

सत्यात् नास्ति परा धर्मः

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THEOSOPHY—A WORD TO BE PROUD OF

He who would lift up high the banner of mysticism and proclaim its reign near at hand, must give the example to others. He must be the first to change *his* modes of life; and, regarding the study of the occult mysteries as the upper step in the ladder of Knowledge, must loudly proclaim it such despite exact science and the opposition of society.

—A MASTER OF WISDOM

Some students of Theosophy think that in popularizing Theosophical truths they can do more good by presenting them unlabelled. They spread among their acquaintances, their audience or their reading public their own understanding of Theosophy, without indicating the source of their ideas. If they are honest in their desire to serve the cause of Theosophy, they have not thought the problem through.

Are they quite sure their motive is not to dissociate themselves from any obloquy attaching to the name of Theosophy because of bigotry or because that sacred name has suffered desecration at the hands of some professed followers? That motive is contemptible.

If we would be regarded as *theosophists*, we have to protect THEOSOPHY; we have to defend our colours before we think of defending our own petty personality and *amour propre*, and should be ever ready to sacrifice ourselves.... Poor is that standard-bearer who shields his body from the bullets of the enemy with the sacred banner entrusted to him! (H.P.B. in *Lucifer*, November 1888)

But is it any more defensible to accept credit for the lofty thoughts one gains from Theosophy and passes on? H.P.B. ever stressed the Source of her teachings and her inspiration. The reason she gave provides food for thought:

It is only her unwillingness to pose in her own sight as a crow parading in peacock's feathers that compels her to this day to insist upon the truth. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 297)

But quite aside from these fundamental considerations of courage and honesty, it must be remembered that each necessarily gives out in terms of his own understanding. Garbled teachings should not, of course, be fathered on Theosophy. How different would be its standing today if pseudo-theosophists had not falsely labelled their vagaries with its name and discouraged their students from going to the original statements of H.P.B.! But, taking for granted a sincere effort to hand on the teachings unaltered, if one has not correctly grasped an idea but gives its source, the earnest inquirer can verify the statement for himself. Not so the hearers of the incognito Theosophist; they are at the mercy of his limitations. So the contagion of wrong concepts spreads, and personal followings are built up.

The claim that a wider hearing is gained for the teachings if they can be, as it were, smuggled into the consciousness of those one meets, rests on the false assumption that people who lack an open mind can recognize unfamiliar truths, however disarmingly presented. The audience of the frank but unaggressive exponent of the Theosophical tenets as such might be smaller, but its gain in quality should more than offset the quantitative loss.

Here is a significant statement by H.P.B. bearing on this point:

... although Theosophical ideas have entered into every development or form which awakening spirituality has assumed, yet Theosophy pure and simple has still a severe battle to fight for recognition. (*Five Messages*, p. 4)

It is time we refrained from blaming a cold and hard-hearted generation that refuses to listen to what we have to say. That species of fault-finding with the world is too often an excuse for our own inaptitude and lack of fire. If the world appears to be disinclined to come to us for Theosophy, let us take Theosophy to it, not by forcing it down people's throats, but "by taking every opportunity of talking to others," "by assisting in circulating our literature" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 246); and for the truly earnest other ways open up. It is true that there are many who are not ready for Theosophy; but are we infallible in our judgment as to who is ready and who is not? Ours the duty of spreading the good tidings of Theosophy and presenting to all those we contact its strength, its beauty, its encompassing truth. If we do just that,

with all the ability of which we are capable, we have done enough. Under this method, some are bound to shed their scales of ignorance and prejudice.

Theosophy must become for us a word to be proud of. To hide or to deny our intimate relation to Theosophy and its Great Cause, when in the company of non-Theosophists, is weakening to our consciousness. True, we should not desire to show off our knowledge of Theosophy, but whenever occasion demands we should have the frankness and courage to state, "I am a student of Theosophy," and explain what we stand for.

In *The Path* for July 1889 Mr. Judge printed the following under the title "Hiding Theosophy Under a Bushel":

If there be in the doctrines promulgated through our Society any virtue or uplifting powers, they should be brought to the attention of all thinking men and women. If theosophists have themselves found any solutions of vexing problems, or any help in their pilgrimage through life, they should not pocket this great benefit and thus keep it from those whom they alone can reach; and if in such members there exists the loyalty that all true men should possess, then it is incumbent on them to not only give out to others the new thoughts they have received, but also to direct attention to the Society's work as an organized body. The crouching in idleness behind the idea that these doctrines are as old as mankind is a weak and untheosophical act. Many sincere theosophists have worked hard against great opposition and bitter ridicule . . . to establish our Society on a firm basis and to accumulate a mass of literary matter upon which all can draw. For other members to use all this and then to fear the name of the Society, is cowardice. However, such weak souls will always hide their heads and cannot harm the cause.

But those who know that all over this great land are millions whose minds and hearts need just the theosophical doctrines, will hasten to spread a knowledge in every quarter, not only of theosophy, but also of where and how theosophical books can be obtained and entrance to our ranks effected. Seek no fashionable quarters; they are useless and ever limited by the small and silly considerations that govern "Society," but all over this broad country are those who care more for the light of truth than for anything social life can give.

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## “PURUSH VISHESH ISHWARA”

### II

The knowledge of the past, present and future is embodied in Kshetrajna.—*Occult Axiom*

Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day.

—I. *Thessalonians*, V. 5

Spiritual knowledge is a rare commodity. Our modern universities do not provide it. The priests have not got it and the scientists do not want it. Magic and Alchemy are only parts of it and both are anathema to church and science. Where, then, does one search for it? Shri Krishna says that the Vedas take a man thus far and no farther. Jesus kept his inner doctrine secret and preached to the masses in parables. The Buddha gave out much, but the inner core of his teachings was given only to the very few. Even if it be true that morality is the *sine qua non* and that one is not pure enough or wise and holy enough to have the higher teaching given to him, has he access at least to that knowledge which shows the norms of entry on the lowest rung?

In his *Yoga Sutras*, Patanjali tells us that Ishwar is the first of Teachers; that all knowledge and all Wisdom ranging from the atomic to the eternal rests in him. If by any means a man can unite himself to the Ishwar within, he would be a partaker of its omniscience. Putting it in another way, the Teaching says that Ishwar presiding in every human heart is the repository of all Wisdom. Reach into your own heart and the Treasure is yours for the asking. But nowhere in available literature are the all-important steps for uniting oneself with Ishwar or for reaching deep into one's own heart given in such abundant detail as would be understandable to the human intellect. Explanations merely paraphrase the difficulty and offer no understandable *via media* from the mundane to the spiritual. In fact, in the initial stages of search the confusion is heightened because Occultism teaches that memory and reasoning (the two main props of earthly knowledge) are not helps but hindrances to Wisdom, and that no solution can be found or be helpful to the man till he is ready to lay aside ideas arising from race, religion and civilization.

Rigid though the discipline appears to be, it has never been wholly unknown. The problem of reaching deep into the unaccustomed part of oneself has exercised the highest minds in all ages. The Wise Ones who have considered the matter have from remote antiquity advocated the

opening up of a channel of conscious communication between the incarnated man on earth and his immortal Ishwar within. For the attainment of this desired objective, codes of conduct and of discipline have been laid down by sages and by charlatans; by exalted beings and by those lesser lights who having progressed to some extent have wandered into the byways of lesser celestial powers.

How, then, does one go about the task of first reaching to that preliminary knowledge which qualifies the candidate to enter the school where alone he can learn how to establish the link between the highest part of him and his lesser self? To understand the ultimate answer, the student has first to know himself and his intimate connections with every secret part of Nature from which he derives his composite and complex being on earth. In his physical nature, there is a vast congeries of sentient, intelligent lives that perform their respective functions independently of the man himself. Breathing, the pulsations of the heart, the functions of the stomach, liver and spleen, as also those of the senses and the brain, are seemingly independent of the man and at times contrary to his will. Blood, the organs and the nervous system play their important roles, as do memory and the animal desires which course through his organism.

Next to the body comes the lower mind, which is aided or hampered by the intellect and which has the possibility of making choices and exercising the will. Being too near to the realm of desires, it gets glamoured by them, and so bends the force of its intellect and will to attain to its choices of lust, power, greed, aggrandizement, revenge and worse. This same mind when it is rid of the passional and personal angles gravitates towards the Higher, the discriminating Self of which it is an aspect and which it is its duty to reflect without distortion. This Higher Mind is the vehicle of the Self — the universal, omniscient Spirit. It will thus be seen that unless the man of earth consciously reaches the plane of the Higher Mind, the channel of communication with the highest is blocked and no light can shine through. The initial effort then has of necessity to be directed to the freeing of the lower mind from all memories and desires of the personal man. Selfishness in all forms has to be eradicated and the first major obstacle to achieving this is terrestrial memory and its reactivation, by the nefarious action of the Astral Light.

The seat of the personal memory is neither in the mind nor in the brain but in the molecular constitution of those bodily organs which

were the most active during the experience. Therefore, personal or terrestrial memories are really quickened primarily by those organs which stored them and which periodically thirst for a repetition of the experience. Thus, a hungry stomach will evoke the memories of a past banquet long before the personal mind has time to draw upon its own storehouse of experiences. So, too, for each passional organ. The memory of past escapades that haunts the enslaved man is invariably aroused first in the very organ which was active during the animal and the passional moments. Sights and sounds, whether external or internal, can arouse the worst in man only if there is still lurking in the make-up of his organs the living memory of a vile action. The triggering off of this memory can be through association of ideas or through the unhealthy activation of any of the senses. For instance, the reaction of the human organism to the sight of a liquor bottle will vary with a teetotaller, an addict, and one who has conquered the vice of drink. In the first, no memory of drinking orgies exists to lash the man's desires into a state of frenzy. In the second, the memories of past indulgences are strong and the thirst for a recurrence of the experience forces the mind and bends the will towards a satisfaction of the desire. In the third case, the will has been made strong enough to push back the images with a strong hand and to fill the void with mind-painted images of the exercise of the opposite virtue.

This obstacle of the memory extends not only to the passional but to the personal man also. It is one thing to brush aside the memories of some of the lower inclinations. It is quite another to wipe the slate clean of all worldly knowledge and to accept only that which the scripture offers without cavil or question and without comparison with earth-bound knowledge which to the opened eye is ignorance. Madame Blavatsky in defining "*Tchitta Riddhi Pada*" in the *Glossary* says that it is "the third condition of the mystic series which leads to the acquirement of adeptship, *i.e.*, the renunciation of physical memory, and of all thoughts connected with worldly or personal events in one's life—benefits, personal pleasures or associations. Physical memory has to be sacrificed, and recalled by *will power* only when absolutely needed. . . ."

Every time that memory, thought and passions coalesce, there is created a lunar form which acts and is acted upon by the dregs of the astral light. Feeding on this diabolical refuse-heap of Nature, the lower mind gets saturated with the foul odic influence that exudes from it. Once that it has fallen a prey to it, the lower mind becomes a passive non-resisting medium to the pictures and suggestions that it receives

from this plane of Nature. The mental excitement thus produced finds its ultimate outlet in a burst of passion on the physical plane, and for a time the satiety of indulgence produces a somnolence of the senses till it is roused again to feverish activity by suggestions from the astral tablets of life.

