

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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THE PARAMITA PATH

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Most, if not all of those who join our Inner Section, are only beginners, preparing themselves in this life to enter in reality upon the path of Discipleship in lives to come.—H.P.B.

The world of real occultists goes on with the laborious process of sifting out the living germs from the masses of men. For occultists may be found and fostered and prepared for coming ages when power will be needed and pretension will go for nothing.—W. Q. JUDGE

AMONG the most inspiring teachings which H.P.B. recorded, those about the Path of Renunciation, about the existence of the Living Mahatmas who already have actually made the great sacrifice, and about the Path of Chelaship leading to Them, are the most potent.

Abject suffering, mental and other disabilities, social and other differences, etc., lead men to inquire about the purpose of human life. But an understanding of that purpose, even a thorough one, does not lead straightway to a practice of Theosophical teachings, till the probabilities of achieving a successful transformation of mundane existence are noted. For the resolve to abandon the highway of ordinary living (on which looters are active, greedy of acquiring the wherewithal for enjoying an ever expanding sensual existence, and overpowering by their might the rights of the humble and the good) and to take to the narrow and strait path of extraordinary life, man needs the strength which emanates from the above-mentioned teachings.

Service of fellow-men makes a natural appeal to the human heart; the fact that Great Renouncers labour for the common good stirs human

imagination and inspires man to co-operate in the Great Work; the truth that special training is made available to all who aspire to come out from among the dead and useless portion of mankind and to belong to the Kingdom of the few Quickened, forces the human mind to seek that special Knowledge.

A fairly large number of men and women have walked into the Circle of the Great Ascetics, having contacted the Theosophical Teachings about the Path of Chelaship leading to the Temple of Divine Wisdom. Both H.P.B. and Mr. Judge warned the would-be disciples of the Masters: "Let no man be unaware that while there is a great joy in this belief there is also a great sorrow.... Do not leave any earnest inquirer in ignorance of this. It has cost others many years and tears of blood to self-learn it." *The Voice of the Silence* distinguishes between the Eye and the Heart Doctrines and says: "Be warned in time." We may be willing but not possess the Will; we may dare to rush the citadel of Wisdom but we may not be humble enough to be aware of our weakness or our ignorance, and may therefore overlook the injunction about taking "a humbler course."

The primary truth to be learnt and assimilated by the would-be Occultist is that virtue leads to Wisdom. To acquire Knowledge without unfolding Virtue is not only dangerous, it is bound to end in frustration. The Paramita Path leads the striver to the higher level by a footpath which evades some grave but avoidable dangers of the steep climbing of the Mountain of Occultism. The Paramita Path curves gently and accustoms the climber to the rigours of the ever rising altitudes. Presently, dangers — unavoidable — will have to be faced, but the accumulated force of virtue will sustain him very greatly.

Explains H.P.B.: "To practise the Paramita Path means to become a yogi with a view of becoming an ascetic." In many a student the desire to become an ascetic-occultist is so great — a Karmic heirloom indeed! — that they think somewhat lightly of the Paramitas — "the glorious virtues." For such, the two statements with which this article opens will prove useful and valuable. The same teaching is given in *The Voice of the Silence*; what is unattainable "this day" is within our reach "tomorrow" and we can create "this day" the chances for "the morrow."

What can H.P.B. mean when she says, "To practise the Paramita Path means to become a yogi with a view of becoming an ascetic"?

Asceticism implies a set of rules for self-control, a code of discipline for soul-unfoldment: The implication that the birth of the ascetic fol-

lows that of the yogi is often overlooked by the zealot. The yogi of this statement is the man of virtue, one who has united himself in some measure with humanity by a proper realization of the One Self and a profound conviction that It makes of humanity an indivisible unit. His service, along the line of Occultism, of the race to which he himself belongs, follows his perception, understanding and realization of his own soul, as Man, without any conditioning distinctions. The great Self-Knowledge which he needs to serve all human souls "is of loving deeds the child." The loving deeds flower on the Paramita tree.

The Centre of all the acts of service of the Ascetic is *Vairagya* — detachment from all affections, all aversions. This quality must grow out of affection for the good, aversion for the evil on the part of the aspirant who is attempting "to become a yogi with a view of becoming an ascetic." Those who, at the earlier stage, become indifferent to the good and the evil alike, develop a hardness of head and often slip into the bog of passion fancying that they have reached the shores of the lake of immortality, wisdom and compassion.

True Occultism, therefore, advocates first the practice of altruism — not as "civilized" society understands it, but altruism founded upon the clear comprehension of the Law of Brotherhood. The Human Soul loves all human souls irrespective of the attributes environing those souls. Perhaps the best way to understand the difference between the two altruisms is to learn the difference subsisting between the virtues of the sectarian in politics, in religion, in society, who is ignorant of the teachings of Theosophy, and those of the student of the Wisdom-Religion who has learnt and sheds sectarianism in every form, and who practises the Paramita-Virtues according to the science of Occultism.

What is the goal? — The man of Kama-Passion has to become the man of Paramartha-Satya, of Compassion-Wisdom.

The earnest student of Theosophy who is preparing himself to enter in reality the Path of Discipleship, who aspires to be one of those "fostered" for the "coming ages" has to learn, therefore, to walk the Paramita Path right away. Theosophical knowledge is necessary because as long as one does not understand the philosophy and metaphysics of the Esoteric system he cannot ever arrive at right conclusions even in the matter of ethics.

The student begins to see that there is a *science* of morality which teaches man how to become good. Mere religious platitudes assume a new meaning and the ethical injunctions of great Teachers, vaguely

preached everywhere but winked at as goody-goodyness, are perceived as laws, infallible and invariable as the law of gravitation. Ethics and morality take a new shape and principles of altruism and philanthropy become vital and viable when Theosophical teachings are grasped.

The effort at expanding our circle of loving service to include the whole of humanity requires a recognition of its centre in those whom Karma has brought nearest to us. We have to remember that it is our Karma to do what we can for them.

Take then as much as merit hath in store for thee, O thou of patient heart. Be of good cheer and rest content with fate. Such is thy Karma, the Karma of the cycle of thy births, the destiny of those who, in their pain and sorrow, are born along with thee, rejoice and weep from life to life, chained to thy previous actions.

