things very much. But this is altogether a mark of the most common sort of men, for it is in thy power whenever thou shalt choose to retire into thyself. For nowhere either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble does a man retire than into his own soul, particularly when he has within him such thoughts that by looking into them he is immediately in perfect tranquillity. . . .

One other witness to the existence of “the quiet place” who testifies to the possibility of reaching it and gaining strength and courage from it when hard pressed is Miss I. A. R. Wylie, a modern novelist and writer of short stories, whose article entitled “The Quest of Our Lives” appeared in the May 1948 *Reader's Digest* and was commented on in our pages in August of that year. In that article she wrote of the “safe place” within herself which she had found in moments of difficulty and from which she had gained a real peace and a sense of integration. Friends with whom she had talked had also had the experience of finding their way to that inner refuge. Interestingly she wrote that they had not been sure how they had first reached it, but all had agreed that it was accessible only when they stood on the “firm ground of moral integrity.” It had been closed to them whenever they wavered from an absolute code of decency and honour. Miss Wylie affirmed her own conviction that the “citadel” was within all men and women of good will, and that the individual quest of it was “the most urgent, significant quest of our lives.” And, having found the way to it, she added,

we can march out of our invulnerable selves, all banners flying, to take risks, seize opportunity with strong hands, meet change with willing adaptability. We shall be often hurt. We cannot escape sorrow and pain and disappointment. But like death itself they will have lost their sting.

Miss Wylie did well to recognize that, winning our way to the “quiet place” and experiencing its calm and strength, we must go forth to do our duty in the world. The vision on the mountain top which that ex-

perience of the secure retreat within resembles, has to be brought down to the valley where our Karma has placed us; the strength and courage that it gave must be applied in the duties of every day.

Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain.

Action is demanded of the sincere Theosophist, not mere intention and thought. Madame Blavatsky declared in *The Key to Theosophy* that

no Theosophist has a right to this name, unless he is thoroughly imbued with the correctness of Carlyle's truism: "The end of man is an *action* and not a *thought*, though it were the noblest" — and unless he sets and models his daily life upon this truth.

What then is Truth?

A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells you. How, then, you ask, do different people think of different and contrary truths? Well, seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that the evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another, and hence those who have made these experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions to be observed in making those experiments. Just as for conducting scientific experiments there is an indispensable scientific course of instruction, in the same way strict preliminary discipline is necessary to qualify a person to make experiments in the spiritual realm. Everyone should, therefore, realize his limitations before he speaks of his Inner Voice. Therefore we have the belief based upon experience, that those who would make individual search after truth as God, must go through several vows, as for instance, the vow of truth, the vow of *brahmacharya* (purity) — for you cannot possibly divide your love for Truth and God with anything else — the vow of non-violence, of poverty and non-possession. Unless you impose on yourselves the five vows, you may not embark on the experiment at all. There are several other conditions prescribed, but I must not take you through all of them. . . . It is because we have at the present moment everybody claiming the right of conscience without going through any discipline whatsoever that there is so much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world. All that I can, in true humility, present to you is that truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility.

—M. K. GANDHI

THE SIX PARAMITAS AND THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

It may not have been noticed that the Six *Paramitas* which form the basis of the *Diamond Sutra* are, in fact, the antonyms of the so-called Seven Deadly Sins.

The first Noble Virtue (or *Paramita*) is the *Dana Paramita* or the Practice of Charity. By Charity is meant Generosity, the antonym of which is Avarice, one of the Seven Deadly Sins. The Lord Buddha informs his disciple Subhuti that true charity cannot be practised by the ego-centred. Actions by the ego-centred which pass off as charitable have no more than the appearance of charity — an observation made in a later age by Jesus, who was especially sensitive to hypocrisy.

Subhuti, if a Bodhisattva-Mahasattva in practising charity, conceives within his mind any of these arbitrary conceptions discriminating himself from other selves, he will be like a man walking in darkness and seeing nothing. But if the Bodhisattva-Mahasattva in his practice of charity, has no arbitrary conceptions of the attainment of the blessing and merit which he will attain by such practice, he will be like a person with good eyes seeing all things clearly as in the bright sunshine.

Similarly with the Practice of Selfless Kindness (the *Sila Paramita*) which is the practice of Morality conjoined with Wisdom. Selfless Kindness implies the attainment of mental equilibrium — the antonym of Anger — and cannot be genuine when practised by the ego-centred who merely impersonate virtue.

The Lord Buddha continued: Do not think, Subhuti, that the Tathagata would consider within himself, "I will deliver human beings." That would be a degrading thought. Why? Because really there are no sentient beings to be delivered by the Tathagata. Should there be any sentient beings to be delivered by the Tathagata, it would mean that the Tathagata was cherishing within his mind arbitrary conceptions of phenomena such as one's own self, other selves, living beings and an universal self.

The Third *Paramita* is the *Kshanti Paramita*, the Practice of Humility and Patience. Humility cannot be attained without Patience, and Patience cannot be practised by ego-centred beings. "If at the time of my suffering," says the Buddha, "I had cherished any of these arbitrary ideas, inevitably I would have fallen into impatience and hatred." Humility is defined as the state of being selfless. This does not mean a state of self-abasement as is often supposed; it simply means the state in which Pride, its antonym, is absent. Self-abasement may be practised by the self-centred, but not humility.

What think you, Subhuti? Suppose a disciple has attained the degree of Anagamin [one who is never to return as a mortal], could he

hold within his mind any such arbitrary conception as, "I have attained the degree of Anagamin"?

No, honoured of the worlds! Because by the degree of Anagamin it means that he is never to return, yet speaking truly, one who has attained that degree never cherishes any such arbitrary conception, and for that reason he is entitled to be called an Anagamin.

The Practice of Zeal and Perseverance (the *Virya Paramita*) is the antonym of Sloth. Without zeal, by which is meant not only the energetic practice of the remaining *Paramitas* but also enlightenment through meditation, no spiritual progress is possible. To the physically busy person whose mind has been seduced by the sense world, those who practise zeal in terms of the prevention of unwholesome, and the cultivation of wholesome, mental states, will appear to be lazy good-for-nothings, which is why so many have sought monastic refuge. The Buddha explains that wherever saints are to be found they will instantly attract and draw all spiritually responsive people away from the habits of ignorance, nurturing them spiritually. But ego-centred people will not have the perseverance to proceed very far.

As disciples become able to zealously and faithfully observe and study this Scripture, explain it to others and circulate it widely, the Tathagata will recognize and support them until they shall succeed in the attainment of its inestimable, illimitable, and wonderful virtues. Such disciples will share with the Tathagata its burden of compassion and its reward of Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi [Highest Perfect Wisdom].

The fifth *Paramita* is the *Dhyana Paramita* (the Practice of Tranquillity).