To achieve disassociation from the passional in man and Nature, it is necessary that a war be waged till victory is achieved. But it would be foolhardy to rush into battle blind and unprepared, for by so doing the aspiring soul gets worsted in the fight. The student has to evaluate the strength and cunning of the opposing forces and has to equip himself with such weapons as would be most effective against the foe. You do not fight naval or aerial battles with bows and arrows. You do not use tanks in ocean warfare or mines in aerial combats. For the same reason, you do not fight selfishness or intolerance or envy with sentimental platitudes or with weapons that you use for fighting off lassitude or fevers. Even when the proper weapons are found, the warrior has to grow so accustomed to them that he intuitively picks those best suited for the particular fray. The celestial weapons which alone can ensure victory are fashioned and designed in realms to which the lower man has no ingress. Here again the student comes across a dilemma in life. The aspiration to leave the vile and the sordid steals upon him in moments of calmness. But he has no guidance, has no knowledge of the higher spheres of consciousness. How then can he seek his weapons in the higher abodes?

Patanjali's great discipline of *chitta vritti nirodh* is based upon the occult truth that whenever the mind releases itself from the thralldom of Kama (the personal and the passional) it becomes the channel of the highest faculties in man. The emancipated mind can reflect the Wisdom from above, but the same mind in the worldly man is crowded out by wave upon wave of desire-based images that arise unbidden through sense stimulation, memory or *Sankalpa*. Although this state of the mind is turbulent, the worldly man is so used to it that he considers it to be the normal state of consciousness. Ages of wrong education poured into him first by religions and then by science have had their diabolical repercussions on him, so that the very turbulence of the mind is to the man — Life. Once caught in the meshes of false learning, man begins to attribute to the non-eternal the marks and insignia of the eternal. When this inversion of values becomes established, ignorance reigns supreme, and this even though the man have honours heaped upon him by state and university alike. The re-establishment of correct values,

the regaining of the ability to distinguish the true from the false, are arduous processes, are preliminary steps in discipline which help transform the mind into that state which alone can make entry into the School of the Eternal possible.

With these remarks as preliminaries, the matter can be gone into in somewhat greater detail. If the memory records of a man's misdeeds are written large upon his organic system, it but follows that disciplines must have been evolved whereby these memories can be erased or crowded out by images which may become the harbingers of the good. Mortification and renunciation, charity and sacrifice are exercises in discipline which irk the lower mind and make it violently rebellious at times. Even the most enthusiastic of aspirants is shaken by the rigidity of the Rules. This is so because too often the *raison d'être* of the Rule is not grasped. The Rule is a corollary in life of a principle in philosophy, and in the very search for its necessity the sting of an imposed way of life is removed. To understand our subject better, it becomes necessary that we gather from the philosophy some fundamental knowledge about cells and atoms, the organs in the body as well as about the lower and the higher minds of man.

It is a basic truth in Occultism that within the mortal man there resides an immortal entity called "Divine Mind" or "*Nous*." The terrestrial mind or the intellect in man is but a distorted reflection of this Divine Mind. These two entities remain virtually apart during the period of each earthly incarnation. The Divine Mind is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane. On the terrestrial plane its omniscience does not shine forth fully because this Divine Mind cannot act directly on the body but acts only indirectly through the personal self of man. Since the Divine Mind is the *vehicle* of all knowledge, past, present and future, it can, given the necessary conditions, transfer this knowledge to the lower mind, which in moments of exaltation may catch occasional glimpses of that which is beyond the senses of man. The lower self is the reflected double of the higher, and if its reflecting qualities are not tarnished by earthly or personal effluvia, it can make of the man a mystic or a seer or a prophet. If, however, the dregs of indulgence adhere to its surface, it ceases to reflect the celestial spheres and tends to identify itself with the mortal characteristics of matter. This lower self changes with every new incarnation and is therefore conscious for but one life period. It has, however, one characteristic which makes its manipulation vital to the man—it manifests outwardly through his organic system.

When the lower self has through perversity and wrong desires ceased to reflect what St. James called the "Wisdom from above," it begins to garner the terrestrial wisdom which James in his Epistle called "earthly, sensual, devilish." It is this so-called lower wisdom which becomes tainted by all the chaotic emanations of the animal passions and debasements of the living body. How, then, can such knowledge be relied upon to subserve the true interests of humanity?

Occultism teaches us that memories of physical and selfish deeds as well as memories of earthly biological functions have a close interrelationship with the molecules which go to build up the various Kamic organs (liver and spleen are two) as also with the nervous system within each individual organ. If we are to enter upon the task of erasing this memory or of sacrificing it, we have to know something of the make-up of organs in general. Science teaches us that each human organ is made up of cells which in turn are formed (ensouled) by atoms. Occultism adds to this and says that each cell has a consciousness of its own. Further — and the importance of this is hardly recognized and its truth doubted — each cell has a free-will of its own to act within the limits of the law governing it. Again, each cell has, so to say, a keyboard of its own, like that of a piano, the only difference being that it emits sensations instead of sounds. Each key of each cell has, at the time of the emitting of the sensation, the potentiality of good and the potentiality of evil. The lower mind with its involvements with Kamic propensities acts upon these cells (and therefore upon the organs), impressing upon them its own taints of the personal and the selfish. Now, whereas the cells can be so impressed by the dark side of man and nature, the atoms which interact within those cells can be influenced by the higher mind alone. It is in this fact that lies the hope of man's ultimate salvation; for, when interaction of these atoms is induced, it has the power to excite the brain *via* the spinal "centre" cord, thus enabling the man to secure a mental conception of spiritual ideas.

It will thus be seen how morality comes to have a basis in life. Even what is called a white lie is dangerous, because, being antagonistic to the spiritual, it injects its virus in the lower mind and ultimately poisons the life of the cell. The reaction of the man to each event and circumstance is therefore to be rigidly controlled. A good man under the temptation that a sudden opportunity may afford, may seek to turn it to his own advantage, and acting impulsively ruin the efforts of a decade. The satisfying of an urge; the hugging to oneself of money and possessions; the pandering to the cravings for food and delicacies;

the struggle for supremacy and the elbowing out of worthier claimants to an office or a post — these under the inverted values of the present civilization have come to be considered valuable and even essential to good living. They poison the lower mind, harm the cell structure, and erupt in epidemics and new diseases that ravage the body. To search out each blemish injected into him by civilization and erase its images past remembrance is the arduous task of the aspirant to wisdom. How few there be who can come out of this preliminary skirmish without injuries which may turn them into lifelong invalids incapacitated for further battles during that incarnation at least!

The mechanics of the action of the lower mind can be studied by any man in his own life if he is not given over to personal bias. The psycho-physiological changes that are induced in the body by the orientation of the lower mind present a fascinating study and provide the reason why in chelaship perfect physical health becomes the first requisite. But the conquering of the lower desires does not by itself open the doors which are nowhere to be found save in the omniscience of Ishwar. This must necessarily be so, because though the plane of the higher mind is the only plane through which the Divine Wisdom can be reached, that Higher Mind itself has to be tuned to the proper pitch. This is so because the battle has to be joined once again on higher planes where selfishness in the garb of an overpowering desire for progress or *Moksha* may take possession of the mind and stay all further progress towards the Divine.

Says the *Book of the Golden Precepts*:

Thou hast crossed the moat that circles round the gate of human passions. . . . Thou hast removed pollution from thine heart and bled it from impure desire. But, O thou glorious combatant, thy task is not yet done. Build high, Lanoo, the wall that shall hedge in the Holy Isle, the dam that will protect thy mind from pride and satisfaction at thoughts of the great feat achieved.

A sense of pride would mar the work. Aye, build it strong, lest the fierce rush of battling waves . . . swallow up the pilgrim and the isle — yea, even when the victory's achieved.

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## LOVE

[In the two articles on Love reprinted here, the aspirant to the higher life will find a message and also some hints for the practice of Right Asceticism. The first is from *The Path* of September 1891, and the second from *Lucifer*, January 1888.

—EDS.]

It is to those who show dislike to us that we must make constant effort in sympathy, patience, and self-sacrifice. Towards all those who love us these things flow from us spontaneously; they are the natural return for what we receive. Yet in their case also constant effort must be made to excel all our previous experiences in unselfishness.

These highest standards attainable by us, with those who love and trust us, and whom we in our turn can love and trust, become bright beacons, guiding us in our efforts towards attaining the same attitude to all mankind.

There is no limit to love; that is to say, the divine, unselfish love which we may have for our fellows; its intensity towards one does not limit it in regard to another; rather does this fervour stimulate us to further effort to stand in this high regard towards as many of our fellow creatures as possible.

And this also is the test whereby we may know divine from human affection; the former has no jealousies, no exclusiveness; its intensity towards one individual, *whether of the same or opposite sex*, does not draw off attention from our constant duty in seeking the weal of all other persons with whom we may come in contact.

In him who is lighted with this divine love we do not find the one theme, the one form, constantly in mind, and causing abstraction from other surroundings which should also claim the attention, but it burns deeply and calmly, is ruffled by no anxieties, questions not whether it is returned by the one or many upon whom it is bestowed; takes ingratitude or deep appreciation with equal satisfaction. It is complete in itself, and is its own perfect reward to him who knows it.

We often deceive ourselves in this love towards individuals, mistaking the human for the divine; we have to sit aside with ourselves and answer many searching questions before we can know ourselves upon this point. The more especially is this a danger where the person in question may be of the opposite sex. There the self-deception is

deepest. What true human lover but falls under the marvellous glamour of believing that the object of his devotion is partly divine, and in some direction is exalted above all other women!

Apart from the fascination of sex, where this factor has not to be considered at all, we have to ask ourselves whether it is not with some special cast of mind, even of feature and expression, with which we are in love, which conforming with our ideal earns our admiration and devotion. Or whether, again, it is not because we have received some strong proof of the individual's interest in *us*, and which thus stimulates to a return; or again, through having been able to help, have we not raised feelings of affection and gratitude within that person, which finding and liking we again reciprocate.

The combinations are endless, and these are but elementary studies in regard to the question — Towards whom, of all those we meet, do we express a love which is wholly unselfish and divine?

We shall probably find that to no individual do we hold a love which is unalloyed, but that it has always something of the human element in it, and this signifies a selfish element. It is a sad discovery to make, yet we surely find this if we sink deep enough into ourselves. It is a discovery which when proclaimed makes many people, who think on the surface, very indignant.

Human love being founded upon selfishness, upon possession, upon exclusiveness, is the exact reverse of the divine element: hence it follows that the transmutation of human into divine love is a long work.

It is *the* work of humanity.

The road from one to the other of these opposites in love is covered with snares and pitfalls, with sophistries of the most subtle kind, and few there are who discern them. Innumerable have been the earnest men, founders often of sects which had much of good in them, who have come to grief themselves and led astray their followers upon this point. Amongst them may be taken as examples the Oneida Community, and that other founded by Lake Harris in California.

Calm and critical indeed must be the mind which delving down into itself can separate the wheat from the chaff, the divine selfless love from the human and selfish.

—E. T. S.