The one and only way to overcome the forces of Karma is by the performance of Dharma. He who pushes himself on the Path of Occultism without due consideration of Karma and Dharma soon becomes "a selfish devotee" who "lives to no purpose" and degenerates into "a false pietist of bewildered soul." To free ourselves from the chains of Karma by the right observance of Dharma — the Law of Duty and duties — necessitates our taking the Paramita footpath which prepares our feet and our lungs for the steep climbs to be made. And so we have to love and cherish those with whom Karma has linked us, to help and serve them from the point of view of the Paramita Path which is very different from the way of ordinary human service. Hence the recommendation that every practitioner should give up more than one personal habit and adopt a few ascetic rules. In doing this, the truth must be recognized that the course of the Paramita Path meets the steep Path of Occultism leading to the Great Ascetics.

The very first requirement of the Paramita Path is the purification of desires. This needs the hammer of Knowledge and the chisel of Will. To cast out vices and evil tendencies — and especially to bring out virtues and forces for performing acts of beneficence — reliable knowledge and quiet confidence are needed. Who does not know what the vices are? Again, the virtues are all well known; their praise has been sung by all religions and their value shown by all philosophies. And so, acts of kindness are performed by the social servant and the religious man; but, in ignorance they often do more harm than good. Communal charity benefits a few to the detriment of the many; mother-love degenerates into selfishness, and so on. Therefore in the good man of the world

who has not practised the art of purifying desires, virtues are not "glorious virtues" — the Paramitas. All honour to the man of worldly virtues and of good deeds and what is said is not to cast a stone at him. Often he has lessons to impart to the student of Theosophy. We are writing about the task of the aspirant who is preparing himself for "the coming ages," who is fitting himself to walk the Path of Discipleship. For him a mental readjustment towards virtue is necessary.

Theosophy describes the human constitution very differently from modern knowledge. It distinguishes, therefore, between supersensuous thought and sense-thought; modern scientific psychology deals only with the latter; the Occultist of the future has to learn to handle supersensuous thought. Wrote a Master once:

We see a vast difference between the two qualities of two equal amounts of energy expended by two men, of whom one, let us suppose, is on his way to his daily quiet work, and another on his way to denounce a fellow-creature at the police-station, while the men of science see none.

While the worlds of religions and philosophies confine themselves to the plane of deeds, the world of Occultism *starts* with the plane of ideation.

Deeds without a true resolve ensouled by the One Desire, and by true ideas, are soulless and mislead common people, just as Kama-rupas are mistaken for the spirits of the dead. Right desire enables us to formulate the Resolve to be made. Each human being carries within himself an impress of the Primal Desire, the first conscious all-embracing desire — to Love. The process of involution carnalizes that impress and that which is universal and good is debased and becomes personal and restrictive, evil and painful.

The Desire to serve humanity by the aid of the Occult Science and its Holy Masters needs sustaining by Right Ideation. The Paramita Path is the Inner Path and begins with Dana-Charity of and in the mind. Purity of thought is not only self-preservative; it is an act of real charity, of love immortal. Numerous are the foes which pull the mind away from the course of Dana, but the future Occultist has to fight his battle in the mind, and must chase them away. The practice of Dana and other virtues, as acts of the mind, should come first and physical deeds of mercy and kindness will follow naturally. To perform deeds of real charity we have to prepare the mind to perceive every-

thing in the light of its truly esoteric judgment and not in that of its worldly one. Said H.P.B.:

Esoterically, thought is more responsible and punishable than act. But exoterically it is the reverse. Therefore, in ordinary human law, an assault is more severely punished than the thought or intention, *i.e.*, the threat, whereas Karmically it is the contrary.

Next in importance to the plane of thought is the plane of speech. The connecting link between ideas and deeds is made up of words. The doer of good deeds errs on the plane of speech, sometimes lamentably, sinfully. Occult science takes a very different view of the power of speech — tone on the plane of sound and talk on that of feeling-thought. “*The spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in, by the modern ‘sages,’*” says *The Secret Doctrine*.

Living in the world, to be not of the world makes performance of actions unavoidable: actions are Karma, and the mortal caught up in its web feels the effect of previous deeds, and acting transforms those effects into new causes to be felt once again in the future. When actions are looked upon in and by the light of the Law of Dharma, and when the impelling motive is the good of others and of all, without a thought of self-recompense, the discharge of duties, plain and simple or great and of far-reaching consequence, the actor feels the beneficent influence of divine freedom.

Therefore on the Paramita Path the practitioner should give up the habit of (1) fanciful thinking, (2) loose talk and (3) selfish acts, and adopt such ascetic rules as are conducive to the concentration of mind and purity in speech. Care must be taken with the already acquired human powers of thought and of speech. These are misused and abused by the *hoi polloi*, and the aspirant to Occultism must rise above the ordinary ways of the world.

When the planes of thought and of speech are guarded, our actions gain in purity, and when motives and methods of deeds are watched the fetters of Karma-Action fall away and the force of Yajna-Sacrifice sustains the doer and the doer’s world.

Correct control and right use of thought, of speech, of action are the channel of growth for the student who aspires “to become a yogi with a view of becoming an ascetic.”

The Path of Discipleship is the path of duties and none of these can be neglected. Therefore the instruction to remain in the world and

to learn not to be of the world, through the right doing of duty unflinchingly by every duty. The future Occultist has to learn to practise the Paramitas in his own personal life — especially taking as very suitable training-ground the place where he is earning his livelihood and that where he is living, *i.e.*, his home. These have to be used as fields from which the evils of selfishness, conceit, cocksureness and desire to get our own way, have to be weeded out, and where the seeds of virtuous thoughts have to be sown, growing the flowers of noble speech and the fruit of sacrifices. In this cycle the Occultist of the future has a wonderful opportunity if he happens to be in the world of commerce and business — he can help in transforming that sphere of human life from a jungle where beasts fight to amass lucre into an ordered garden where service of the community is the guiding motive.