Subhuti, how is it possible to explain this Scripture to others without holding in mind any arbitrary conception of things and phenomena and Dharmas? It can only be done, Subhuti, by keeping the mind in perfect tranquillity and in selfless oneness with the "suchness" that is Tathagatahood. And why? Because all the mind's arbitrary conceptions of matter, phenomena, and of all conditioning factors and all conceptions and ideas relating thereto are like a dream, a phantasm, a bubble, a shadow, an evanescent dew, the lightning's flash. Every true disciple should thus look upon all phenomena and upon all the activities of the mind and keep his mind empty and selfless and tranquil.

To practise true Tranquillity one must experience the illusory nature of the sense world of Space-Time because only in this way can one become detached from the lure of objects and be freed from the desires which they engender. The ego-centred person cannot attain Tranquillity because, being real to himself, the world of sense seems real and he therefore seeks to gratify himself with the good things he sees, which is a condition of lifelong turbulence. To put this another way, the ego-

centred person is subject to various kinds of vices such as the Deadly Sins of Lust, Gluttony and Envy. Tranquillity, which is a state of Chastity, Temperance and Contentment, can only be achieved through Self-Restraint, which cannot be practised by the selfish.

Nothing could be simpler, or subtler, than this analysis of the Noble Virtues. Charity, Morality, Humility, Zeal and Tranquillity constitute the pathway to Wisdom and can only be practised by those who are not ego-centred, those who do not cherish "arbitrary conceptions of phenomena." In the final *Paramita*, the *Prajna Paramita* or the Practice of Wisdom, Wisdom is itself defined as the state where no arbitrary conceptions of Wisdom are cherished.

Blessed Lord! When thou didst attain Highest Perfect Wisdom, didst thou feel within thy mind that nothing had been acquired?

The Lord Buddha replied: That is it precisely, Subhuti. When I attained Highest Perfect Wisdom, I did not feel as if I grasped within my mind any arbitrary conception of Dharma, not even the slightest. Even the words "Highest Perfect Wisdom" are merely words.

Moreover, Subhuti, what I have attained in Highest Perfect Wisdom is the same as what all others have attained. It is something that is undifferentiated, neither to be regarded as a high state, nor is it to be regarded as a low state. It is wholly independent of any definitive or arbitrary conceptions of an individual self, other selves, living beings, or an Universal Self.

Now, this is *Nirvana* or, if preferred, an arbitrary conception of *Nirvana* put into words and thus reduced to the relative plane of mortal mind for the purpose of spiritual instruction. But if *Nirvana* is Highest Perfect Wisdom, which is a state "wholly independent of any definitive or arbitrary conceptions," this would seem to mean that the Six *Paramitas* can only be practised by the enlightened, which is to say that Wisdom can only be sought by those who already possess it.

The Lord Buddha clarifies this point in the conclusion to the *Diamond Sutra*, explaining that those who seek Wisdom are wise without knowing it, and that Highest Perfect Wisdom is the attainment of the knowledge of Wisdom.

Subhuti, the Tathagata knows that the sentient beings who awaken faith after hearing sentences and sections of this Scripture will accumulate blessing and merit that are inestimable. How do I know this? Because these sentient beings must have already discarded such arbitrary conceptions of phenomena as one's own self, other selves, living beings, and an Universal Self. If they had not, their minds would inevitably grasp after such things and then they would not be able to practise charity nor keep the precepts.

THE NEW STYLE OF THINKING

V.—DESIRES AND DESIRE

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In our last study we discussed two types of desires — mental and bodily. The former may be described as embodying Ahriman-Mara-Devil, while the latter are but shadows cast by that beast. The vehicles of these two desires are mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 260):—

It is not molecularly constituted matter — least of all the human body (*sthulasarira*) — that is the grossest of all our “principles,” but verily the *middle* principle, the real animal centre; whereas our body is but its shell, the irresponsible factor and medium through which the beast in us acts all its life. Every intellectual theosophist will understand my real meaning. Thus the idea that the human tabernacle is built by countless *lives*, just in the same way as the rocky crust of our Earth was, has nothing repulsive in it for the true mystic. Nor can Science oppose the occult teaching, for it is not because the microscope will ever fail to detect the ultimate living atom or life, that it can reject the doctrine.

The student should take note that “the real animal centre” is the womb of mental desires, while the “countless lives” of which the corpus is composed produce the bodily desires. In another place these two desires are explained thus (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 13):—

- (1) Desiring for oneself even such abstractions as power, knowledge, love, happiness or fame.
- (2) Desire for the things of matter.

It will help in our study of the subject if we subdivide these two types according to ordinary knowledge. People speak of good and bad desires; *e.g.*, desire for love or for knowledge is called good while desire for power which evolves intolerance and cruelty is called evil; similarly æsthetic desires of the senses are regarded as good — even a gourmet is praised for his tastes, while indulgence is considered bad. But this division of desires into good and evil made in ordinary knowledge is somewhat arbitrary and confusing. Desires, good or evil, be they mental or be they bodily, are called in Occultism — hindrances.

More than once in this series it has been pointed out that man has the inner nature of perfection as well as the outer error-stricken and error-producing nature. Has the former or higher nature any desires of its own? It has no desires; it has Desire — “Desire for the purely abstract.”

In our normal waking consciousness we have the higher and the lower commingling. We are afflicted and attacked by the desires both of mind and of body. But also, now and then, there is an urge from the higher — the force of the One Desire; its voice is not audible, and its

influence is vague and translates itself to us as the desire to be unselfish, to be good, to be wise.

Now in reference to all that is said above, Occultism, or the Esoteric Philosophy applied, clarifies the issues.

(A) Acquire knowledge of the One Self and Its ray which is the real man.

(B) To acquire this, get rid of false knowledge.

(C) False knowledge results from the two types of desires — mental and bodily.

(D) Listen to the voice of the One Desire; cultivate the art of unfolding some aspect of the One Desire.

In a priceless fragment entitled "Self-Knowledge" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 12), we come upon the steps which, placed in juxtaposition with the above, reveal to us the path to be walked.

(A) Become conscious of ignorance about our own higher nature. Many even among the students do not really know that they are ignorant. Just as many worldly people fancy that they know everything about themselves, so also many students fancy that they know the Occult truths because they have read of these in the textbooks.

(B) We are often deceived and the deception glammers us. In philosophy we speak of this phenomenon as *maya*; in Occultism, learning to be precise, we speak about the serpentine Astral Light. Maya, glamour, self-deception has to be removed.

(C) Real, intuitive or certain knowledge can be obtained by effort. Intuitive knowledge implies knowledge emanating from *Buddhi-Manas*. Right practice in living the higher life enables the waking consciousness to catch the light of *Buddhi-Manas* without its being distorted by the Astral Light. Such spiritual influx of knowledge is most fitful and reaches us only occasionally. This is not sufficient. The ordinary mystic-philosopher remains satisfied with such occasional experience. The real esotericist would not be so satisfied; for, he is taught to possess "indomitable determination to obtain and face that knowledge." Obtaining knowledge implies theory but facing it means actual practice.