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## LOVE WITH AN OBJECT

Some distinguished contributors to theosophical literature have of late been describing what qualities are necessary to constitute a perfect man, *i.e.*, an Adept. They said that among other things it was absolutely and indispensably necessary that such a being should possess Love — and not merely Love in the abstract — but love regarding some object or objects. What can they possibly mean by speaking of “love with an object,” and could there possibly be love without any object at all? Can that feeling be called love which is directed solely to the Eternal and Infinite, and takes no cognizance of earthly illusions? Can that be love which has no object, or, in other words, is the love of forms or objects the true love at all? If a man loved all things in the universe alike, without giving any preference to any of them, would not such a love be practically without any object; would it not be equal to loving nothing at all; because in such a case the individuality of any single object would be lost to sight?

A love which is directed towards all things alike, an universal love, is beyond the conception of the mortal mind, and yet this kind of love, which bestows no favours upon any one thing, seems to be that eternal love which is recommended by all the sacred books of the East and the West; because as soon as we begin to love one thing or one being more than another, we not only detract from the rest an amount of love which the rest may rightfully claim; but we also become attached to the object of our love, a fate against which we are seriously warned in various pages of these books.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* teaches that we should not love or hate any object of sense whatsoever, nor be attached to any object or thing, but renounce all projects and fix our thoughts solely on It, the Eternal, which is no-thing and no object of cognition for us, but whose presence can be only subjectively experienced by, and within, ourselves. It says: “He is esteemed, who is equal-minded to companions, friends, enemies, strangers, neutrals, to aliens and kindred, yea to good and evil men” (Chap. vi, 9); and further on it says: “He whose soul is united by devotion, seeing the same in all around, sees the soul in everything and everything in the soul. He who sees Me (Brahmâ) everywhere and everything in Me, him I forsake not and he forsakes not me. . . . He who sees the same in everything, Arjuna, whether it be pleasant or grievous, from the self-resemblance, is deemed to be a most excellent Yogin.” (Chap. vi, 29-32)

On almost every page of the *Bhagavad-Gita* we are instructed only to direct our love to that which is eternal in every form, and let the form itself be a matter of secondary consideration. "He must be regarded as a steadfast renouncer, who neither hates nor desires." . . . "In a learned and modest Brahman, in a cow, in an elephant, in a dog, and a Shwapāka, they who have knowledge see the same thing." . . . "Let no man rejoice in attaining what is pleasant nor grieve in attaining what is unpleasant; being fixed in mind, untroubled, knowing Brahma and abiding in Brahma." . . . "He who is happy in himself, pleased with himself, who finds also light in himself, this Yogin, one with Brahmā, finds *Nirvana* in Him."

The great Hermes Trismegistus teaches the same identical doctrine; for he says, "Rise and embrace me with thy whole being, and I will teach thee whatsoever thou desirest to know." The Bible also tells us that "God is Love" (*I. John*, iv. 8), and that we should love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind (*Matt.*, xxii. 37); and while it teaches that we should love nothing else but God who is All in All (*Ephes.*, i. 23), yet it affirms that this God is omnipresent, eternal and incomprehensible to the finite understanding of mortals (*I. Timoth.*, vi. 16). It teaches this love to be the most important of all possessions, without which all other possessions are useless (*I. Corinth.*, xiii. 2), and yet this God, whom we are to love, is not an "object," but everywhere. He is in us and we in Him (*Rom.*, xii. 5). We are to leave all objects of sense and follow Him alone, although we have no means of intellectually knowing or perceiving Him, the great Unknown, for whose sake we are to give up house and brethren, sisters, father, mother, wife, children and lands (*Mark*, x. 29).

What can all this mean, but that love itself is the legitimate object of love? It is a divine, eternal, and infinite power, a light, which reflects itself in every object while it seeks not the object, but merely its own reflection therein. It is an indestructible fire, and the brighter it burns, the stronger will be the light and the clearer will its own image appear. Love falls in love with nothing but its own self; it is free from all other attractions. A love which becomes attached to objects of sense, ceases to be free, ceases to be love, and becomes mere desire. Pure and eternal love asks for nothing, but gives freely to all who are willing to take. Earthly love is attracted to persons and things, but Divine spiritual love seeks only that which is divine in everything, and this can be nothing else but love, for love is the supreme power of all. It holds together the worlds in space, it clothes the earth in bright and beautiful colours, it

guides the instincts of animals and links together the hearts of human beings. Acting upon the lower planes of existence it causes terrestrial things to cling to each other with fond embrace; but love on the spiritual plane is free. Spiritual love is a goddess, who continually sacrifices herself for herself and who accepts no other sacrifice but her own self, giving for whatever she may receive, herself in return. Therefore the *Bhagavad-Gita* says: "Nourish ye the gods by this and let the gods nourish you. Thus nourishing each other ye shall obtain the highest good" (Chap. iii, 11); and the Bible says: "To him who has still more shall be given, and from him who has not, even what he has shall be taken away." (*Luke*, xix. 26)

Love is an universal power and therefore immortal; it can never die. We cannot believe that even the smallest particle of love ever died, only the instruments through which it becomes manifest change their form; nor will it ever be born, for it exists from eternity, only the bodies into which it shines are born and die and are born again. A Love which is not manifest is non-existent for us; to come into existence means to become manifest. How then could we possibly imagine a human being possessed of a love which never becomes manifest; how can we possibly conceive of a light which never shines and of a fire which does not give any heat?

But "as the sun shines upon the lands of the just and the unjust, and as the rain descends upon the acres of the evil-minded as well as upon those of the good," likewise divine love manifesting itself in a perfect man is distributed alike to every one without favour or partiality. Wherever a good and perfect human being exists, there is divine love manifest; and the degree of man's perfection will depend on the degree of his capacity to serve as an instrument for the manifestation of divine love. The more perfect he is, the more will his love descend upon and penetrate all who come within his divine influence. To ask favours of God is to conceive of Him as an imperfect being, whose love is not free, but subject to the guidance of and preference to, mortals. To expect favours of a Mahatma is to conceive him as an *imperfect* man.

True, "prayer," *i.e.*, the elevation and aspiration of the soul "in spirit and in truth" (*John*, iv. 24), is useful, not because it will persuade the light to come nearer to us, but because it will assist us to open our eyes for the purpose of seeing the light that was already there. Let those who desire to come into contact with the Adepts enter their sphere by following their doctrines; seeking for love, but not for an object of

love, and when they have found the former, they will find a superabundance of the latter throughout the whole extent of the unlimited universe; they will find it in everything that exists, for love is the foundation of all existence and without love nothing can possibly continue to exist.

Love — divine love — is the source of life, of light, and happiness. It is the creative principle in the Macrocosm and in the Microcosm of man. It is *Venus*, the mother of all gods, because from her alone originate Will and Imagination and all the other powers by which the universe was evolved. It is the germ of divinity which exists in the heart of man and which may develop into a life-giving sun, illuminating the mind and sending its rays to the centre of the universe; for it originates from that centre and to that centre it will ultimately return. It is a divine messenger, who carries Light from Heaven down to the Earth and returns again to Heaven loaded with sacrificial gifts.

It is worshipped by all; some adore it in one form and some in another, but many perceive only the form and do not perceive the divine spirit. Nevertheless the spirit alone is real, the form is an illusion. Love can exist without form, but no form can exist without love. It is pure Spirit, but if its light is reflected in matter, it creates desire, and desire is the producer of forms. Thus the visible world of perishable things is created. "But above this visible nature there exists another, unseen and eternal, which, when all created things perish, does not perish" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, viii. 20), and "from which they who attain to it never return." This is the supreme abode of Love without any object, unmanifested and imperishable, for there no object exists. There love is united to love, enjoying supreme and eternal happiness within her own self, and that peace of which the mortal mind, captivated by the illusion of form, cannot conceive. Non-existent for us, and yet existing in that Supreme *Be-ness*, in which all things dwell, by which the universe has been spread out, and which may be attained to by an exclusive devotion.

—EMANUEL

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Whate'er thou lovest, O man, that too become thou must;  
God, if thou lovest God; dust, if thou lovest dust.

—RABĪ'Ā

## THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM

When the Theosophical Society came into existence in 1875, Madame Blavatsky made plain at once her stand with respect to the phenomena of Spiritualism. She proclaimed that there are genuine phenomena which do take place and are not the result of fraud. These phenomena, however, are not produced, as the Spiritualists claim, by the "spirits" of the dead, but by other and varied forces as yet unknown to modern science though well known in ancient days. These invisible forces in no way deserve the epithet of "spiritual." Nor do full materializations prove the return of the "Spirits."

Yet the desire to communicate with those who have gone on persists. Such desire to interfere with their rest is rooted in selfishness. There is an ancient Hindu injunction not to awaken a sleeping person unless it is absolutely necessary to do so. The same is true of the person who has gone beyond the gate of death. Fortunately for the dead and the living, it is not possible to disturb the Soul or the Real Man who has gone into the peace and bliss of *Devachan*. What is it, then, that "returns" and manifests in the séance-room?

Theosophy explains that a great number of the Spiritualistic phenomena result from communicating entities which cannot possibly be dignified by the name of "Spirits" — if by "Spirits" we mean the immortal principles of the disembodied persons. These "Spirits" are merely certain reliquiæ or eidola, the astral simulacra of deceased human beings. Their "return" does no good to the dead or to the living; on the contrary, it does great harm.

As for the real Man, the Immortal Soul, he is in a state of blissful ideation which, being subjective, does not permit him while in that condition to return to earth or communicate objectively with those he has left behind.

That which can and does "visit" the séance-room is what we have named above as the reliquiæ, eidola, or astral simulacra of deceased human beings. That form which is left behind when the body dies is termed *kama-rupa* in Hindu philosophy. It is the subjective form created by every human being through the desires and thoughts in connection with things of matter. This form survives the death of the physical body, and vegetates for a period of time in *Kama-loka*, the "Hades" of the ancient Greeks. This pale copy of the man that was, this eidolon of human and animal passions and desires, lasts until the effects of

the mental impulses that created it are exhausted. Bereft as it is of any self-conscious intelligence or the Immortal Soul, this *rupa* if left alone will gradually fade out and disintegrate. But if forcibly drawn back into the terrestrial sphere, whether by the passionate desires and appeals of surviving friends, or by regular necromantic practices — one of the most pernicious of which is mediumship — the *kama-rupa* or “spook” may survive for a period greatly exceeding the natural span of its life. It then becomes a vampire, feeding on the vitality of those who are so anxious for its company!

Nor are these *kama-rupas* the only creatures that are attracted by mediums and psychic sensitives. There is a variety of these invisible semi-conscious entities, and the worst ones are the “elementaries” who have lost every spark of spirituality, yet retain the mind principle, and hence are deliberately bent on finding an open door to earth-life in order to gratify vicariously, through an unfortunate instrument, their sensuous longings and animal cravings.