So also with the home. Thought and feeling, speech and action are the builders of homes — good, bad or indifferent; methodical and neat and smiling or otherwise; friendly to neighbours or separative and stuck-up; hospitable and open or “world forgetting and by the world forgot.”

The Paramita Path may well be called the preparatory class for the School of Occultism, in which the student is getting ready “his mental luggage,” to use the phrase of H.P.B.; he is training himself to hear and to respond to “the first call when he is once more reborn.”

IN all classifications of the deadly sins, pride has been given the first place. Augustine calls it the root of all sin; Thomas Aquinas says that it is an inordinate desire for our own excellence, whereby a man is not subject even to God; Dante describes it as the devil's darling sin; and John Ruskin says it is at the bottom of all great mistakes. . . .

The remedy for pride lies in the contemplation of examples of humility. In the company of the greatest and best, we are reminded of the smallness of our accomplishments and the insufficiency of our talents. Pride rejoices and thrives in an atmosphere of isolation, so that it can be best corrected by associating with those who are wiser and humbler than ourselves.

— THOMAS CAMERON

MUSINGS IN THE TWILIGHT

LARGE AREAS of freedom have to be surrendered if you desire to help Nature and work on with her. You have to be the first to make your obeisance. When your surrender to the Higher Self is complete, Nature itself bows and responds in abundant measure.

It is only when you have pledged yourself irrevocably to service that power may be released to you — cautiously and in small measures. This caution protects both the Movement and yourself.

Service is only one side of the soul's activity. The other side is the effort consciously made and continuously kept up to link the Monad more firmly to the Pitris responsible for our physical evolution. Neither duty can be neglected.

Do not worry about your own progress. Your duty may demand that you remain in step with others. The length of Brahma's life has to be used for others. The sincere worker is never abandoned.

So you think you can rush from the darkest night to the brightest day? The eyes have to be adjusted slowly to the unaccustomed light. There is great wisdom in the statement: Hasten slowly.

There is this sign over the door of an ancient academy: "Abandon Hope, All Ye Who Enter Here." Remember that voluntarily you crossed the threshold and entered. Adjust your life accordingly.

Your cravings belong to your personality and therefore have a beginning and an end. The permanent part of you can have only one aspiration: to secure union with the divine — for yourself and others.

Theosophy helps you to touch the fringes of the Divine through a daily and somewhat intimate contact with metaphysics and ethics. Only when stability in this is in part achieved will works of charity and altruism flow from you. Await that moment of TRUTH in your life.

Sacrifice is the act of offering. Only that sacrifice is acceptable to the Soul which distils from the mortal an essence that can be assimilated to the immortal.

Work for others. But unless your work has been touched by the magic wand of your divinity, it will carry the germs of frustration for yourself and others.

You can stretch a moment into an eternity and compress an eternity into an enduring moment.

When the wrong is preferred to the right, Karma turns into Nemesis. In that Nemesis is the lesson, the cure and the power that can push towards progress. Happy the man who does not struggle against Nemesis.

The surprising fact that TRUTH can make you free has to be realized. Your not being free shows that TRUTH has not come to you yet. Have you the courage to invite it and the fortitude to guard it against pollution?

There is no lack of obstacles and impediments in troubled times.

That which does not increase virtue or wealth is lust.

Acting against virtue and wealth is courting disaster.

Most valiant of all is the valiant giver.

Devotion to the teacher, God, and the learned one is ornament.

Humility is everyone's ornament.

Even a lowly one if humble is better than a high-born one.

Sweet words, if inept, should not be spoken.

No diamond remains uncut.

The one without anger wins over all.

The impure one suspects others.

There is nothing incomplete in a great man.

— MAXIMS OF CHANAKYA

THE PEDIGREE OF MAN

This is thy present wheel, said the Flame to the Spark. Thou art myself, my image and my shadow. I have clothed myself in thee, and thou art my vahan (vehicle) to the day, "Be with us," when thou shalt rebecome myself and others, thyself and me. Then the Builders, having donned their first clothing, descend on radiant Earth and reign over men — who are themselves.

—Stanza VII, 7, from *The Book of Dzyan*

THE PHYSICAL BODY which we possess and with which so many identify themselves totally, represents a combination of bone, flesh, tissues, nerves, blood, lymph, organs of sensation and of action, and skin. By itself, it can do nothing save some automatic and reflex functions. At all times, it remains what it was intended to be: a tool which nature provides for the inner motivating entity which for most men remains unknown and unknowable except by inference. This entity unites itself with the child round about the seventh year of its existence. Long before that, the body is saddled with a name chosen by parent or priest, while fetters of caste and creed are fixed on it by the customs of family and race. This body is not the initiator of actions and is therefore not responsible either for its use or misuse, nor for its poor or good condition. The merit or demerit for its use and condition must attach exclusively to him who uses that body for his own purposes. It therefore follows that by itself the body can neither be wicked nor virtuous, though as an instrument for the imbibing of virtue or vice, its owner may have moulded it to respond more readily to the one than to the other. How often do we come across men who blame their poor showing in life upon their body, or who father their incapacity to fight evil on a body which they themselves have rendered incapable of withstanding the stresses and strains that the leading of a spiritual life entails! For the aspiring heart, the great lesson to be learnt is that over the coming years, and perhaps lives, the body which it inherits can be so moulded as to restore its capability to serve as an instrument through which the brilliance of the inner flame can be shed to illumine life.

Since the body is only an instrument, the question naturally arises as to who is its real owner and what the relation of that owner is to the ray of the Absolute that is traditionally reported to be overbrooding the entire man. Before an attempt can be made to formulate an answer,

the questioner has to ask himself why at times he lives the life of an animal beset by insatiable desires, while at other times the beast in him lives quiescent and the human and the humane elements become predominant. This much is clear to any inquiring mind, that the ordinary man is wont to sway between the animal and the human poles of existence and that the emplacement of his consciousness at any given moment depends entirely on whether he is swayed by the passions that ravage him or by the aspirations that infrequently raise him to nobler heights and loftier endeavours. Experience will have shown him that he does not have very great control on either and that these oscillations cannot be stilled unless he adopts the disciplines of a somewhat ascetic life. However, these swingings between the extremes of goodness and amorality, if not immorality, will have shown him that goodness is not that far away nor alien to any man, and that this same goodness cannot coexist with evil during those moments when he succumbs to his cycles of gloom and darkness. During the decades of his soul's turmoil, he has to learn through much sorrow and oftentimes intense suffering that the atmosphere of desires and passions as of tensions and runaway appetites is repugnant to spirituality and that a mind hemmed in and beset by these characteristics becomes incapable of adapting itself to its own innate spiritual potentialities.