Now, it is stated (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 13):—

Life itself teaches these lessons; for all such objects of desire are found Dead Sea fruit in the moment of attainment. This much we learn from experience.

But need we wait till life teaches us? No. One of the basic principles on which the institution of Chelaship rests teaches that it is possible to learn by looking "intelligently into the hearts of men." It is said:—

Study the hearts of men, that you may know what is that world in which you live and of which you will to be a part. Regard the constantly changing and moving life which surrounds you, for it is formed by the hearts of men; and as you learn to understand their constitution

and meaning, you will by degrees be able to read the larger word of life. (*Light on the Path*, p. 12)

The esotericist has already accepted this verity of the possibility of learning from co-disciples, from Nature, from the Great Gurus, and what is accepted in theory has to be realized in practice. There is another verity — complementary to the former. The science of Occultism shows what may be called short cuts to freedom and to the service of humanity by taking which the determined practitioner can reach his goal. Appropriate to our subject the short cut may be described thus: Eschew desires which are hindrances and assimilate the One Desire which sets the prisoner-soul free. Complete the quotation given above from *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 13:—

Intuitive perception seizes on the *positive* truth that satisfaction is attainable only in the infinite; the will makes that conviction an actual fact of consciousness, till at last all desire is centred on the Eternal.

In the last sentence we come upon an important link in the study of our subject — the relation of Will to Desire. Many students are confused about it. Leaving aside for the present a philosophical or a psychological disquisition, let us quote a very practical and therefore a very useful statement from the same pamphlet (p. 14):—

DESIRE... is indistinguishable from Will; but we men never know desire under this form while we remain only men. Therefore Will and Desire are here considered as opposed.

They are considered as opposed, though in reality they are indistinguishable. In grasping the contents of the three fragments from which we have quoted (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, pp. 12-14) the student will derive real help from H.P.B.'s important article "Psychic and Noetic Action" included in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*. Therein we find this statement (p. 59)¹:—

Manas, or rather its lower reflection... whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being, with *kama*, becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of the free will in physical man.

In the light of all that is presented for the student's consideration it will be found that in our normal waking consciousness our task is dual — to purify desires and to awaken Desire which stands behind Will.

The practical way for each student is to search out and ascertain the predominant mental desire, and also the predominant bodily desire. The discipline chosen and accepted by the devotee of Theosophy requires that he purify both these desires by (*a*) obtaining theoretical knowledge about them, and (*b*) proper application to the troubles they cause. Even our Theosophical convictions, if they are rooted in and held from desires, will perpetuate these desires and their results. Faith or

¹ Second edition, p. 52.—EDS.

Shraddha is not merely reliance on the hypothetical Self; how can we rely on something we do not know, about which we have but some vague ideas? Seeking the Self implies seeking the Wisdom about and of the Self. It is said (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 218):—

The body of itself is incapable of action, and is merely an organized aggregation of physical matter used and controlled by the thinker and actor within; it is this thinker and actor who needs to change his modes of thought and action. In changing from one mode of thought and action to another of an opposite kind, the man finds himself at war with habits which he himself established; these have to be dis-established by the institution of habits in accord with his changed basis.

The new style of thinking means a reconstructing of our ideas according to the science of the Soul. Controlling desires, freeing the mind and taking it by the power of Will to the Fountain of Immortality within us, we will be able to offer refreshment to others. The Path cannot be walked without this, and unless we walk it we will not arrive at the Ashrama of the Great Gurus.

Successful control over one's thoughts, words or deeds along moral lines will verily take one to the kingdom of heaven while lack of such control will throw him into the darkness of hell itself.

Therefore foster and preserve self-control as your most precious acquisition; indeed there is nothing so valuable to human life.

The stature of a man who has an unblemished record of domestic life, is far greater than that of the tallest mountain.

Humility is an admirable quality in both rich and poor; but, as it happens, it indeed becomes an additional kind of wealth to the materially rich.

By withdrawing one's fivefold senses into oneself even as the tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell, one becomes endowed with an anchorage that will help pilot him safely through all his births.

Even though you may not succeed in controlling your other faculties fully, you owe it to yourself to control at least your tongue; failure to do so will assuredly entail suffering born out of its misuse.

Beware of your words while giving utterance to them by being uniformly graceful, for, one wrong word might, by hurting the other's feeling, completely undo the wholesome effect created by all other right words put together.

The burn caused by a live ember heals up quickly; but that caused by an untamed tongue is hard to heal.

Verily the god of Dharma will wait at the doorstep of that man who successfully stifles anger at its birth, is learned and at the same time self-controlled.

SOUL-WISDOM

Soul-Wisdom is a term which means much more than just high learning and brilliant academic training. It is profound knowledge arising out of the depth of the heart, indicating vision and foresight. It is an expression of the soul powers of man, of the inner illumination gained through reflection and meditation on universal concepts day after day and life after life. It is the inner experience of the Eternal Pilgrim acquired through contact with the various aspects of the whole cosmos. So it is altogether a different type of knowledge, and can manifest only through those beings who have gone through complete self-purification and self-discipline.

Our civilization is speedily advancing in all branches of knowledge. Young men and women by the thousand go in for higher university education. Scientific research has unveiled some mysteries of Life and Nature. Attempts are made to probe the starry firmament above and the depths of the land and the sea below. This is all to the good; but, side by side with the acquisition of such knowledge, men and women show a lack of true wisdom and of insight in their very behaviour and mode of life. Therefore *The Voice of the Silence* prefers even ignorance to such knowledge with no Soul-Wisdom to illuminate and guide it.

What is the exact difference between this worldly knowledge, better known as head-learning, and Soul-Wisdom? *The Voice of the Silence* names them the Doctrine of the Eye and the Doctrine of the Heart, respectively. The former is gained *via* the senses, the brain and the mind and belongs more or less to the personal consciousness. It may be gained through books or other people, by testimony and inference, by turning without. Soul-Wisdom or the Heart Doctrine is the result of self-realization. When man becomes united to the whole of nature, when he becomes one with the prime Source, all knowledge and powers become his. Tennyson says, referring to worldly knowledge, "She is earthly of the mind but wisdom heavenly of the soul." The difference is as vast as that between heaven and earth. And note also — one belongs to the mind and the other to the soul. Another English poet, Cowper, states: "Knowledge dwells in heads replete with thoughts of other men; Wisdom in minds attentive to their own." Like Krishna, he too emphasizes the necessity for the mind to be engaged in the right performance of duties, to be attentive to the work in hand rather than be thinking about and criticizing others and their work.