Thus Theosophy does not deny the existence of invisible forces in Nature, the incubi of mediæval demonology, the *bhuts* and *pisachas* of the Hindus, nor does it deny the awful possibility of these ghouls and soulless entities producing a variety of phenomena through mediums and psychics. It simply refuses to identify these vampires and shells with the spiritual souls of the dead. That the influence of the “Spirit-guides” and “controls” is harmful is proven by the sad history of modern Spiritualism which records the terrible degradation and moral shipwreck of not dozens, but literally hundreds of such poor mediums. The medium, being but a passive instrument, “controlled” instead of controlling, cannot discriminate or guard against the fearful risks to which he exposes himself through this intercourse with invisible entities which he does not know and cannot identify in spite of all claims to the contrary.

In warning against the dangers of mediumship Theosophy but reiterates the teachings of all the great sages and true philosophers down the ages. From the remotest antiquity to this day every wise one has strongly condemned the raising of the images of the dead, or necromancy, now known as Spiritualism — the greatest misnomer, for it contains naught that is spiritual. Believers in such communications are, unconsciously to themselves, dishonouring the dead and are guilty of sacrilege.

But not all Spiritualistic phenomena are caused by entities from

the other side of death, by *kama-rupas* or elementaries. The subject is a vast one, and there are wheels within wheels and laws within laws. Some of these phenomena may be produced by the living medium unconsciously to himself. The strange substance called teleplasm or ectoplasm which, as has been ascertained by psychical researchers, oozes out from the body of the medium, Theosophy explains to be matter, magnetic and electrical in essence, and originating from the medium's astral body, the invisible design body or the "double" of the physical, known as *Linga Sharira* in Hindu psychology. This body corresponds in man's constitution to the Astral Light of our earth, the invisible region which surrounds and interpenetrates our globe. The Astral Light is the great "Astral Serpent" of Eliphas Levi. It is the psychic world of supersensuous perceptions and of deceptive sights, the world of mediums. The chief characteristic of this subtle astral essence is that of retaining an image of everything that happens on earth, so that from it are picked up many of the messages purporting to be from dead relatives or friends. Some of the materializations themselves are but pictures in the Astral Light reflected upon the teleplasm furnished by the living medium, and which, impregnated as it is by his vitality and magnetic emanations, lends to the pictures a semblance of life.

Again, it is this teleplasm, in the form of an extended astral limb, which can cause the displacement of objects and other peculiar phenomena when these take place at a short distance from the medium. The Astral Light, photographing as it does all things, can also mirror forth or reflect the thoughts and ideas in the sitters' minds, and thus these telepathic impressions are radiated back upon the medium who receives them unconsciously and reproduces them, equally unconsciously, in his "message." This accounts for the fact that spiritualistic circles always receive "communications" more or less in accordance with the prevailing views and aspirations of the sitters. And it also explains why the so-called "spirits" of different groups of Spiritualists very often disagree entirely in the views and explanations they offer.

Even ethical and lofty teachings received through a medium are not a proof that the controlling agencies are good and moral. Do we not meet everywhere living men and women who have a sentimental love for virtue, who can speak of ethics and spirituality, and even preach them with a puffed-up vain conceit in their hearts, and yet whose lives are one unbroken course of lust and self-indulgence? And as the men and women were, so are their reliquiae or spooks or *bhuts*.

To conclude — Mediumship cannot be denied, but it should not be laughed at and easily dismissed as nothing but fraudulent imposture. It is, alas, in reality a disease, and one moreover which is highly contagious, and like a noxious weed, spreads under encouraging influences. Developing passivity, the individual is exposed to unseen dangers and almost certain demoralization, leading often to insanity and obsession. That is why Theosophy is against any development of mediumship and psychism, and against the use of psychic powers when these appear spontaneously. Those who know and understand the dangers of modern spiritualism do not wish to antagonize or denounce, but only to help and to warn, and, through a dispassionate dissemination of the true philosophy, to protect the unfortunate mediums and their clients from themselves!

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Occult Science teaches that the frame of mind in which a man dies is of the utmost importance owing to the abnormal and psychic state in which he then is. The last thought of a dying person does much to influence his immediate future. The arrow is ready to fly from the bow; the bow-string is abreast of the ear, and the aim will decide the *immediate* fate of the arrow. Happy is he for whom "Om is the bow, the Self is the arrow and Brahman — its aim!" (*Mundaka Upanishad*). At such a sacred moment, strong spiritual aspirations, whether natural or induced by the earnest exhortation of either one who has a true conviction, or better still, of one possessed of the divine Gnosis, will protect the Soul of him who is leaving life. This is not meant, however, to endorse the superstition of a "death-bed repentance," for the immutable justice and harmony of the Karmic Law can only return a fleeting effect for a fleeting cause; and the rest of the Karmic debt must be paid in future earth-lives.

—*Lucifer*, April 1891

## PROOF

“Why do you not help me?” cries the disturbed mind of the youth of today. “Help me to progress and to know the meaning of life.”

Young men and women today hold many mistaken notions, however much they may think they are after self-expression and individualism. Having discarded the dogmas and taboos of the past, they are at the stage when they are trying to swim in a raging torrent, while refusing to learn how to swim, even though there are those who can help them. They cannot be helped unless they are willing to listen.

The whole trouble stems from non-recognition of the purpose of life as explained, age after age, by the philosophers of the past. The youth of today believe that no one in the past has answered the questions they ask, and hope that someone in the present may be able to answer them, or that they will be able to find out for themselves. They stand in their own light, while seeking light to illuminate the present and the future.

Truth eludes them partly because they are not content with mere hearsay and require proof as to what is true; and proof today means something which can be demonstrated in the laboratory, something which can be seen with the eyes, or heard with the ears, or felt by the touch. Our youth refuse to acknowledge that to understand anything is proof enough to him who understands. Understanding is a faculty of the mind and functions either through the senses, or through mental perception, or, higher still, through spiritual-mental perception.

Youth, by mind-changing drugs, are trying to get out of the realm of the physical senses into a different world. The mystic tries to get out of the physical sense world into another world, not of the senses with objects to perceive, but of the essence of things, beyond form, ideas themselves ceasing to exist in the flood of mystic vision. Can we deny that some have had these visions? Do we know whether they are true or not? Can we prove them?

Here is the most important thing for all of us to grasp: we can neither prove they are wrong, nor prove they are true. Denial is a sign of the times. The youth of today deny all things which cannot be proved by sense-perception. Let us look at some of the things that are denied.

We deny *reincarnation* because it cannot be proved to us. Why not deny that *we have only one life on earth*, for this, too, cannot be

proved to us?

We deny that there is a *subtle form* of matter beyond the reach of material instruments, or of the senses, or of feeling. Why not deny that there is *no such subtle form*, because this also cannot be proved to us? Many things are proved today that were denied yesterday.

We deny the *spirit* in man. Why not deny that there is *no spirit* in man, for that, too, cannot be proved to our satisfaction?

We deny that the *words* of great Teachers and Philosophers are true. Why not deny that *they are untrue*? Unless we experiment with them, we cannot prove whether they are true or not, and until we have as great knowledge as they had, how can we prove either way?

We deny that there is *God*. Why not deny that there is *no God*? Neither proposition can be proved in the laboratory or by the physical senses.

Only logic and the innate feeling common to all human beings can take the middle position and say: "*I do not know.*"

This difficulty has always been with us, and the cry in the Christian scripture, "Lord, help thou mine unbelief," is a pointer to us, provided we do not fall into the error of taking anything *on trust*. To prove anything we must use the laboratory of our own nature.

It would be worth while if the youth of today would take a good look at the ethics of Theosophy, which are the same as the ethics of Jesus, of Buddha, and of every other great Teacher and Philosopher.

The most important moral precept given to us by ancient Buddhism and reiterated by Theosophy is: Stop living the life of pleasure. Live not for yourself; *live to benefit mankind*. To do this, knowledge is necessary.

Put very simply, we have the *Panchasila* of the Buddhist, the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus, the Code of Zoroaster, the teachings of Pythagoras. These are ethical principles which all can apply.

The first important precept given to us is: "Kill not." Study this. What does it mean? Does it mean we can go hunting or fishing, and kill for pleasure, or even for food? Does it mean we can kill "pests"? Does it mean we can use insecticides and poisonous sprays? Or does it mean that we must help Nature to keep her balance by not giving opportunities for the proliferation of rats, insects, etc.? Not by various processes of extermination but by cleanliness can we help Nature and Nature can help us. There is another form of killing—the killing of

reputations. Do we hurt others by slander, harsh words and ill feeling? Non-injury to others has many ramifications.

“Steal not.” This, too, covers all forms of stealing, the theft of worldly possessions being the least. There is the stealing of another’s job, of another’s ideas, etc. Let us remember to say, when we have lost a material possession, “I have returned it,” for law works, and whatever we take which does not belong to us, we shall in some life or another have to return.

“Bear not false witness.” This, too, covers many aspects of life. To slander others, to make excuses for oneself, to psychologize people by advertisements, etc., to deny without a reason what others say — all this, as well as the telling of untruths in business or personal life, comes under this head.

“Covet not.” Is not the mass of advertisements and films making us covet the life of others, tempting us to act as they do, to possess what they possess? What are wars — not all wars, but most — caused by but covetousness for the land or possessions of others?

“Lust not.” Here is a field in which more damage is being done today than perhaps at any time, for the youth are being taught that lust is a physical necessity. Impurity is lust, wrath and delusion, said the Buddha. We are blindly following those who delude us, and we also delude ourselves. People follow what they want to follow for the gratification of sense-life. But the toll will have to be paid.

Why is this so? Because law rules every aspect of the universe, not just the physical aspect. Causes produce effects in every department of life, and effects become future causes. There is no possible escape from this. All is governed by LAW. The Buddha made that one of his prime teachings. Learn and obey the law; that is all we have to do.

We hear of moral education in schools. The ethics of all religions and philosophies can be taught in story form as also be given as laws. These laws were not produced by a “god” any more than they were found out in the laboratory, but they are the means by which Nature works. We teach children the mathematical tables, the rules of grammar. Why not also the rules of conduct so that we can live more harmoniously together?

By teaching ethics, not as a superimposed set of rules, but as statements of law which have to be learnt and applied; by teaching that man has his life in his own hands and must decide for himself what

his future is to be, we shall turn out a new generation of thinking beings, consciously ruling their lives for the good of the whole. A real civic sense must be cultivated; from that will come a national sense, and then an international sense. But all this needs *cultivating*, and here is where education can help. True education should give the youth the capacity to live their lives to the best of their ability and to learn the nature and purpose of the universe and of man; the capacity to understand all creatures and know the relationship which exists between every aspect of Nature, known and unknown.

Have the older students of Theosophy taken their responsibility seriously? Have they taken to heart the words of the Master, that what constitutes the true Theosophist is "the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause to benefit by it as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can"? Have they spoken to the "awakening Spirit of Humanity, to the human Spirit and the Spirit in man"? Have they taken to heart the suggestion that the great mission of true Theosophy is, "first, the working out of clear unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men; and second, the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life, as shall offer a field where they may be applied with most equitableness"?