To understand better the real significance of the presence in man of the spiritual on the one hand and of the earthly and devilish on the other, one has to go to the beginnings of human evolution and trace the pedigree of man to its early and far distant origins. Quoting from an old Commentary, *The Secret Doctrine* states: "*It is from the material Worlds that descend they who fashion physical man at the new Manvantaras. They are inferior Lha (Spirits), possessed of a dual body (an astral within an ethereal form).*"¹ It is round this form which the Lha projected that physical nature built the "coat of skin" and endowed it with the "Breath of animal Life."² But these inferior Lha could do no more. The Commentary continues: "*Into the forms projected by the Lha (Pitris), the two letters (the Monad, called also 'the Double Dragon') descend from the spheres of expectation.*"³ These are Monads who had not reached Nirvana in the preceding evolutionary periods and who are said to slumber in unconscious inactivity between the Manvantaras. But though the Monad did descend into the form which was prepared to receive it, it remained powerless because in its pure

¹II. 57.²II. 56.³II. 57.

state it was too far removed from matter to work on it. To be effective, it required an intermediate agent of transmission to bridge the gap. Without such an agent of transmission the Monad could not make its presence felt by the form which as a result remained ignorant of the Monad's presence and existence.

This agent which was required to form a link or bridge between the Monad on the one hand and the astral and ethereal form on the other, could be effective only if it served a dual purpose. It had to be pure enough to be a channel which would provide a communication to and from the divine. At the same time, it had to be of such a nature as would permit it to have a constant and continuous contact with the material elements and earthly propensities of the elemental man. The building of such a bridge across the gulf which separated the spiritual from the material was made possible by the grafting of two other principles on to the yet incomplete make-up of man. The first such principle was provided by the Manas-Egos, who, according to the occult teachings, were conscious entities who came from, and in many cases were the entire essence of high intelligences destined under Karma to reincarnate in this Manvantra.⁴ The second constituent principle of the "agent of transmission" was the false and transitory personality or the animal-human soul — the two facets of which, namely, the animal and the human, had to be closely blended for a full terrestrial existence.⁵ This animal-human soul became the false personality whose legitimate function was to impress the thoughts arising in the divine mind and retained by the Manas-Ego on to the material aspects of the man.

One more consideration stemming from the past history of man is relevant to any serious study of his complex make-up. It has to be remembered that at the time of the descent of the Manas-Egos, not all forms which they were destined to inhabit were of the same degree of fitness. The Stanzas of Dzyan record the evolutionary events thus:

The Sons of Wisdom, the Sons of Night (issued from the body of Brahma when it became Night), ready for rebirth, came down. They saw the (intellectually) vile forms of the first Third (still senseless Race). "We can choose," said the Lords, "we have wisdom." Some entered the Chhayas. Some projected a spark. Some deferred till the Fourth (Race). From their own essence they filled (intensified) the Kama (the vehicle of desire). Those who entered became Arhats. Those who received but a spark remained destitute

⁴II. 248.

⁵II. 241-242.

of (higher) knowledge. The spark burnt low. The Third remained mindless. . . . They became the narrow-headed. . . .⁶

Those which had no spark (the "narrow-brained") took huge she-animals unto them. They begat upon them dumb races. Dumb they were (the "narrow-brained") themselves. But their tongues untied. The tongues of their progeny remained still. Monsters they bred. A race of crooked, red-hair-covered monsters, going on all fours. A dumb race, to keep the shame untold.⁷

Time rolled on and then:

The Fourth (Race) became tall with pride. We are the kings, it was said; we are the gods.

They took wives fair to look at. Wives from the "mindless," the narrow-headed. They bred monsters, wicked demons, male and female. Also Khado (Dakini) with little minds.

They built temples for the human body. Male and female they worshipped. Then the third eye acted no longer.⁸

From all that has gone before, this much is clear, namely, that the incarnating Beings were from the very beginning of diverse intellects and varying degrees of spirituality and that all these variations of capacity were karmic effects which, if they were not the results of causes sown in the immediate past, were none the less effects projected from causes generated in by-gone eras. No one — gods, heroes, or men — enters the evolutionary stream with a handicap which is not directly the result of his own actions. Unworked-out causes remain as potential seeds which must burgeon sooner or later into appropriate effects. The time and the circumstance, the environment and the nature of the prevailing cycle determine the moment of the karmic manifestation. That we of this day and age had only a spark from our parent Ego⁹ is no mischance, nor is it an arbitrary limitation foisted on us by an agency extraneous to ourselves. He who thinks otherwise is prone to modulate his life on an edifice of presumptions built on errors and will find himself delayed while others move on.

If we are but a spark projected from our Father-Ego into the form that we inhabit, what is it that we are expected to achieve during this and the subsequent incarnations? Stanza 24 quoted above pinpoints the limitation under which we labour. It says: "Those who received but a

⁶II. 161, Verse 24.

⁷II. 184, Verse 32.

⁸II. 271, Verses 40-42.

⁹II. 167-68.

spark remained destitute of (higher) knowledge. The spark burnt low." One implication of this statement is that knowledge can come only with the full incarnation of the human Ego, and that is possible only when the Ego decides that the earthly tabernacle has been made worthy for it to enter and work through. The other inference vital to our thought is that the knowledge which the spark has so far been garnering is devilish wisdom as distinct from the Wisdom from on high, and that its acceptance by us can only tarnish and defile. It cannot elevate. If this is so, then the only course open to an aspirant is to invoke a power which is not to be found in matter and materiality.