Cowper brings out another important Theosophical principle when he says: "Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much; Wisdom is humble that he knows no more." The virtue of humility shines forth in the man of wisdom, who always says, "Thus have I heard," whereas the one with head-learning proudly exclaims, "Behold, I know!" So humility is essential. *The Voice of the Silence* further advises the practitioner: "Be humble, if thou would'st attain to Wisdom. Be humbler still, when Wis-

dom thou hast mastered." Krishna says to Arjuna, in the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error, O son of Bharata." As long as pride lingers, it is an obstacle on the way to Soul-Wisdom.

"The pupil must regain *the child-state he has lost*," according to *The Voice of the Silence*. This implies, not becoming childish, but gaining childlike innocence and purity. What the child does unconsciously, that the pupil has to do deliberately. Then only may arise spontaneously within oneself the knowledge or inner illumination which every mystic strives for. It is only in the Ninth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, when Arjuna had accomplished half the journey, that Krishna speaks about the realization of knowledge. Having gained sufficient equanimity of mind, having shown faith and trust in the Law, Arjuna was qualified for the reception of the Kingly Knowledge and the Kingly Mystery.

How essential the preliminary discipline and training are is well brought out in the *Dhammapada*: "Irrigators lead the waters. Fletchers shape the arrows. Carpenters carve the wood. Wise people discipline themselves." Each one has his own proper duties. Anybody and everybody cannot irrigate the waters or carve the wood or make an arrow. Training and practice are necessary; so also in the spiritual life self-discipline is of the utmost importance.

Soul-Wisdom is not something to be gained from outside as much as to be brought out from within. Once upon a time, in the far past, it was in man's possession, having been gained through contact with divine and exalted Beings who sacrificed Themselves to come down upon earth to teach mankind the Eternal Verities. That knowledge was subsequently lost through the misuse of powers. In *The Secret Doctrine* it is stated how the Divine Eye or the Third Eye, which was once functioning, became atrophied later on. It is an important lesson for students of Theosophy, for they have to make the best possible use, at the present hour, of the knowledge given out, and not fritter away their time and opportunity in other directions.

Head-learning is constantly changing from year to year and from decade to decade, whereas Soul-Wisdom is ever the same; therefore the latter can be made the basis for thought and action which would never lead anyone astray. It is the safest refuge. Soul-Wisdom brings deeper understanding of life and of human nature, so that one can become more and more appreciative of the work of others. The lower mind becomes an instrument or an obedient servant of the higher mind; therefore life's problems and complexities cease to bother us and inner peace and harmony can be established. It is the constant conflict between the two that creates obstacles on the spiritual path and holds back the aspirant from reaching the goal contemplated.

Madame Blavatsky has stated in *The Secret Doctrine*:—

The modern Prometheus has now become *Epi-metheus*, "he who sees only after the event"; because the universal philanthropy of the former has long ago degenerated into selfishness and self-adoration. Man will rebecome the *free* Titan of old, but not before cyclic evolution has re-established the broken harmony between the two natures — the terrestrial and the divine; after which he becomes impermeable to the lower titanic forces, invulnerable in his personality, and immortal in his individuality, which cannot happen before every animal element is eliminated from his nature. (II. 422)

It was for this particular purpose that the great Theosophical Movement was launched, that men and women might become free from the bondage of their lower nature, gain inner illumination, and become helpful and useful channels for the Work of Theosophy.

"Grasped wrongly," said the Buddha on a certain occasion, "the Scriptures conduce to hurt and harm.

"It is precisely as if a man, wanting a water-snake, hunting a water-snake, searching for a water-snake, were to see a big water-snake and were to grasp it by the body or by the tail, and that water-snake were to turn on him and were to bite him on the hand or on the arm or on some other major or minor member of the body, and as a result of this he were to incur death or mortal pain. And why? Because he wrongly grasped the water-snake.

"Precisely so," said the Buddha, "the Scriptures, wrongly grasped, conduce to hurt and harm.

"On the other hand," said the Buddha, "the Scriptures, rightly grasped, conduce to weal and welfare.

"It is precisely as if a man, wanting a water-snake, hunting a water-snake, searching for a water-snake, were to see a big water-snake, and with a goatsfoot, with a stick, were to hold it down, were to hold it down firmly; and with the goatsfoot, with the stick, holding it down, holding it down firmly, were to grasp it by the neck, were to grasp it firmly; no matter how much that water-snake were to wrap its coils about that man's hand or arm or other major or minor member of his body, nevertheless, as a result of that man's firm grasp, he would incur neither death nor mortal pain. And why? Because he rightly grasped the water-snake.

"Precisely so," said the Buddha, "the Scriptures, rightly grasped, conduce to weal and welfare."

—*Majjhima Nikaya*, i. 133-34

UNITY IN THE ALL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Swinburne wrote in his poem "Hertha":—

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

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

“Epipsychidion”:—

I know

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

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

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

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

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

THE FUTURE OCCULTIST

[The following editorial comment was appended to a letter reprinted in *The Theosophist* of August 1884 (Vol. V, pp. 263-264) from the *Indian Mirror*, an influential Calcutta daily. The letter, signed "A Hindu," reads in part:—

We have to endeavour to hasten the approach of the day when the scientific aspect of the "immaculate conception" will be realized. It would not be unprofitable here to quote the sentiments of an Eminent Occultist, published in the *Paradoxes of the Highest Science*:—

"Woman must not be looked upon as only an appanage of man, since she was not made for his mere benefit or pleasure any more than he for hers; but the two must be realized as equal powers, though unlike individualities.

"...Woman's mission is to become the mother of future occultists—of those who will be born without sin. On the elevation of woman, the world's redemption and salvation hinge. And not till woman bursts the bonds of her sexual slavery, to which she has ever been subjected, will the world obtain an inkling of what she really is, and of her proper place in the economy of nature....

"...Then the world will have a race of Buddhas and Christs, for the world will have discovered that individuals *have it in their own powers* to procreate Buddha-like children or demons. When that knowledge comes, all dogmatic religions, and with these the demons, will die out...." (Page 115)

In short, one may say that what mankind has first to get rid of are the base passions and desires which appeal to their sensual appetites. The woman has to cease to be a slave; so has the man to become free; both have to break loose from the bondage of animal tendencies. Then will their natures be elevated; then will the woman be able to put herself *en rapport* with *Prakriti*, and man with *Purush*: the union of these two will produce a race of *Buddhas*, the children of the Virgin "without sin." These are our *ideal* men and women, but philosophy recognizes that "the imagination realizes what it invents," a paradoxical truth beautifully put forth by Eliphas Levi. And if those Hindus, who blindly worship their sacred books as also those who sneer at these latter without realizing the meaning of what they contain, were but to return to them with an enlightened eye, and comprehend their teachings by reading them between the lines, they will take the right step in the cause of progress, which should be the real scope of education.

The words of the "Eminent Occultist" quoted above are from a volume published by Allan O. Hume in 1883, containing certain heretofore unpublished manuscripts of the late Eliphas Levi which had been sent to him by Master K.H. The Master had appended his own comments to various statements in the manuscripts. These comments are signed "E.O.," which, according to Mr. Hume's statement in the Preface, stands for "Eminent Occultist."