It is pointed out that

our age . . . is inferior in Wisdom to any other, because it professes, more visibly every day, *contempt for truth and justice, without which there can be no Wisdom*. Because our civilization, built up of shams and appearances, is at best like a beautiful green morass, a bog, spread over a deadly quagmire. Because this century of culture and worship of matter . . . has no encouragement to offer to morality; no prize to give for any moral virtue. . . . Because it encourages, legally and tacitly, vice under every form, from the sale of whiskey down to forced prostitution and theft brought on by starvation wages, Shylock-like exactions, rents, and other comforts of our cultured period. ("The Dual Aspect of Wisdom": *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 32*, p. 2)

It is time we did some stock-taking of our own (not other people's) shortcomings. And let each one of us say "*mea culpa*." That way we may change our criticisms of others into active work on and by ourselves.

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## THE TRUE PATH OF LIFE

It has been stated that true knowledge is not easily acquired. Yet perception of truth must precede or be concomitant with the setting out of a pattern in which our lives may find expression and meaning. Here we touch on what has been one of the greatest problems of the human mind and the cause of many a dilemma in the lives of serious and earnest searchers after truth.

Truth in essence is unutterable and it is vain to try to imprison it within a set of dogmas and rituals. This is one of the reasons why originally great truths were given and embodied in abstract symbols, in geometrical signs and glyphs. The mind was asked to reflect and ponder on these great symbols and from them derive strength and acquire a certain vision of truth, it being understood that any comprehension of the great mysteries of life could never be full, for further reflection and contemplation would always yield a greater apprehension of what is real and divine in Life.

Further, the law of evolution tells us of change, of constant changes brought about by the forward impulse of life, which is in itself never fully comprehended. Man sees that, experiences all the time the necessity of having to adapt himself to his changing environment, and yet when he faces the eternal questions regarding Reality and Causality he tries to concretize and materialize pure abstractions. Life spiritual, like life physical, is a constant challenge. There is no final resting place.

The real crux of the matter is that the search is an individual problem, and how each should go about it cannot be explained in words. Words help us only to be comfortably moral, and reliance on ritual leads us to mistake it for real worship; in other words, kills the spirit so that the letter of the teachings alone survives. The trouble is that we are all born and brought up in some kind of ideology which is deeply rooted in the heart, and part of the agony of becoming truly thinking human beings lies in the tearing out of these deeply embedded roots while trying to give a new meaning to our lives. Even this, however, is not enough. What is required is a deeper commitment of ourselves, consisting in a renewed allegiance of our will to the great Law of Life, that Law which we sense and perceive, but do not fully know. The perception of truth is *sui generis* to any individual and depends more on the degree of awareness he has attained than on any outside factor.

There are perhaps two levels at which truth is comprehended. The

first is that of our ordinary thinking. It is not necessarily incorrect in itself, but the trouble is that we let verbal formulations of the truth lull to sleep the spiritual urge in us to convert it into a living truth.

The second level is that of our true Self, who is the perceiver, the knower, the admonisher in us, and who at most unexpected times comes upon the scene of our present consciousness to stir our conscious will to act as true human beings should act. It is in fact that true Self in us which enables us to bridge the gap between the two kinds of perceptions. The closer the relationship between the lower and the higher Ego, the better are the foundations upon which our faith can rest. It is not a static relationship and, curiously enough, does not present us with a definite pattern of life. It rather infuses into us the true spirit of life, steels our will to carry on the task, and bends our heart to a compassionate understanding of Life itself.

As human beings we need the companionship of like minds and hearts, and they need us. Thus we are all parts of a vast scheme whose main aim is to forward the ideal of human brotherhood. Further, we are part of a vast cosmic scheme. There could not be individual existence apart from that universal pattern.

It seems, therefore, that we must first try to grasp what that universal pattern of life is, and what it means in terms of daily living, so that we can create our own pattern of life in accordance therewith. This is what the ancients meant when they spoke of considering all particulars in the light of Universals. The deeper and broader our perception of that Universal Pattern, the greater the joy at our being able to live in conformity with it. It is not a fixed pattern, and is perhaps never fully encompassed by any human being. How could it be, when even manifested life is boundless and infinite?

As human beings still imperfect and living mostly on the objective and physical plane, we need to be constantly reminded of the Eternal Verities which constitute the best framework upon which we can build our daily acts. The three Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine provide that framework. They are propositions and not dogmas. The Soul of man is free to weave out of them its threads of truth, from which will emerge our self-made destiny. They contain the very essence of wisdom and help us to model our lives upon those of the great Compassionate Ones.

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## “VANITY OF VANITIES”

The short book of the Bible called *Ecclesiastes*, a word meaning Preacher, needs closer study; and when we realize, as H.P.B. tells us in *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 703), that it contains the words of the “King-Initiate,” we can gain from it much of real value. In it Solomon, as an excellent preacher, shows the vanity of the things of this world, “in order to withdraw the hearts and affections of men from such empty toys.” The whole short book can be taken as a meditation on life: on “birth, death, decay, sickness and error.”

Starting with the well-known words, “Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity,” and repeating them in the last chapter after having taken us through all the vanities of life, the *Ecclesiastes* ends by giving us the antidote of vanity: fear of the Lord and the observance of the moral law.

To reach to the realization of this truth we must follow the *Ecclesiastes*, or the Preacher, in his mental researches.

Just as in the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* we are given the key to all that follows in that book, so also here we are given at the very outset the underlying basis of all that is to follow. We are brought to a conception of those two great aspects of life: Motion and Time.

*One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh:  
but the earth standeth for ever.*

*The sun riseth, and goeth down, and returneth to his place:  
and there rising again,*

*Maketh his round by the south, and turneth again to the north:  
the spirit goeth forward, surveying all places round about, and  
returneth to his circuits.*

*All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea doth not overflow:  
unto the place from whence the rivers come they return, to flow  
again.<sup>1</sup>*

This eternal motion and the vanity of thinking that the earth and ourselves are unique, brings us to the second great principle — Duration:

*What is it that hath been? The same thing that shall be.  
What is it that had been done? The same that shall be done.*

*Nothing under the sun is new, neither is any man able to  
say: Behold this is new. For it hath already gone before in the  
ages that were before us.*

<sup>1</sup> All quotations are from the Douay-Rheims Version of *The Holy Bible*.

If this is true then why do we not remember what has gone before? Ecclesiastes answers with the plain statement: "There is no remembrance of former things: nor indeed of those things which hereafter are to come, shall there be any remembrance with them that shall be in the latter end."

It was with these thoughts in mind, he tells us, that he proposed in his mind "to seek and search out wisely concerning all things that are done under the sun." For this is the whole duty of man. It is when despair sets in and the uselessness of life is seen that most of us begin to seek the purpose of our existence. The King-Initiate reminds us how, after becoming the greatest of Kings, he saw the vanity of all temporal things.

I have seen all things that are done under the sun: and behold all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

The perverse are hard to be corrected: and the number of fools is infinite.

I have spoken in my heart, saying: Behold I am become great, and have gone beyond all in wisdom that were before me in Jerusalem. And my mind hath contemplated many things wisely: and I have learned.

And I have given my heart to know prudence, and learning, and errors, and folly: and I have perceived that in these also there was labour and vexation of spirit,

Because in much wisdom there is much indignation: and he that addeth knowledge, addeth also labour.

Man progresses and learns by self-effort and by the method of trial and error; and so Ecclesiastes says that he set out to find "what was profitable for the children of men, and what they ought to do under the sun, all the days of their life." He said in his heart that he would go and enjoy all that there was to be enjoyed, in order to find out wherein lay wisdom and wherein lay folly. He had palaces and gardens and orchards made for him; he got himself men-servants and maid-servants, had a big family, and grew in prosperity. "I surpassed in riches all that were before me in Jerusalem: my wisdom also remained with me." But when he looked at all these riches and worldly labours he saw in them vanity, and realized that nothing was lasting.

Then he saw that "wisdom excelled folly, as much as light differeth from darkness." But, though the wise man was alert and could see things, while the fool was ignorant and walked in darkness, both alike were to die one day. Therefore of what avail is the wise man's wisdom

and labour? This also he considered to be vanity, for both the wise man and the fool are forgotten in time.

He became weary of life, for everything he turned to seemed to him to be "vanity and vexation of spirit." And he began to hate all the things he had worked for, as he would have to leave them behind. Despair set in, and "I left off, and my heart renounced labouring any more under the sun." In such a state of despair he almost repeated Arjuna's cry, "I shall not fight."

Then he turned away from his own individual life and looked around. It brought him to the law of cycles, of change, for he learned that all that is earthly is liable to perpetual change.

All things have their season: and in their times all things pass under heaven.

A time to be born, and a time to die. A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.

A time to kill, and a time to heal. A time to destroy, and a time to build.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh. A time to mourn, and a time to dance. . . .

And he follows this theme through the events of life, reaching the conclusion that by the necessary change of times, vanity is added to human travail. He then realizes that we are to put our trust in the Good Law and cast away fruitless cares. And the first cheerful note is sounded:

I have known that there was no better thing than to rejoice and do well in this life.

For every man that eateth and drinketh, and seeth good of his labour, this is the gift of God.

I have learned that all the works which God hath made continue for ever: we cannot add any thing, nor take away from those things which God hath made that he may be feared.

If we see that God and Law are one, we sense the truth of what is said and what follows: "The things that shall be have already been: and God restoreth that which is past." In other words, realizing that Law works everywhere and in all things, Ecclesiastes saw the unity of all. "All things breathe alike . . . and all things go to one place." He perceived that "nothing is better than for a man to rejoice in his work: and that this is his portion." Have we not here the great teaching of

the *Gita* to do our duty, that *dharma* to which we are born, with the added injunction to *rejoice* in doing it?

But the human spirit can never rest in peace while still human and with a mind that is constantly seeking the true essence of life. So Ecclesiastes turned to other things and saw that oppressions were rife and the innocent shed tears; and "they had no comforter . . . being destitute of help from any." Of what use, then, are all the labours of men? "The fool foldeth his hands together . . . saying: Better is a handful with rest, than both hands full with labour, and vexation of mind." Vanity is increased by oppression, by envy, by idleness, by covetousness, by solitariness, by wilfulness.

It is better . . . that two should be together than one: for they have the advantage of their society. If one fall he shall be supported by the other. . . .

Better is a child that is poor and wise than a king that is old and foolish, who knoweth not to foresee for hereafter.

Because out of prison and chains sometimes a man cometh forth to a kingdom: and another born king is consumed with poverty.

This again is a reminder of the teaching of the Buddha:

Who toiled a slave may come anew a Prince  
For gentle worthiness and merit won;  
Who ruled a King may wander earth in rags  
For things done and undone.

When we see the oppressions of the poor and the perversion of justice, let us realize that "he that is high hath another higher, and there are others still higher than these." Is this a hint to us to let the Law work, and not become ourselves agents of retaliation? We are told, also, what will be the fate of the covetous. All that comes to us is really not ours; the covetous man and the rich man suffer: the one is never satisfied and the other loses his sleep through surfeit. Riches hurt the owner, for when they are lost he suffers. "As he came forth naked from his mother's womb, so shall he return. . . . What then doth it profit him that he hath laboured for the wind?"

Next, we are given prescriptions against worldly vanities — mortification, patience, and seeking wisdom.

I have surveyed all things with my mind, to know, and consider, and seek out wisdom and reason: and to know the wicked-

ness of the fool and the error of the imprudent. . . .

Only this I have found, that God made man right, and he hath entangled himself with an infinity of questions. Who is as the wise man? And who hath known the resolution of the word? . . .