It should not be difficult of understanding that the tiny spark that each one of us possesses has the potency of its Father and can therefore turn towards that Father for guidance. The spark can in moments of inner silence turn in adoration to its divine Monad, the Atma-Buddhi, with its fund of experience and wisdom. It is this act of adoration which alone can make the intellect leave its cold isolation and, abandoning its moorings in materiality, stir up within itself that yearning for the divine which makes it exalted. When it finally touches divinity, it undergoes a wonderful transformation. That event produces strange and stranger results. Compassion enters the Soul. It is as though a new power has come — a power that finds its own good and rejoices in service and sacrifice. The first faint indications of the coming transformation are found in the feeling of gratitude that wells up in the man for the lunar ancestors in whose *chhaya* he dwells. But the great moment of joy comes at each moment of union of the spark with its Flame. The return of the prodigal is a moment of joy past understanding both to the prodigal and to his Parent. That joy is not something shared only by the Father and his son. It percolates through to all Nature. *The Voice of the Silence* describes it thus:

... all Nature thrills with joyous awe and feels subdued. The silver star now twinkles out the news to the night-blossoms, the streamlet to the pebbles ripples out the tale; dark ocean waves will roar it to the rocks surf-bound, scent-laden breezes sing it to the vales, and stately pines mysteriously whisper: "A Master has arisen, a MASTER OF THE DAY..."

Yea, he is mighty. The living power made free in him, that power which is HIMSELF, can raise the tabernacle of illusion high above the Gods, above great Brahm and Indra.

THE PATH OF COMMUNICATION

THE INNER LIFE is a discipline. From remote antiquity, the culture of consciousness has been regarded as an intimate life-experience. Self-control or self-expression, Second Birth or Integration, whatever the name — it is an *inner* realization, not a mental recognition. In this lies the stupendous, nay the unbridgeable, gulf between the method of acquiring ordinary knowledge and that of acquiring esoteric wisdom which is *sui generis*. What the mind learns, it learns by inner experience, not with the help of the outer senses. What the Soul intuits, it does by an inner ideation, not dependent on mental reflection. The only process analogous to it in ordinary life is the functioning of the voice of conscience — sometimes valued as the infallible voice of the Soul, whereas it is but the voice of the accumulated experience of the lower or the personal man; and at times the voice of desire and fleshly impulses is mistaken for it. What the voice of conscience is to the human brain and blood, that — and something more — is the voice of the Spiritual Soul to the human heart and the inner invisible sensorium.

The greatest service which conscience renders is not in its protective action which tells us what *not* to do, but in its provocativeness which is a mysterious, silent symbol. Conscience is an awakener; it gives the indication that an inner universe exists. The universe of gods, heroes, geniuses, is glimpsed when we wake up to this second and symbolic aspect of conscience. The lighthouse affords a good comparison; it flashes its message of "don't come near here." The message is ever active and beneficently protective. But the lighthouse is also a silent symbol — the steady, revolving, and blazing power which tells the sailor what not to do, leaving him to find out, by other means, how to reach his haven of safety. It is self-evident that the lighthouse has a silent and invisible message about the existence of the port and the way thereto.

This double interworking is the only link between the world of mortals and that of gods, heroes, geniuses. Conscience is the internal organ, the path or the bridge between the desire-fraught mind of man and his Spirit-illuminated Soul. The Divine Ego and the personal self are joined by conscience. From the lower side it stores the innumerable experiences gathered in the world of senses; into the higher it opens the Door to the Holy of Holies. The bridge lies inward, behind and beyond the jungle of the world, and leads to the garden of Eden.

The first requirement for the higher life is that a man should know himself. The starting point of self-knowledge is this internal organ called conscience whose "don'ts" must be heeded, *and while heeded must be understood*. The paths are many. Muhammed's description is graphic — there are as many ways to God as there are breaths of the children of men. The conscience-organ represents the evolution of the past; it exists in the foolish as in the wise man; therefore its injunctions and modes of assistance differ for each. But feeble or strong, it exists, and *in each it is the starting point*. Its first or protective help which warns us against repetition of old blunders makes for the discipline of ordinary life. The idea of what is proper in life, is formulated by conscience which keeps us away from the pitfalls of the soul. Good people mostly live by "don'ts," because they live by the voice of conscience; it is well that they heed that voice, but that is not sufficient; they must probe and ascertain its why and wherefore. "It is not done," is conservatism and orthodoxy; a consideration of why it is not or should not be done liberalizes and then liberates. The higher life is a liberalizing pursuit. It is not merely repetitional like ordinary life.

The discipline of life reveals ideals — we live in a particular way because we aspire to live up to particular ideals. One's code of morals has a soul and a body — ideals are the Soul, and conduct forms the body. Scientific cultivation of conscience is the very first right step. Why shall a person not lie, nor steal, nor commit adultery? Why is it better to be generous than to be mean? Why is it noble to be sympathetic, and ignoble to be scornful? Why is cruelty bad and compassion good? These and like questions enable a man to know himself — his virtues and peccabilities. This inquiry leads him to the preparation for Second Birth. Strange as it may sound, there are illegitimate twice-borns, and we have the phenomenon of the libertine genius, the voluptuary poet, the debauchee and drunkard who creates not in spite of, but because of, debauchery and drink. Eastern Occultism warns — beware of illegitimate ways; they lead to Abaddon.

The legitimate way to the inner life lies through Conscience — the Path of Communication. It is the fearless questioning of one's own beliefs, habits and hopes. We have to free our minds from all the ideas which we may have derived from heredity, from education, from surroundings, or from sundry teachers. This freeing of the mind from the bondage of acquired habits is spoken of in Eastern Occultism as the courting of the Soul, before the betrothal, which is followed by the

consummation of marriage. The period of courtship is full of adventures, mishaps, happiness and dejections. It more often brings forth failure, as the rules of the subtle game of Soul-courtship are not observed, mostly because of ignorance, but sometimes because of the spirit of venture or self-opinionatedness or impatience. These three are the dangers in Soul-courtship. Do not be impatient; leave self behind, fight and overcome all obstacles not by spasmodic and fitful ventures, but by steady thinking and steadfast adherence to the rules of this most ancient of games.