An editorial footnote in *The Theosophist* states:—

The writer in the *Indian Mirror* has omitted the most important passage from the remarks of the "Eminent Occultist." The passage reads: "Old India, the India of the Rishis, made the first sounding with her plummet line in this ocean of Truth, but the post-Mahabharatan India, with all her pro-

fundity of learning, has neglected and forgotten it." This remark will show that the present article treats of a practical reality and not of a fanciful theory.

—Eds.]

The above letter raises certain important questions. Some enquire how the world is to go on if all were to become occultists, one of the vital conditions of that order being celibacy. Others say that the ancient *Rishis* married, quoting some of the names mentioned in the Hindu religious books; and argue therefrom that celibacy is not an essential condition for progress in *practical* occultism. Generally, they put a literal interpretation upon what is beautifully conveyed by means of an allegory and insist upon the dead-letter sense being correct, whenever such a course is profitable in their narrow interests. They find it difficult to control the lower animal desires; and, in order to justify their conduct of persistence in hankering after sensual pleasures, they resort to these books as their authority, interpreting them in a manner most convenient to themselves. Of course, when any passages, even in their exoteric sense, conflict with the dictates of their "lower self," then others are quoted, which *esoterically* convey the same sense, although exoterically supporting their peculiar views. The question of the marriage of the *Rishis* is one of such disputed points. The readers of *The Theosophist* may recall here, with advantage, a passage occurring in the article under the heading of "Magicon," where one of the occultists is said to have rejected the hand of a beautiful young lady, on the ground of his having taken the vow of celibacy, although he himself confesses further on to be courting a virgin whose name was "Sophia." Now, it is explained there that "Sophia" is wisdom or the *Buddhi*—the spiritual soul (our sixth principle). This principle is everywhere represented as a "female," because it is passive inasmuch as it is merely the vehicle of the seventh principle. This latter—which is called *Atma* when spoken of in connection with an individual and *Purusha* when applied in its relation to the Universe—is the active male, for it is the CENTRE OF ENERGY acting through and upon its female vehicle, the sixth principle.

The occultist, when he has identified himself thoroughly with his *Atma*, acts upon *Buddhi*, for, according to the laws of Cosmic Evolution, the *Purusha*—the universal seventh principle—is perpetually acting upon and manifesting itself through *Prakriti*—the universal sixth principle. Thus the MAHATMA, who has become one with his seventh principle—which is identical with *Purusha*, since there is no isolation in the spiritual monad—is practically a creator, for he has identified himself with the evolving and the manifesting energy of nature. It was in this sense that the *Rishis* are said to have married. And the union of *Siva* and *Sakti* represents the same allegory. *Siva* is the *Logos*, the *Vach*, manifested through the *Sakti*; and the union of the two produces the phenomenal creation, for until the Son is born, the Father and the Mother are non-existent. Now *Sakti* being a female princi-

ple, it is *fully* manifested through a woman, although, properly speaking, the *inner* man is neither male, nor female. It is only the preponderance of either of the two principles (positive and negative) which determines the sex. Now, this preponderance is determined by the Law of Affinity; and hence in a woman is manifested abnormally the occult power represented by *Sakti*. She is moreover gifted with a wonderfully vivid imagination — stronger than man's. And as the phenomenal is the realization or rather the manifestation of the IDEAL, which can be properly and strongly conceived only by a *powerful* IMAGINATION — a WOMAN-ADEPT can produce high occultists — a race of "Buddhas and Christs," born "without sin." The more and the sooner the animal sexual affinities are given up, the stronger and the sooner will be the manifestation of the higher occult powers which alone can produce the "immaculate conception." And this art is practically taught to the occultists at a very high stage of initiation. The "Adept," whether the *Sthula Sarira* be male or female, is then able to bring a new being into existence by the manipulation of cosmic forces. *Anasuya*, a female adept of the ancient times, is thus said to have conceived immaculately *Durvasas*, *Dattatreya* and *Chandra* — the three distinct types of Adeptship. Thus it will be seen that the marriage of the occultist (who is, as already explained, neither male nor female) is a "holy union," devoid of sin, in the same manner as Krishna's union with thousands of *Gopis*. Sensual-minded men have taken this fact too literally; and, out of a wrong interpretation of the text, has arisen a sect which indulges in the most degrading practices. But, in fact, *Krishna* represents the seventh principle, while the *Gopis* indicate the innumerable powers of that principle manifested through its "vehicle." Its union "without sin," or rather the action or manifestation of each of these powers through the "female principle," gives rise to the phenomenal appearances. In such a union the occultist is happy and "without sin" for the "conception" of his other-half — the female principle — is "immaculate." The very fact that this stage pertains to one of the very highest initiations shows that the time — when ordinary humanity, during the course of cosmic evolution, will, in this manner, be able to produce a race of "Buddhas," etc., born "without sin" — is yet very, very far off — perhaps attainable in the sixth or the seventh "round." But when once this possibility and the actuality of this fact is recognized, the course of living and education may be so moulded as to hasten the approach of that eventful day when on this earth will descend "the Kingdom of Heaven."

EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

Masters have said that They cannot interfere with the Karma of even Their chelas. Their purpose and method are to "help Nature and work on with her." They will "interfere" or act only when the All and the Whole is benefited. They cannot help individuals or even nations and races at the cost of others, be they individuals or nations. What then is implied in the idea of "taking upon oneself the Karma of others"? Take H.P.B.'s case: she was asked and she consented to take upon herself the burden of others' Karma. Now, all beings, small and great, make Karma (Aphorism 1); but, further, each also may become the "agent" of Karma for those makers of Karma. So H.P.B. could take up the Karma of the entire humanity, but in doing whatever she had to do she had to encounter those "agents" — in her case, special individuals like Judge, Damodar, Olcott, Mrs. Besant, Sinnett, etc., and also groups like the Theosophical Society which she created. (As she said, she was the Society's mother and her magnetic fluid circulated in it.) Outside the T.S. and the Theosophical Movement she had other work and other agents of Karma. Of course this does not include her own family or national Karma; that she had to deal with independently, so to speak. We are all learning to be Universal Beings, aspiring to serve Humanity without any distinctions. Now our "universe" is small, but the same principles are at work. Every accredited chela gets his share in learning to take upon himself the Karma of others. Theosophical students make a jump and a short cut, so to say, from personal Karma to universal Karma, taking in their stride family, community, national and race Karma. There is the factor of self-surrender and Self-surrender also involved.