He that keepeth the commandment shall find no evil. The heart of a wise man understandeth time and answer.

There is a time and opportunity for every business.

Understanding the Law, or Divine Providence, he is led to see that "it is better with the godly in adversity, than with the wicked in prosperity." "There are just men to whom evils happen, as though they had done the works of the wicked: and there are wicked men who are as secure as though they had the deeds of the just. But this also I judge most vain." For, though "sentence is not speedily pronounced against the evil," yet Divine Providence rules over all. We come to see that "wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good"; and that "the words of the wise are heard in silence, more than the cry of a prince among fools." Even though we cannot see the why of things, still "whatsoever thy hand is able to do, do it earnestly. . . ."

The last chapter gives the chief antidote of vanity.

Whereas Ecclesiastes was very wise, he taught the people, and declared the things that he had done: and seeking out, he set forth many parables.

He sought profitable words: and wrote words most right, and full of truth.

The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails deeply fastened in, which by the counsel of masters are given from one shepherd.

More than these, my son, require not. Of making many books there is no end: and much study is an affliction of the flesh.

Let us all hear together the conclusion of the discourse. Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is all man:

And all things that are done, God will bring into judgment for every error, whether it be good or evil.

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## REPLIES TO AN ENGLISH F.T.S.

[The following is reprinted from *The Theosophist*, November 1883.—EDS.]

### SAKYA MUNI'S PLACE IN HISTORY

No Orientalist — save perhaps the same wise, not to say deep, Professor Weber — opposes more vehemently than Professor Max Müller Hindu and Buddhist chronology. Evidently, if an Indophile he is not a Buddhophile, and General Cunningham, however independent otherwise in his archæological researches, agrees with him more than would seem strictly prudent in view of *possible* future discoveries.<sup>1</sup> We have then to refute in our turn this great Oxford professor's speculations.

To the evidence furnished by the *Puranas* and the *Mahavansa*, which he also finds hopelessly entangled and contradictory (though the perfect accuracy of that Sinhalese history is most warmly acknowledged by Sir Emerson Tennant, the historian), he opposes the Greek classics and their chronology. With him, it is always "Alexander's invasion" and "Conquest," and "the ambassador of Seleucus Nicator — Megasthenes," while even the faintest record of such "conquest" is conspicuously absent from Brahmanic record; and, although in an inscription of Piyadasi are mentioned the names of Antiochus, Ptolemy, Magus, Antigonus, *and even of the great Alexander himself, as vassals of the king Piyadasi*, the Macedonian is yet called the "Conqueror of India." In other words, while any casual mention of Indian affairs by a Greek writer of no great note must be accepted unchallenged, no record of the Indians, literary or monumental, is entitled the smallest consideration. Until rubbed against the touchstone of Hellenic infallibility it must be set down, in the words of Professor Weber, as "of course mere empty boasting." Oh, rare Western sense of justice!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding Prof. M. Müller's regrettable efforts to invalidate every Buddhist evidence, he seems to have ill succeeded in proving his case, if we can judge from the openly expressed opinion of his own German *confrères*. In the portion headed "Tradition as to Buddha's Age" (pp. 283-288) in his *History of Indian Literature*, Prof. Weber very aptly remarks, "Nothing like positive certainty, therefore, is for the present attainable. Nor have the subsequent discussions of this topic by Max Müller (1859), *Hist. A.S.L.* (p. 264 ff.), by Westergaard (1860), *Ueber Buddha's Todesjahr*, and by Kern, *Over de Jaartelling der Zuidel Buddhisten*, so far yielded any definite results." Nor are they likely to.

<sup>2</sup> No *Philaryan* would pretend for a moment on the strength of the Piyadasi inscriptions that Alexander of Macedonia, or either of the other sovereigns mentioned, was

Occult records show differently. They say — challenging proof to the contrary — that Alexander never penetrated into India farther than *Taxila*; which is not even quite the modern Attock. The murmuring of the Macedonian's troops began at the same place and not as given out, on the banks of the Hyphasis. For, having never gone to the *Hydaspes* or Jhelum he could not have been on the Sutlej. Nor did Alexander ever found satrapies or plant any Greek colonies in the Punjab. The only colonies he left behind him that the Brahmans ever knew of, amounted to a few dozens of disabled soldiers, scattered hither and thither on the frontiers, who with their native raped wives settled around the deserts of Karmania and Drangaria — the then natural boundaries of India. And, unless history regards as colonists the many thousands of dead men and those who *settled* for ever under the hot sands of Gedrosia, there were no other, save in the fertile imagination of the Greek *historians*. The boasted "invasion of India" was confined to the regions between Karmania and Attock, east and west, and Beloochistan and the Hindu-Kush, south and north: countries which were all India for the Greek of those days. His building a *fleet* on the Hydaspes is a fiction; and his "victorious march through the fighting armies of India," another. However, it is not with the "world conqueror" that we have now to deal, but rather with the supposed accuracy and even casual veracity of his captains and countrymen, whose hazy reminiscences on the testimony of the classical writers have now been raised to unimpeachable evidence in everything that may affect the chronology of early Buddhism and India.

Foremost among the evidence of classical writers, that of Flavius Arrianus is brought forward against the Buddhist and Chinese chronologies. No one should impeach the *personal* testimony of this conscientious author had he been himself an eye-witness instead of Megasthenes. But when a man comes to know that he wrote his accounts upon the now lost works of Aristobulus and Ptolemy; and that the latter described their data from texts prepared by authors who had never set their eyes *upon one line written by either Megasthenes or Nearchus himself*; and that knowing so much one is informed by Western historians that among the works of Arrian, Book VII of the *Anabasis*

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claimed as an actual "vassal" of Chandragupta. They did not even pay tribute, but only a kind of quit-rent annually for lands ceded in the north: as the grant-tablets could show. But the inscription, however misinterpreted, shows most clearly that Alexander was never the conqueror of India.

of Alexander, is “the chief authority on the subject of the Indian invasion — a book unfortunately *with a gap* in its twelfth chapter” — one may well conceive upon what a broken reed Western authority leans for its Indian chronology. Arrian lived over 600 years after Buddha’s death; Strabo, 500 (55 “B.C.”); Diodorus Siculus — quite a trustworthy compiler! — about the first century; Plutarch over 700 *anno Buddhæ*, and Quintus Curtius over 1,000 years! And when, to crown this army of witnesses against the Buddhist annals, the reader is informed by our Olympian critics that the works of the last named author — than whom no more blundering (geographically, chronologically, and historically) writer ever lived — “form along with the Greek history of Arrian *the most valuable source of information* respecting the military career of Alexander the Great” — then the only wonder is that the great conqueror was not made by his biographers to have — Leonidas-like — defended the Thermopylean passes in the Hindu-Kush against the invasion of the first Vedic Brahmans “from the Oxus.”

Withal the Buddhist dates are either rejected or only accepted *pro tempore*. Well may the Hindu resent the preference shown to the testimony of Greeks — of whom some, at least, are better remembered in Indian history as the importers into Jambudvipa of every Greek and Roman vice known and unknown to their day — against his own national records and history. “Greek influence” was felt, indeed, in India, in this, and only in this, one particular. Greek damsels mentioned as an article of great traffic for India — Persian and Greek *Yavanis* — were the foremothers of the modern *nautch-girls*, who had till then remained pure virgins of the inner temples. Alliances with the Antiochuses and the Seleucus Nicators bore no better fruit than the rotten apple of Sodom. Pataliputra, as prophesied by Gautama Buddha, found its fate in the waters of the Ganges, having been twice before nearly destroyed, again like Sodom, by the fire of heaven.

Reverting to the main subject, the “contradictions” between the Ceylonese and Chino-Tibetan chronologies actually prove nothing. If the Chinese annals of Sauï in accepting the prophecy of our Lord that “a thousand years after He had reached Nirvana, His doctrines would reach the north” fell into the mistake of applying it to China, whereas Tibet was meant, the error was corrected after the eleventh century of the Tzin era in most of the temple chronologies. Besides which, it may now refer to other events relating to Buddhism, of which Europe knows nothing, China or *Tzina* dates its present name only from the

year 296 of the Buddhist era<sup>3</sup> (vulgar chronology having assumed it from the first *Hoang* of the Tzin dynasty): therefore the Tathagata could not have indicated it by this name in his well-known prophecy. If misunderstood even by several of the Buddhist commentators, it is yet preserved in its true sense by his own immediate Arhats. The Glorified One meant the country that stretches far off from the Lake Mansarovara; far beyond that region of the Himavat, where dwelt from time immemorial the great "teachers of the Snowy Range." These were the great Sraman-acharyas who preceded Him, and were His teachers, their humble successors trying to this day to perpetuate their and His doctrines.

The prophecy came out true to the very day, and it is corroborated both by the mathematical and historical chronology of Tibet — quite as accurate as that of the Chinese. Arhat Kasyapa, of the dynasty of Moryas, founded by one of the Chandraguptas near Pataliputra, left the convent of Panch-Kukkutarama, in consequence of a vision of our Lord, for missionary purpose in the year 683 of the Tzin era (436 Western era) and had reached the great Lake of Bod-Yul in the same year. It is at that period that expired the millennium prophesied. The Arhat carrying with him the fifth statue of Sakya Muni out of the seven gold statues made after his bodily death by order of the first Council, planted it in the soil on that very spot where seven years later was built the first GUNPA (monastery), where the earliest Buddhist lamas dwelt. And though the conversion of the whole country did not take place before the beginning of the seventh century (Western era), the good Law had, nevertheless, *reached* the North at the time prophesied, and no earlier. For, the *first* of the golden statues had been plundered from Bhikshu Sali Suka by the Hsiung-nu robbers and melted, during the days of Dharmasoka, who had sent missionaries beyond Nepaul. The *second* had a like fate, at Ghar-zha, even before it had reached the boundaries of Bod-Yul. The *third* was rescued from a barbarous tribe of Bhons by a Chinese military chief who had pursued them into the deserts of Shamo about 423 Buddhist era (120 "B.C."). The *fourth* was sunk in the third century of the Christian era, together with the ship that carried it from Magadha toward the hills of Ghangs-chhèn-dzo-ngá (Chittagong). The *fifth* arriving in the nick of time reached its destination with Arhat Kasyapa. So did the

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<sup>3</sup> The reference to *Chinahunah* (Chinese and Huns) in the *Bhishma Parva* of the *Mahabharata* is evidently a later interpolation, as it does not occur in the old MSS. existing in Southern India.

last two. . . .<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, the Southern Buddhists, headed by the Ceylonese, open their annals with the following event:

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<sup>4</sup> No doubt, since the history of these seven statues is not in the hands of the Orientalists, it will be treated as a "groundless fable." Nevertheless such is their origin and history. They date from the first Synod, that of Rajagriha, held in the season of *war* following the death of Buddha, *i.e.*, one year after his death. Were this Rajagriha Council held 100 years after, as maintained by some, it could not have been presided over by Mahakasyapa, the friend and brother Arhat of Sakyamuni, as he would have been 200 years old. The second Council or Synod, that of Vaisali, was held 120, not 100 or 110 years as some would have it, after the *Nirvana*, for the latter took place at a time a little over 20 years before the physical death of the Tathagata. It was held at the great Saptaparna cave (*Mahavansa's Sattapanni*), near the Mount Baibhar (the Webhara of the Pali Manuscripts), that was in Rajagriha, the old capital of Magadha. Memoirs exist, containing the record of his daily life, made by the nephew of king Ajatasatru, a favourite Bhikshu of the Mahacharya. These texts have ever been in the possession of the superiors of the first Lamasery built by Arhat Kasyapa in Bod-Yul, most of whose Chohans were the descendants of the dynasty of the Moryas, there being up to this day three of the members of this once royal family living in India. The old text in question is a document written in *Anudruta* Magadha characters. [We deny that these or any other characters—whether Devanagari, Pali, or Dravidian—ever used in India, are variations of, or derived from, the Phœnician.] To revert to the texts, it is therein stated that the Sattapanni cave, then called "Saraswati" and "Bamboo-cave," got its latter name in this wise. When our Lord first sat in it for *Dhyana*, it was a large six-chambered natural cave, 50 to 60 feet wide by 33 deep. One day, while teaching the mendicants outside, our Lord compared man to a *Saptaparna* (seven-leaved) plant, showing them how after the loss of its first leaf every other could be easily detached, but the seventh leaf—directly connected with the stem. "Mendicants," He said, "there are seven Buddhas in every Buddha, and there are *six* Bhikshus and but one Buddha in each mendicant. What are the *seven*? The seven branches of complete knowledge. What are the six? The six organs of sense. What are the five? The five elements of illusive being. And the *one* which is also ten? He is a true Buddha who develops in him the ten forms of holiness and subjects them all to the one—the silent voice" (meaning Avalokiteswara). After that, causing the rock to be moved at His command, the Tathagata made it divide itself into a seventh additional chamber, remarking that a rock too was septenary, and had seven stages of development. From that time it was called the *Sattapanni* or the Saptaparna cave. After the first Synod was held, seven gold statues of the Bhagavat were cast by order of the king, and each of them was placed in one of the seven compartments. These in after times, when the good law had to make room to more congenial because more sensual creeds, were taken in charge by various viharas and then disposed of as explained. Thus when Mr. Turnour states on the authority of the sacred traditions of Southern Buddhists that the cave received its name from the Sattapanni plant, he states what is correct. In the *Archæological Survey of India*, we find that Gen. Cunningham identifies this cave with one not far away from it and in the same Baibhar range, but which is most decidedly not our Saptaparna cave. At the same time the Chief Engineer of Buddha Gaya, Mr. Beglar, describing the *Chetu* cave, mentioned by Fa-Hien, thinks it is the Saptaparna cave—and he is right. For that, as well as the Pippal and the other caves mentioned in our texts, are too sacred in their associations—both having been used for centuries by generations of Bhikkhus, unto the very time of their leaving India—to have their sites so easily forgotten.

They claim *according to their native chronology* that *Vijaya*, the son of *Sinhabahu*, the sovereign of *Lala*, a small kingdom or *Raj* on the *Gandaki* river in *Magadha*, was exiled by his father for acts of turbulence and immorality. Sent adrift on the ocean with his companions after having had their heads shaved, Buddhist-Bhikshu fashion, as a sign of penitence — he was carried to the shores of *Lanka*. Once landed, he and his companions conquered and easily took possession of an island inhabited by uncivilized tribes, generically called the *Yakshas*. This — at whatever epoch and year it may have happened — is an *historical* fact, and the *Ceylonese* records, independent of Buddhist chronology, give it out as having taken place 382 years before *Dushtagamani* (*i.e.*, in 543, before the Christian era). Now, the Buddhist Sacred Annals record certain words of our Lord pronounced by Him shortly before His death. In *Mahavansa* He is made to have addressed them to *Sakra*, in the midst of a great assembly of *Devatas* (*Dhyan Chohans*), and while already “in the exalted unchangeable *Nirvana*, seated on the throne on which *Nirvana* is achieved.” In our texts *Tathagata* addresses them to his assembled *Arhats* and *Bhikkhus* a few days before his final liberation: “One *Vijaya*, the son of *Sinhabahu*, king of the land of *Lala*, together with 700 attendants, has just landed on *Lanka*. Lord of *Dhyan Buddhas* (*Devas*)! my doctrine will be established on *Lanka*. Protect him and *Lanka*!”

This is the sentence pronounced which, as proved later, was a prophecy. The now familiar phenomenon of clairvoyant prevision, amply furnishing a natural explanation of the prophetic utterance without any unscientific theory of miracle, the laugh of certain Orientalists seems uncalled for. Such parallels of poetico-religious embellishments as found in *Mahavansa* exist in the written records of every religion — as much in Christianity as anywhere else. An unbiased mind would first endeavour to reach the correct and very superficially hidden meaning before throwing ridicule and contemptuous discredit upon them. Moreover, the Tibetans possess a more sober record of this prophecy in the *Notes*, already alluded to, reverentially taken down by King *Ajatasatru*'s nephew. They are, as said above, in the possession of the *Lamas* of the convent built by *Arhat Kasyapa* — the *Moryas* and their descendants being of a more direct descent than the *Rajput Gautamas*, the *Chiefs of Nagara* — the village identified with *Kapilavastu* — are the best entitled of all to their possession. And we know they are historical to a word. For the *Esoteric Buddhist* they yet vibrate in space; and these prophetic words, together with the true

picture of the Sugata who pronounced them, are present in the aura of every atom of His relics. This, we hasten to say, is no proof but for the psychologist. But there is other and historical evidence: the cumulative testimony of our religious chronicles. The philologist has not seen these; but this is no proof of their non-existence.

The mistake of the Southern Buddhists lies in dating the *Nirvana* of Sanggyas Pan-chhen from the actual day of his death, whereas, as above stated, He had reached it over twenty years previous to His disincarnation. Chronologically, the Southerners are right, both in dating His death in 543 "B.C.," and one of the great Councils at 100 years after the latter event. But the Tibetan Chohans who possess all the documents relating to the last 24 years of His *external* and *internal* life — of which no philologist knows anything — can show that there is no real discrepancy between the Tibetan and the Ceylonese chronologies as stated by the Western Orientalists.<sup>5</sup> For the profane, the Exalted One was born in the 68th year of the Burmese *Eeatzana* era, established by Eeatzana (Anjana), King of Dewaha; for the *initiated* — in the 48th year of that era, on a Friday of the waxing moon, of May. And, it was in 563 before the Christian chronology that Tathagata reached his full Nirvana, dying, as correctly stated by *Mahavansa* — in 543, on the very day when Vijaya landed with his companions in Ceylon — as prophesied by Loka-natha, our Buddha.

Professor Max Müller seems to greatly scoff at this prophecy. In his chapter (*Hist. A. S. L.*) upon Buddhism (the "false" religion), the eminent scholar speaks as though he resented such an *unprecedented* claim. "We are asked to believe" — he writes — "that the Ceylonese historians placed the founder of the Vijayan dynasty of Ceylon in the year 543 in accordance with their sacred chronology!" (*i.e.*, Buddha's prophecy), "while *we* (the philologists) are not told, however, *through what channel* the Ceylonese could have received their information as to the exact date of Buddha's death." Two points may be noticed in these sarcastic phrases: (*a*) the implication of a false prophecy by our Lord; and (*b*) a dishonest tampering with chronological records, reminding one of those of Eusebius, the famous Bishop of Cæsarea, who stands accused in history of "perverting every Egyptian chronological table for the sake of synchronisms." With reference to charge

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<sup>5</sup> Bishop Bigandet, after examining all the Burmese authorities accessible to him, frankly confesses that "the history of Buddha offers an almost complete blank as to what regards his doings and preachings during [a] period of nearly twenty-three years" (Vol. I, p. 260).—ED. [ *The Theosophist* ]

*one*, he may be asked why our Sakyasinha's prophecies should not be as much entitled to his respect, as those of his Saviour would be to ours — were we to ever write the true history of the "Galilean" Arhat. With regard to charge *two*, the distinguished philologist is reminded of the glass house he and all Christian chronologists are themselves living in. Their inability to vindicate the adoption of December 25 as the actual day of the Nativity, and hence to determine the age and the year of their Avatar's death — even before their own people — is far greater than is ours to demonstrate the year of Buddha to other nations. Their utter failure to establish *on any other but traditional evidence* the, to them, historically *unproved*, if probable, fact of his existence at all — ought to engender a fairer spirit. When Christian historians can, upon undeniable *historical* authority, justify biblical and ecclesiastical chronology, then, perchance, they may be better equipped than at present for the congenial work of rending heathen chronologies into shreds.

The "channel" the Ceylonese received their information through, was two Bhikshus who had left Magadha to follow their disgraced brethren into exile. The capacity of Siddhartha Buddha's Arhats for transmitting intelligence by psychic currents may, perhaps, be conceded without any great stretch of imagination to have been equal to, if not greater than, that of the prophet Elijah, who is credited with the power of having known from any distance all that happened in the king's bedchamber. No Orientalist has the right to reject the testimony of other people's Scriptures, while professing belief in the far more contradictory and entangled evidence of his own, upon the selfsame theory of proof. If Professor Müller is a sceptic at heart, then let him fearlessly declare himself; only a sceptic who impartially acts the iconoclast has the right to assume such a tone of contempt towards any non-Christian religion. And for the instruction of the impartial enquirer only, shall it be thought worth while to collate the evidence afforded by historical — not psychological — data. Meanwhile, by analysing some objections and exposing the dangerous logic of our critic, we may give the theosophists a few more facts connected with the subject under discussion.

(*To be concluded*)

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Does the technologist have any moral responsibility for the uses made of his work by virtue of his being a technologist? If so, to what extent can he exercise responsibility once his discoveries have passed from his hands into those of the manager or politician who may also be his employer? These are questions with far-reaching implications.

Peter J. Smith, discussing the technologist's role in the London *Spectator*, says that every discovery has good as well as bad consequences, and often it is not possible for scientists and technologists to foresee the use to which their discoveries will be put. It is inevitable that discoveries will be made, but it is not inevitable that the full range of associated ill effects should be felt.

Thus, the discovery of nuclear fission was inevitable; large-scale radioactive pollution of the atmosphere is not. Fossil fuel fires and the automobile are inevitable; the filthy atmospheric deposits produced by them are not.

The positive responsibility of the technologist [says Peter Smith] comes after the initial discovery, in the assessment and eradication of the ill effects. As far as environmental pollution is concerned, it is quite possible to make a scientific evaluation of the risks involved, whether it be in the use of the radioactive bomb, the coal fire or the motor-car, before they become too great. Unfortunately this is not always done soon enough, or at all. . . . The tragedy is that we do not learn from past mistakes. . . .

In all types of pollution the problem is basically the same. The risks may be scientifically assessed by determining the number of people likely to be exposed to the pollutant, the quantity they are likely to absorb and the harm that may result. The role of the scientist and technologist is to place the harmful effects on some form of quantitative basis without which no valid judgment of risk may be made.

Apart from the study of imminent hazards, there is another aspect of the scientist's contribution which is of considerable importance. In certain cases he may be able to look far ahead to predict long-term, less obvious ill effects which, though not of immediate concern, are likely to become important to future generations.