Just as a man's whole routine of life undergoes a change when he falls in love and goes a-courting, so also the moorings and discipline of life undergo a transformation when the Inner Enchanter is encountered. The glammers of sense, of mental deception, of selfish attachment are seen in their true light; a revision of discipline takes place; new modes of thought and of labour are perceived; above all, the beauty and the truth of things take new values. The result of the whole experience compels the man to give up more than one personal habit, such as practised in ordinary social life, and on the other hand to adopt some few ascetic rules.

Conscience, then, is the first step.

Lay me to sleep in sheltering flame,
O Master of the Hidden Fire!
Wash pure my heart, and cleanse for me
My soul's desire.

In flame of sunrise bathe my mind,
O Master of the Hidden Fire,
That, when I wake, clear-eyed may be
My soul's desire.

— WILLIAM SHARP

THEOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

[We reprint here another of Dr. J. D. Buck's addresses at the Parliament of Religions, World's Fair of 1893, held at Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.—EDS.]

THE WORD Science, like the word Religion and the word Philosophy, necessarily conveys to different minds different meanings. There has grown up in what we call the Western world a superstructure without form, though not altogether void, that it would be as difficult to define as the generic term religion. This superstructure claims to exercise as much authority over the current thought of the age as does religion, if not more. It will therefore be pertinent to our line of thought this afternoon to inquire in what sense the Western world uses and applies the word science, and in what sense those who advocate what we call Theosophy use this word "science."

A very great misapprehension rests upon the minds of the Western world, including the scientists, and that is, that what we call science is a thing of very recent date; that the olden times had superstition, that men had what is known as religion, that men speculated a great deal into the nature of things and had some philosophy; but science—O, science is a thing of the present times, a new thing. It would be impossible for me to convince you of the misapprehension that lies in any such suggestion, this afternoon, in the brief time that is allotted to me to speak upon this subject. But nothing would be easier than to convince any candid individual, any reasoning mind, that no greater mistake could possibly be made than to suppose that what in the strictest sense is called science is not a thing of the distant past, and that the distant ages, as we call them, did not possess a science just as demonstrable as that which we call science today. There was a difference in the application of this science in the olden time from that method by which it is applied today.

Now, in order to be perfectly just and fair, I will take two or three of the later utterances—comparatively late utterances—of one of the leaders of modern science, in order to show what he defines as the basis and the method of what we call science in the West. I recite from an essay published quite a number of years ago by Prof. Huxley, entitled "A Half Century of Science." In this he says:

"The object of science is the discovery of the rational order that pervades the universe."

It would be very easy to convince Prof. Huxley, if he would listen to evidence, if he had desire enough to follow along the lines which could be investigated, that this rational order was known thousands and thousands of years ago. Otherwise these grand philosophies could never have had any existence. Another point which could easily be shown is that the method pursued by Prof. Huxley himself, that the direction in which he looks in order to find this rational order that pervades the universe, has never revealed to man that rational order, and never will. That rational order that pervades the universe cannot be found by the methods of modern science. It cannot be found by investigating phenomena, it cannot be found alone by the inductive method of reasoning. It must be looked for in other directions and derived by other means. The method of science, as defined by Prof. Huxley, is that science proceeds by exact observation and correct reasoning. Here no intelligent Theosophist will take any exception as far as it goes, but the definition of the method remains incomplete. One thing more must be added to it, and that is experience. In other words, you will have to bring in the problem of consciousness, and go deeper than mere observation through the physical senses. You must go to the mind, and even beyond the reasoning faculty, in order to discern the rational order that pervades the universe.

Prof. Huxley also says that all physical science starts from certain postulates. Now, what is a postulate? It is an assumption, it is an hypothesis and nothing more or less. They are called postulates when they are involved with other postulates, and when particularly the effort is made to weave them into what is called a system of postulates or a system of philosophy. Well, physical science starts from certain postulates. One of them is the objective existence of a material world, and I expect to show that this is not only one of them but that it is the crowning one in modern science. The validity of these postulates is a problem of metaphysics. They are neither self-evident nor are they, strictly speaking, demonstrable. Now, when we look to modern science as being exact, when we look to its decrees as being final, let us bear in mind this confession of one of the foremost if not the very foremost advocates of modern science — a man who cannot be used in support of materialism, however. It is only by the lesser lights, it is only when Prof. Huxley is misquoted or misunderstood, I think, that he can be declared to be a materialist.

These problems or postulates, he says, are neither self-evident nor

are they, strictly speaking, demonstrable, and this is the basis of modern science. Here comes now a confession from Prof. Huxley which seems to me very strange. It startled me as I read it. I don't know where he got it. He says, "Perhaps it may occur to the reader that the boasted progress of physical science does not come to much if our present conceptions of the fundamental nature of matter are expressible in terms employed more than two thousand years ago by the old Masters, by those who know."

To whom could Prof. Huxley have referred by — "the old Masters, those who know"?

Quoting still from Prof. Huxley, a fallacy: "In antiquity, these postulates meant little more than vague speculations." He very much mistakes. At the present day they indicate definite physical conceptions susceptible of mathematical treatment and giving rise to innumerable deductions the value of which may be experimentally tested.

In the first paper which I had the honour to read to the Congress,¹ I referred to the historical evidence showing that what we call Theosophy may be traced back to the Middle Ages, to the beginning of the Christian era, to Plato and Zoroaster; and what was the keynote of the philosophy of Pythagoras, the science of numbers, of mathematics; and looking at the schools of mathematics as they existed in those days, and looking at the way they experimented in regard to Man by numbers and harmonies, do you think they can be accused of not knowing mathematics, or that they could not apply the principles of mathematics to the postulates of their philosophy?

"In the meanwhile," he says, "the primitive atomic theory which has served as the scaffolding for the edifice of modern physics and chemistry, has been quietly dismissed," that is, in the form in which it was received in the Western world. But the form in which it was taught in the Secret Doctrine can never be refuted. The difficulty is in the concept of matter. "In the meanwhile," he says, "the primitive atomic theory which has served as the scaffolding for the edifice of modern physics and chemistry, has been quietly dismissed. I cannot discover," he says, "that any contemporary physicist or chemist believes in the real indivisibility of atoms or in an interatomic matterless vacuum." That was the old theory which seems to have served as a "scaffolding for modern science."