Karma is a difficult topic. Metaphysically speaking, Natural Impulse Karma or Fohatic Will expression is primary and basic; then, man's self-induced ways make his own Will Karma. A higher phase of that Will-full Karma is what you are looking into when you refer to H.P.B.'s having made herself a scapegoat for the *Kali Yuga*. The essay on "Karma" in *Light on the Path* has some implications of it. Of course there is the melting pot of Karma and there is not your Karma and mine, but one Karma. How it all functions, works out, rewards and punishes — that remains a puzzle and a mystery. It may not be soluble by us at present, but some day—!

We know our Karma very definitely from the effect side: whether I am well or ill; what my character is; why my knowledge is what it is, limited or otherwise, and so on. These are effects and people always seek causes and give answers — God, heredity, the stars, etc. The cause in every case is ourselves — *our* Karma, *i.e.*, action. Therefore from the effect side I know my Karma. We get into a wrong line of thought when, in the present life, we meet agents of Karma through whom we fulfil Karma and pay our debts. That these *are* our agents of Karma there is

no doubt. But there is unexpended Karma and there are other agents. Also in collective life half-a-dozen agents may be used for our effect-experience. The mystery of individual Karma as a part and an aspect of collective Karma is again the philosophic problem of the One in the many. People ask why they suffer, but accept wrong answers in nine cases out of ten. Even our students seeking full understanding through partial knowledge look in the wrong direction. Making applications to our own self in the field of Karma — that is indeed a difficult thing.

We repeat our errors. Even knowing the cause will not enable us to banish the error; a remedy has to be found. Take a very simple case — a headache; you may trace it to wrong eating as cause, but to remove the headache you have to take a pill! But that does not tell you why this food gives you a headache and this pill removes it. To go through an experience is one thing; to learn the lesson thereof, another. You have to trace the causal weakness; not what kind of food causes headache or indigestion but how and why. Otherwise we shall be lost in the process of links. Mind-feelings or feeling-thoughts are the root and we have to set that right; one cause will remove several ill effects. That is where corporate Karma comes in. No, we do not learn from every Karma and we will not till we learn the remedy side of Karma — to stand up and fight the Great War. There is one Right Way for everything: patience, resignation and action based on and after study of the Sacred Science. You see, we cut across mundane webs to a Celestial Force.

About counteracting Karma and three lives [Aphorism on Karma, No. 26], as I understand it: though there are always agents of Karma (that is, others) we make Karma and feel its effects. But when the time comes and we feel within ourselves that a deliberate effort should be made to pay off Karma, we naturally turn to the *inner* environment of mind and heart, look at our weaknesses and powers and, with the aid of will, knowledge and aspirations, work; we succeed though the period of three lives witnesses the death of what we have been working at. Is there not fulfilment of past Karma by what and how we act now?

As to the effort made by man to overcome his Karma and obliterate the impressions of the past: We have a very important Aphorism given in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*. Please see Aphorism No. 27, where we are told that measures can be taken by an ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects and to counteract by setting up opposite causes, thus weakening past Karma and transmuting it into real Karmic stamina for the benefit of the ego. Please also consult Aphorism No. 13. We never create a new force without the basis of an old impression, good or bad. Just as our new knowledge is but an extension of old knowledge, so also our new impressions are an extension of old impressions, whether they be Kamic or Buddhic. The transfer from the Kamic to the Buddhic impressions

occurs because knowledge is acquired through study, and application is made of that knowledge. Our old impressions can be turned into good forces by the help of knowledge.

Karma always offers opportunities for eager longings; your wish will be fulfilled if your heart yearns that way.

National Karma is like personal Karma — we succumb or we overcome. A nation is composed of persons, individuals, *i.e.*, two classes: those who live and act as personalities, and others as Individualities. The former are guided by the fate aspect of the Law; the latter are guided by knowledge which teaches the meaning and mystery of Free Will — the Will to be freed. This freeing of the Will is gradual. More and more we must act with responsibility by self-induction, by self-devised ways and means, and when our Karma checks us, find out how to checkmate the move of Karma.

There can be no objection to the general well-known broad propositions put in the essay on "Men Karmic Agents," nor to the statement that there is no excuse under Karma for a failure to do a present duty in protecting those who are wronged or attacked, but the tone of that essay is really in the direction of showing the necessity of our being reformers of other people who offend in various ways. It is a personal question with every theosophist whether he will assume this position; the general proposition "Men are Karmic agents" does not make it entirely clear. For horses, dogs, the wind, the whole of manifested nature, are Karmic agents as much as Man is. There is no doubt many people need reforming, and if one's observation did not show that they generally rebelled at interference it might be well for us to ride forth to the reformation. But for one person who is benefited or reformed by our punitive measures in social life, there are probably one hundred who are only angered. If, then, an enormous percentage of people are made to set up extreme currents of anger and bitterness by our reformatory acts and speech in small matters, we must some day feel the reaction even though we thought to benefit society in what we did. In those cases, while attempting to constitute ourselves conscious Karmic agents, we succeeded, but at the same time set up new Karma just as bad as that which we appeared to be working out: an endless chain, a ceaselessly moving wheel moved again, and nothing particular gained except a minute percentage of benefit, a larger proportion of bitterness evoked, and the largest result being self-satisfaction at having punished the fault of another.

—W. Q. JUDGE (*The Path*, February 1892)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Mr. Maurice Cranston, Lecturer in Political Science, London School of Economics, and author of several books, in his talk on "Culture and Anxiety" broadcast over the B.B.C. Home Service (*The Listener*, June 7th) separates the two senses in which the word "culture" can be used. In one sense, a "culture" is simply "a type of society," one identified by its technical, religious, moral, economic, social and artistic peculiarities. But there is also the sense in which one speaks of a cultured person — someone cultivated in literature, art, languages, history and so forth, and of course manners. "Culture in this second sense," says Mr. Cranston, "is inextricably allied to a concept of excellence; it was of this that Matthew Arnold was thinking when he defined culture as acquainting ourselves with 'the best that has been said and thought in the world.'" By separating the two senses of the word, it is possible to envisage "a culture without culture — a society lacking any of the higher arts or graces, any æsthetic sensibility or imagination, or striving for perfection."

The ideal of a cultured nation is one to which many today aspire, but reformers of the present day, as pointed out by Mr. Cranston, have no clear idea of what they mean by culture. If we agree with Matthew Arnold that culture implies the pursuit of the best, we must know how to recognize the best. What is the criterion of taste? How does one know where excellence lies? One must decide for oneself what is better and what is worse, and this is no easy task. To evaluate and to judge is a heavy responsibility. Mr. Cranston infers that where there is responsibility it is natural that there should also be anxiety.

This is not the only reason why people shrink from the thought of excellence. Many are loath to do their own thinking and are content to let the will of the majority decide what shall be done. Commercialized news and mass entertainments are, in the words of Mr. Cranston, "the institutions of a culture without superiority, where nothing is better than 'what the public wants.'" "

What is more, a culture which is "ordinary" calls for no effort or exertion. Mr. Cranston concludes:—

The only problem it raises is the question whether such a culture is really a culture in anything but the anthropologists' sense of the word. It might have books, but no literature; buildings, but no architecture; paintings, but no art: nothing that would need to be striven for, and nothing worth striving for. The culture which *does* entail a concept of excellence can never be had without effort. . . .