Pollution is one of the greatest problems facing modern man. It is not something that we can afford to ignore even for a few

years longer. . . . If our scientific and technological advance is retarded slightly because of efforts devoted to the improvement of our environment, the price is not too high.

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Various aspects of present research into the biological rhythms that all beings, man and nature included, are subject to, were discussed at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C. Especially significant are findings on the 24-hour or "circadian" rhythms. (*Fate*, July 1967)

As to the existence of these "internal clocks," there is no doubt now. Daily rhythms were first noticed in flowers and plants. It was assumed that sunflowers, for instance, were following the sun around the sky, but in actual fact it now has been learned that their movement is independent of light and linked to time alone. Later, bees were found to follow the same 24-hour rhythms even when several generations had been raised in complete darkness. A German scientist reported in 1952 that pigeons can tell local time — and therefore navigate correctly — within an accuracy of five minutes.

Science now has learned that sunlight, temperature and other effects will "set" the biological clocks but will not change the fundamental 24-hour circadian rhythms. All this has the most practical application for human beings, even though they are only just beginning to understand it. According to Professor Edward Batschelet, a Catholic University statistician, "even operations should be done at the proper time . . . not just when the doctor is available."

Dr. Britton Chance, an internationally-known biological researcher, presented a theory to explain the underlying basis for these rhythms. He told the AAAS that he has discovered a 160-second chemical cycle in cells, keyed to 20 biochemical reactions involving the production of energy. This discovery reduces to the cell level all the complex timing mechanisms involved in biological systems.

Each cell, indeed, as H.P.B. says in her article "Psychic and Noetic Action," "has a memory and a consciousness of its kind, or call it instinct if you will. . . . Every human organ and each cell in the latter has a key-board of its own, like that of a piano, only that it registers and emits sensations instead of sounds."

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In the magazine *Life* for May 29 (Asia Edition) appeared an article by its Senior Editor David Snell describing the experiences he went through during the few minutes that he was "clinically dead." In this confrontation with death Snell was objectively unconscious, but subjectively his consciousness was still active, although no one present could notice it. While two doctors were fighting for his life, which to all appearances had come to an end, for the heart had stopped, the patient was really not dead. Writing of his experience he says:

Slumped upon a chair...I was slipping across the honed edge of death. For a period of some minutes there had been no pulse, no blood pressure, no pronounced stirring of the heart. My eyes, I have been told, were glazed. My limbs were flaccid, my face swollen and ashen. In the last extreme seconds, only *awareness* remained of the vital functions. As the crisis deepened, I was acutely, almost electrically, aware of things around me and then, when this awareness receded, of things *within* me. I was an enthralled eyewitness and mind-witness to my own rapidly advancing demise.

It was a turbulent experience but not at all terrifying.... At the end I gazed into something that I believe to be life's supreme mystery.... Now, in retrospect, I grope for this other thing. There was *something* else, something that I felt or experienced or beheld at the very last instant. What was it? I knew it so well when it was there, opening before me, something more beautiful, more gentle, more loving than the mind or imagination of living creatures could ever conceive.

David Snell's experience induced Dr. J. V. Teunissen, neurologist and psychiatrist at the Mental Hospital of Leidschendam, Holland, to write in *Life* pointing out that there are many others, like Snell, who, after having been pronounced dead, have later revived, and have described how it feels to die. In his opinion, it is worth while studying these experiences, for they might contribute to a new concept of soul. As a result of his remarks in *Life*, Dr. Teunissen was interviewed by a Dutch journalist, who reported as follows in *De Telegraaf* of August 3:

Dr. Teunissen said: "David Snell has really seen beyond the verge of death. Officially he was dead; he was completely unconscious, but the conception of clinical death has considerably altered of late. Formerly it was thought that a person was dead as soon as the heart stopped beating, but with our modern means of resuscitation we have learned that the heart is no longer the

central organ, and that man only dies when the brain dies. In principle the heart may not stand still longer than five minutes, because after this lapse of time the brain suffers too much and its electric vitality ceases. The patient is dead as soon as this electric vitality falls down to zero. It does not happen often that a patient in these few minutes between death of the heart and death of the brain can be brought back to life. Most of them die and therefore cannot tell what they experienced in these few minutes. But those who have been able to tell about it have proved that there is a great similarity in these cases."

"According to their later descriptions [continued Dr. Teunissen] the patients were surrounded by a solemn silence, ecstasy took hold of them and some saw the whole scene as from above. But those present noticed nothing of all this; they only saw the patients lying there as if dead, and could not see that they were subjectively fully alive, though objectively completely unconscious." When asked whether he thought that this is something everyone goes through in his last moments, the psychiatrist answered in the affirmative. "Up to now," Dr. Teunissen said, "there was only a very small possibility of examining this kind of cases, because only very few returned from clinical death. But at present the patient can be brought back to life by massage of the heart and various other modern medical practices. In our time the conception of the soul, as also the conception of God, has come to the fore. Many people find it difficult to come to an understanding of what the soul is. . . . I believe that many people would be helped by a certain perspective of life after death, and if this perspective can be attained via natural science then we must certainly not neglect to do so."

---

The spectacular discovery of the immense urban ruins at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa in the 1920's caused all earlier ideas of ancient Indian history to be revised. The stage now seems to have been set for yet another significant attempt at reconstructing a chapter in the past history of India — this time with evidence uncovered by Soviet scientists in south Turkmenistan. (*The Times of India*, May 24)

It has been confirmed that the sites uncovered in Turkmenistan reveal cultural patterns much the same as those discovered at Kalibangan, Taxila, Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. The pottery is Harappan

and so are the bronze implements. This raises the question: Is this correlation a mere coincidence, and if not, how explain the similarities between the two cultures?

Archæological discoveries are gradually bringing to light the cultural ties that once existed between India and distant lands. But the India of those days was very different from what we know as India now.

There was a time when the ancient nations of the West included under the generic name of India many of the countries of Asia now classified under other names. There was an Upper, a Lower, and a Western India, even during the comparatively late period of Alexander; and Persia, Iran, is called Western India in some ancient classics, and the countries now named Tibet, Mongolia, and Great Tartary were considered as forming part of India. When we say, therefore, that India has civilized the world and was the Alma Mater of the civilizations, arts and sciences of all other nations (Babylonia, and perhaps even Egypt, included), we mean archaic, prehistoric India, India of the time when the great Gobi was a sea, and the lost Atlantis formed part of an unbroken continent which began at the Himalayas and ran down over Southern India, Ceylon, Java, to far-away Tasmania. (*The Theosophist*, January 1882)

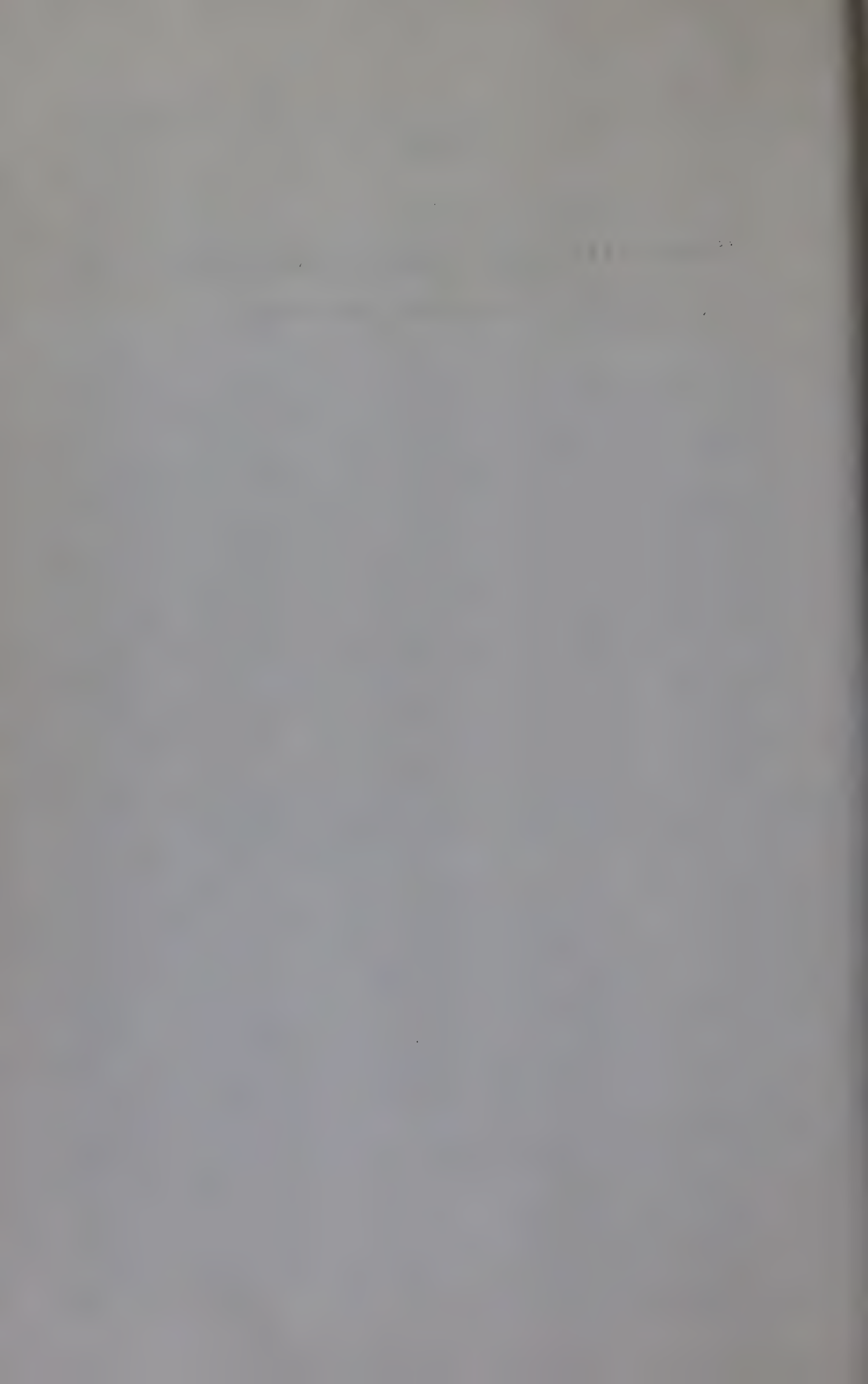
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Dr. J. G. Defares, professor at the University of Leiden, Holland, warns in the *Dutch Medical Magazine* of July 1967 against the contraceptive known as "the pill."

Dr. Defares states that in the long run the use of the pill can hasten the process of aging. The ingredient of the pill is the feminine sexual hormone estrogen, and recent research has shown that its prolonged use causes a suppression of the production of the woman's own estrogen, resulting in a chronic lack of this hormone and damage to all the functions of the organism, physical as well as mental. Porosity of the bones and arteriosclerosis are part of the harm that can result. Professor Defares deplores the increasing use of a product which undermines the health of body and mind and assails womanhood in its most vital functions.

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“THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT”  
VOLUME XXXVII : NOVEMBER 1966 – OCTOBER 1967



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