¹Reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, April 1980.

Now, he comes to the important point, the question of genesis, or abiogenesis. Whether matter has ever passed into living matter without the agency of pre-existing living matter, necessarily remains an open question. "All that can be said is that it does not make this metamorphosis under any known conditions. They who take a monistic view of the physical world" (that is, regarding matter and spirit as being essentially one) "may fairly hold abiogenesis" (or spontaneous generation) "as a pious opinion." And here is the only little fling that I find in this magnificent lecture. He says it may be "held as a pious opinion supported by analogy and defended by our ignorance." "As matters stand," he says, "it is equally justifiable to regard the physical world as a sort of dual monarchy." I think this is a proper and fair claim for us. The theory has only an equal justification with that other theory which he simply terms an *à priori* opinion. "The kingdoms of living matter and of non-living matter are under one system of laws," and the fact of their profound mystery is consistent with the Theosophical philosophy, "and there is a perfect freedom of exchange and transit from one to the other." This implies by fair reasoning all that the Theosophical philosophy claims for that universal ether, or that universal spirit or consciousness, or that universal life, call it by whatsoever name you will — it furnishes the basis of the Theosophical philosophy. "But no claim," he says in conclusion, "to biological nationality is valid except birth."

Now, this is as fair an outline as I can procure of the points presented by Prof. Huxley that bear on the points claimed by the advocates of Theosophy today.

The fact is, that just so long as science makes its formulations with regard to matter, with regard to force, with law and mathematics, we have no quarrel whatever with the scientists. It is only when they come to deny with regard to intelligence, with regard to soul, with regard to spirit, that we take issue with them.

You find in what is called science in modern times, that it represents simply one department in human knowledge. And we hear even yet, although it is only, perhaps, the echo that is dying away, a good deal about the conflict between religion and science. The unity, the sequence, the co-ordination of the knowledge of Man as an individual, as a knower, is a matter of great importance. And the result of modern methods of investigation is to divide what we call knowledge into three departments, Religion, Philosophy, and Science, and to establish or to permit very little association or recognition between these departments. This

seems to have served for the cultivation of each department in its own way, in its own realm, but it does not minister, it never has nor ever can, it seems to me, minister to the intelligent enlightenment of Man to have his knowledge divided in any way without any recognition of the fact that knowledge in one department is not different to the individual knower than knowledge in any other department of his being.

Now, the element that the Theosophical Society brings into modern thought is the basis upon which Philosophy, Science, and Religion all find a resting place. There is here no disagreement whatever; here religion never contradicts Philosophy, here Science never disagrees from either Religion or Philosophy. This basis upon which the knowledge of Man rests is a revelation from the elder brothers of the race. This has never yet, so far as History records, been discovered by investigation of natural phenomena alone. Men who deal simply with phenomena, no matter how carefully they may observe the phenomena, no matter how logically they may reason upon the phenomena, until they push their investigations farther than this, they can never come to what justly may be termed actual knowledge. Now, there is one term with which we are all very familiar, "Self-Consciousness!" What is, in a general way, Self-Consciousness? Man is conscious. Every atom of matter in the universe, according to our philosophy, in its own degree, in its own way, under its own limitations, possesses the germs or the element of consciousness. The animals are conscious, but their consciousness differs from that of Man. It is only when you come to the human consciousness that we use the term self-consciousness, and what is that self-consciousness? Self-consciousness is that manifestation or that evolution of the universal consciousness of nature, when the individual himself is conscious of his consciousness, when he can investigate and analyse his own mind, when the thinker, the real man, can retire within the citadel of his soul and take cognizance of his own methods of knowing.

Now, the point where modern scientists again divide is upon this problem of consciousness. They have not the advantage of the Eastern philosophy, which regards matter, life, intelligence, force, consciousness as one all-pervading, universal principle, and it is only from the Theosophical view of the subject that the value of this primary postulate becomes clear, where it can be truly appreciated. Under this method of reasoning we deal with consciousness, and what is consciousness in this connection? It is simply the use by Man of his intellectual faculties, of his reasoning faculties, of his sensory faculties, to investigate by the

process of observation and of sensation the phenomena of a material world. And Prof. Huxley himself says that Science investigates, or, at least, that its method is the observation of phenomena and correct reasoning upon the nature of these phenomena. What, now, is the method of philosophy? Science proceeds by what we call the analytical method. The scientist, like the little boy, takes the thing apart, separates it into its constituent elements, in order to find out what makes the wheels go round, but he does not find out by any method of sensation alone. Prof. Huxley says we experiment by applying the process of correct reasoning to what we have observed. But then when you come to reason upon things, we find that different individuals will reason in a different way, and that the basis of the reasoning of every individual will be the evolution of his faculty to reason. And, therefore, the results at which individual investigators arrive must necessarily differ in every individual case; and who shall determine the result, and therefore the criterion of truth, inasmuch as every different individual must come to a different conclusion from every other? You have here what I conceive to be a logical definition and a very fair statement of science, when science is regarded merely as one of the three departments of knowledge in the mind of Man. Now, Philosophy, as I understand it, is the supplement of science. Just as by the analytical method of science you take things apart and observe phenomena, so in all true philosophy you put things together and ascertain how they came, and try to discover what Prof. Huxley calls the rational order of the universe.

But I do not think that either of these two methods alone while pursued separately will lead Man to truth by any means.

Now, there is Religion, divorced in modern times, set apart from Science, and not recognizing Philosophy; and furthermore, there is recognized unfortunately a conflict between Religion and Science, and this degradation of Philosophy into what is called mere idle speculation, tolerated neither by the religionists nor by the scientists. As to Religion itself, we have made it a superstition. It has been walled about and separated from other kinds of knowledge till it has lost its energy. Now, there is a duty to Science and Philosophy, and another duty to Religion; and that is, devotion to truth, devotion to the highest ideal.