That rather neglected sociologist, Karl Mannheim, used to say that the role of artists and what he called culturally creative élites was to sublimate the psychic forces in society. But not all artists are content to fill this "social function." Sometimes they do help to sublimate the psychic forces; but often they set up tensions and release emotional drives that undermine the social order. . . . And since we can never be

sure what the result will be, socially useful or socially harmful, it is only reasonable that we should feel uneasy. It is natural to be anxious, and I think it will continue to be, until we know a great deal more than we know now, about the psychology of art and society, and, for that matter, about the psychology of our individual selves.

The word "culture" has deep philosophical and ethical implications. It is an expression of men's inner condition, and has its roots in the cultivation of the possibilities and higher faculties inherent in every individual. There are cultures that are ephemeral and a Culture that is enduring. A truly cultured individual is able to absorb the beneficent currents that flow from all directions and at all times, and discerns behind the many cultures of the world a harmonious pattern, a universal Culture which is above every nation and creed but has ever found expression in the Good, the True and the Beautiful in each of them. Such a cultured man takes the whole universe for his province, considers humanity a single family, recognizes the value of reverence for Nature and for her laws. Cultural development, whether individual or collective, becomes for such an one a continuing, creative and absorbing pursuit.

In the same issue of *The Listener* appears a thought-provoking "Note on the Definition of Culture" by Sir Richard Rees, which reads in part:—

The precarious condition of culture in the twentieth century is not a problem confined to any one country or any one continent. It is world-wide. Any society in which there appear to be two separate cultures, divorced from one another, is in fact a society whose culture is in decay. If it is possible to speak of a scientific culture on the one hand and a literary and artistic culture on the other, then it is certain that neither of these so-called cultures is genuine.

The only writer I know of who has succeeded in adumbrating a more positive description is T. S. Eliot, in his book, *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture*: "While we believe," says Eliot, "that the same religion may inform a variety of cultures, we may ask whether any culture could come into being or maintain itself, without a religious basis. We may go further and ask whether what we call the culture, and what we call the religion, of a people are not different aspects of the same thing: the culture being essentially the incarnation (so to speak) of the religion of a people." A high religion means a high culture, a savage religion means a savage culture, and no religion means no culture. It is obvious which of the three cases most resembles our own case today. . . .

. . . a scientific Utopia is not the same thing as a civilization and can never produce anything that deserves the name of culture. The preservation and revivification of culture does not mean a fixation upon the past or an enslavement to tradition. On the contrary, it means what Dr. Leavis would call the "living creative response of individual

minds" to developments in the present. But this is only possible when individuals are nourished and inspired by their own spiritual and cultural traditions. If nothing of the sort has happened it is because in Europe and America, ever since the eighteenth century, there has been a continuous process of spiritual and cultural deracination, and this process has now spread to all the rest of the world.

Indeed we need religion; we need ritual; but we should free ourselves and the world of their distorted shadows — orthodoxy and conservatism. The tendency today is to become irreligious, to disregard the existence of the invisible and the spiritual. Spirituality in religion and rites and rituals which acknowledge the debt of human beings to the powers of nature and which endow human living with grace and beauty are abandoned, and instead, in the words of Sir Richard Rees, "we are bending all our efforts towards the creation of an irreligious World State, which will probably be the source of great material prosperity, but which cannot possibly be a source of culture."

The findings of a study undertaken by the Parapsychology Foundation of New York were published recently in a monograph by Dr. Karlis Osis, under the title *Deathbed Observations by Physicians and Nurses*. This is condensed by the author, in collaboration with Marian L. Nester, in the Spring 1962 issue of the *International Journal of Parapsychology*.

The behaviour and experiences of dying persons were studied especially with a view to collecting evidence for survival after death. The word "survival," it should be noted, typifies the teaching of the Spiritualists and the psychical researchers, while "immortality" is a fundamental concept of ancient Oriental Philosophy which Theosophy reiterates. "Survival" lays the emphasis on this material life from which something survives; while "immortality" has in it the idea of something beginningless and endless, not limited to a particular form or manifestation — an altogether nobler conception.

A general questionnaire was sent to 10,000 doctors and nurses, taking care to choose from such professional categories as were more likely to have made deathbed observations. This was followed up by five detailed questionnaires. The respondents had observed 35,540 dying patients. It was learned, however, that only about 10% of the dying are conscious during the last hour.

It is significant to note that, in the respondents' judgment, fear does not at all dominate the emotions of the dying, and there is often on the dying man's face an expression of happiness and peace where before there had been a look of distress and pain. The cause of this last-hour elation is being inquired into.

Some patients saw visions of what they described as "heaven," or the "Promised Land," or "another world." It is admitted that "traditional concepts from religious writings and pictures without doubt influenced

such visions," which appeared only to "religious people" and those who had all their life firmly believed in such a life after death in a heavenly world.

Doctors and nurses alike were vividly impressed by the patients who, revived from a state near death or from deep anæsthesia, reported "unusual experiences."

The respondents reported 1,370 "hallucinated" patients, *i.e.*, those who saw "apparitions" of the dead or of the living, or of religious or mythological figures. A great many close relatives, a large proportion of whom were dead, were "seen" by the dying. It is suggested that, since the belief that the dead come to take the dying away is widespread, this expectation alone might cause the hallucination. "The patients would be most anxious to see their close relatives, and this motivation could explain the predominance." Some saw an anthropomorphic "God" of their conception; others, prophets, angels, devils. The large majority of those who saw apparitions were not disturbed by sedatives, medication or high temperature.

The most frequently reported purpose of the "apparition," that of helping the patient to make the transition to another existence, we are told, "fits well into the survival framework." In some other instances, however, it is admitted that the patient "was simply reliving memories."

It is concluded that

the roots of deathbed hallucinations go below the obvious differences between people — sex and physiological, educational, and religious variations. One possible explanation might even be that they go beyond the individual himself and imply an external activity, conceivably involving post-mortem existence of the dead. Other explanations could include Jung's concept of inherited basic themes of human experience, archetypes or emergences of the collective unconscious. . . .

That our findings are important to medical personnel was noted by a number of our respondents, both doctors and nurses. A nurse wrote: "Being able to prepare a patient for death psychologically is a phase of nursing which is overlooked by many." Others too who come in contact with the dying — clergy, relatives, friends — might thereby gain a better understanding of what happens at the moment of death.

Theosophy regards death as a sacred and spiritual experience, for at every death the Spiritual Soul, Atma-Buddhi, radiates from above on the incarnated Ego who is about to leave the body. This accounts for the "rise of mood," the peace and tranquillity experienced by the dying person. The higher and the lower state of consciousness blend and become one and this makes it possible for the Ego to live his whole life over again, after the physician has pronounced the death of the body, which, however, is not *complete* death. He sees incidents, scenes, people — all that he had thought and felt and lived through, not as isolated events, but as links in the chain of cause and effect; and this perfect lucidity brings added peace to the dying man. The fact of such an

unrolling of the "life-film" has often been attested by men rescued from drowning. The teachings of Theosophy record the fact as a universal experience.

The explanation of visions and hallucinations seen by the dying, and, under certain circumstances, by others as well, is not difficult to see once it is admitted that upon the tablets of the Astral Light the most trifling action, impulse, thought, belief or impression is ineffaceably recorded. Under certain conditions and stimuli, it becomes possible, not only to look into the Astral Light, with the help of one's inner or astral sight, but for the picture or the image that one sees to take an objective shape. In the case of a religiously-inclined person, the image which he will see will be in line with his particular religious belief. Thus an orthodox Christian may see an image such as that of Jesus or of Mary; while a Hindu may have a vision of Krishna or of any other personified "god" he believes in and worships.

Time was when the philosophy of Ayurveda was part and parcel of the culture of India. This system of medicine was then followed in every home and was taught in the celebrated universities such as those at Taxasila and Nalanda. For some time past there has been a persistent demand for the resuscitation of this ancient system in a manner suited to the altered modern conditions. As a result, various States in India have instituted courses of study in Ayurveda, combining with it a basic knowledge of anatomy, physiology, social hygiene and other fundamentals of modern medicine. State governments have allowed Ayurvedic practitioners to register themselves and thus given them the status of practitioners of medicine. Various endeavours are being made to further the correct and scientific understanding of the basic concepts of Ayurveda.

Dr. P. M. Mehta, in "The Renaissance of Ayurveda" (*Bhavan's Journal*, August 5th), points out that Ayurveda regards man as a composite whole, consisting of body, mind and soul. It recognizes also that no two individuals are exactly alike. The starting point of the basic theory of Ayurveda is that man is a part of the universe and cannot be separated from the rest of it. What is true of the macrocosm, therefore, should be true of the microcosm. Every branch of Ayurveda — physiological, pathological and clinical — lays greater emphasis on the vital, functional aspects of life than on the mere material aspects. Ayurveda, says Dr. Mehta,

has a dynamic and creative view of health, for health can never be a mere static condition. It must grow like life or fall. Hence the need for constant vigilance.

There is a regimen of conduct known as hygiene, social and individual, and a good life which includes the control of the senses and the mind and which ennobles man and lifts him above the dangers of

psychic and nervous disorders that are constantly increasing with the stress and strain of the so-called modern civilization. This psychic regimen provides wholesome nutrition to the mind even as the physical regimen does to the physical body.

Charaka's concept of a healthy man is as follows: "Now the life of such a man is called happy as is not afflicted with either bodily or mental ailments, as is, in particular, endowed with youth, strength, virility, reputation, enterprise and boldness befitting his abilities."

Defining the physician's duties, Charaka says:—

For his part, the physician, too, should regard all his patients as his own children and vigilantly guard them from all harm, considering this to be his highest religion. . . . He who practises medicine neither for gain nor for gratification of the senses, but moved by compassion for creatures, surpasses all. Those who, for the sake of a living, make merchandise of medicine, bargain for a dust-heap, letting go a heap of gold.

Dr. Mehta recommends the understanding of man, disease and drug "in their whole as well as in their minutest parts." Ayurveda stands for the understanding of the whole, not only with regard to man but also with regard to disease and drug; the modern system of medicine, on the other hand, pursues the analytical process. Dr. Mehta considers the two systems to be complementary to each other and their fusion to be essential to the future greatness of medicine. "A universal system of medicine," he writes, "based on the recognition of all variables in health and disease, is indispensable and should be the ultimate objective of all human endeavour."

The full facts of the thalidomide scandal are gradually becoming known, and, appalling though the story is, it will have accomplished something if it checks the unauthorized sale and indiscriminate use of drugs whose mode of action is not exactly known and whose consequences cannot be foreseen with precision.

The history of thalidomide is traced in the leading article in the *New Statesman* (London) of August 10th. The drug was mass-produced as a sleeping pill by a West German firm, and administered without prescription, not only to adults, including pregnant women, but even to infants. From Germany it found its way into other countries. Despite growing evidence of toxicity, the public health authorities, doctors and manufacturers were disturbingly slow to take action. "Thalidomide babies," suffering from the previously rare complaint of phocomelia (from the Greek, *phoke*, meaning seal, and *melos*, meaning limb), began to be born, and in Germany alone there have been between 4,000 and 6,000 cases of deformed babies, some with all limbs missing, some with flipperlike limbs.

The *New Statesman* article throws the blame on the absence of effective licensing authorities. Uniform international standards in assessing new drugs and systematic exchange of information may limit but cannot entirely remove the risk of disaster. Thalidomide, it should be noted, was marketed by reputable firms and thoroughly tested by current standards.

Here in India, nearly eight types of drugs containing radicles of thalidomide, which has been banned by the Government, are suspected to be on sale (*The Times of India*, September 15th). Coming close on the heels of the unearthing of the widespread racket in spurious drugs, the increasing sale of these sedatives has created quite a stir among the public.

Doctors are often easy victims to the ceaseless propaganda of pharmaceutical firms. The fixation on drugs is so strong that the severe limitations of drug therapy are often overlooked. The obvious course for the general practitioner, the *New Statesman* suggests,

is to exercise great restraint. But this is difficult in the face of a public avid to submit itself to the monstrous regiment of pills. The late Marilyn Monroe, we are told, was accustomed to take 20 sleeping tablets every night. Such cases are increasingly common — justified by the alleged “stresses” of 20th-century existence. “Stress,” in fact, is now one of the most telling words in the Adman’s vocabulary and finds a ready response in a public deprived by affluence of the more material sources of grievance. Pill-mania, of course, can be reduced by removing medicine from the commercial sphere altogether. . . . But the only ultimate protection is a heightened sense of personal responsibility.

Dr. Pratima Bowes, in a paper read at a symposium organized by the Calcutta Cultural Forum on “The Aims and Objectives of Education at the Present Time” (*Quest*, July-September 1962), stated:—

The idea of perfection as it plays a part in education includes perfection in one’s character and personality. . . .

A human being should develop with a view to living as rich and full a life as he is potentially capable of, guided by ends which [are] good for their own sakes. Liberal education therefore should, ideally speaking, provide opportunities to individuals for growing in as many ways as possible, learning to participate in the business of living on as many fronts as one is capable of, commensurate of course with the perfection of one’s special abilities if one has any, fully aware of oneself not only as a member of a community to which one owes responsibilities but also as an individual who encounters life as an unique centre of experience and at the same time has respect for ends that are worthy to be upheld for their own sakes.

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