The purpose of investigation is to define by religion—and it is the core of the great religions of the world—to point out not only the method, not only the means, of acquiring it, but also the use that shall

be made of the true religion, which is one with that trinity which we may call Science, Philosophy, and Religion. Therefore I say that we have no warfare with science so far as it deals with matter, force, and phenomena, so far as it affirms the existence of material phenomena, but when it denies in regard to spirit, when it simply puts the problem one side and refuses to investigate it, then we take issue with the school. Now, the whole of modern science may be said to proceed on one line or one basis, and that is, it undertakes to reduce all problems in nature and in life to questions of mass and motion. Physical Science is necessarily materialistic, and so far we have not a particle of fault to find with it. But when it undertakes to represent mental phenomena, vital force, consciousness, and all the higher attributes of Man and all of the higher aspects of nature, in terms of mass and motion, it becomes perniciously materialistic, and we have a perfect right to call a halt at that point.

Now, the problem that I referred to a few moments ago, the problem of consciousness or self-consciousness, is a great stumbling block to modern science. Prof. Tyndall, one of the foremost advocates of modern science, a great many years ago made the declaration that between the molecular structure of the brain and consciousness there was a gap — he did not say “over which we could not pass,” but he says that it was one that was inconceivable, a gap over which there were no bridges—there could be no connection established whatever. In other words, modern science has not determined whether matter can think, or how, or why.

You may take all the philosophies of the world, and very fairly and justly classify them into two categories. One is the assumption that matter alone exists, and that everything is an attribute, or property, or potency, or outgrowth of matter; the other class will take the opposite view exactly, namely, that spirit alone exists, and that everything else is spirit precipitated or differentiated. Now, in the Theosophical philosophy we postulate a single substance that lies back of both matter and spirit, of force and intelligence, that one inscrutable, eternal, unknowable principle which is neither matter nor force, neither matter nor spirit, but the root from which all of these come, and its consciousness is universal in nature, as it is manifested in individual man.

Therefore we have in what would be called the Science of the Secret Doctrine or the Science of Theosophy, no such missing links. We have

no necessity in our scientific investigations to make any such assumptions as are made, or any such admissions of gaps or missing links as are found in science, and we take issue only with the advocates of modern science when they cease to be scientific, when they begin to be dogmatic, and when in the face of the logical conclusions justified by the investigations pursued by the senses, and justified by rational processes pursued in these investigations, they begin to deny, to scoff, to ridicule philosophy or religion or the realm to which the mind of Man is open and which he may himself investigate as a matter of experience if only he will.

This problem, then, of science is the one that I have already said is the bugbear, the stumbling-block, of modern science, and it is the basic proposition in the philosophy and the science of the Secret Doctrine.

When the true relations between what we call intelligence or reason and consciousness and mind are once determined, when we have the starting point in Man, the thinker, the reasoner, when we have that well fixed in our minds, then everything else flows with a logical sequence that leaves no missing link, no gaps in our knowledge, so far as we go. Knowledge then, real knowledge, becomes an investigation, and an experience of the soul. Science as it is pursued, I don't think can justly be called a result. It is rather a method. Therefore when the advocates of science undertake to hold up to us something which is indefinite and vague, which they call the authority of science, we call a halt. We claim that it is a method of the human mind, and that there is no such thing as a body of doctrines or a formulated series of results that can have any more authority over the human mind than can the dogmas of religion. One really rests upon the same basis as the other. It is simply a premature conclusion, and so far as the materialistic conclusions that are drawn from the statements of men like Huxley and Darwin and Herbert Spencer and many that are quoted as advocates of materialism, I say, so far as their own statements are concerned, you will very seldom find them materialistic. The larger the mind the broader his intelligence, the deeper his consciousness, the stronger his conscientiousness. In other words, the larger the man in every sense, the more careful and guarded and charitable will be his statement. It is only when the lesser lights come to hasty deductions and draw illogical conclusions from the statements of these scientists that materialism grows up; and therefore we have no hesitancy in

making the declaration as publicly as we can, that there is nothing that has been demonstrated in modern science that is inconsistent with the Secret Doctrine, that there is no proposition laid down by them which is reasonable and which agrees with one's common sense which is not also advocated by the Secret Doctrine and which cannot be found in the Secret Doctrine. The prediction has been made by the authors of *The Secret Doctrine* that although in the present age science is perhaps too proud, too conceited, to examine these doctrines in order to ascertain candidly and dispassionately just what they contain, still the prediction is made that in the twentieth century they will be investigated and receive a recognition of their true worth and true value; and it seems to me that the twentieth century is very close upon us today, when we have been able to gather here so many interested individuals to hear about these doctrines, and I don't think we need fear in any sense whatever as to what the result must finally be.

Of course there are two organizations which will yield last to the modifying influences which Theosophy undertakes to introduce into human thought: and they are the religious organization and the scientific organization. And so far as I can observe in all fairness, the more dogmatic of the two today is science. Altogether more so than religion itself.

These problems, of course, are of such a character that to take them up in detail, as I said in the beginning, would be impossible in a brief argument such as I am trying to pursue. The number of points at which, however, modern science is becoming harmonious with ancient philosophy is very surprising, and the reference of Prof. Huxley which I read to you in regard to the atomic theory proves it. For instance, where he says it is not demonstrable in the ordinary sense through the agency of the senses that the constitution of matter is a metaphysical problem and that the atomic theory is now an exploded one though it was a very good scaffolding. When you come to the experiments by Prof. Crookes, his metaphysical investigations into the constitution of matter, when you read the writings of Prof. B. W. Richardson, when you read the address of Prof. Lodge, one of the foremost chemists in England—the paper he read to the advanced men of modern science, where he told these men that they might as well drop all expectation of realizing the ultimatum of science by the aid of reason and experimentation alone—you see plainly that they are trenching upon the ground of ancient philosophy, and in these

later utterances you will find the dying wail of materialistic science, you will find at last the note, the morning song, of the new science, of the new philosophy which has come into the world, which is born of metaphysics, which is born by pushing the intellect of man out into space, and reasoning upon the foundations of matter and force, and supplementing all that has been derived by an analytical investigation, by correct reasonings as to the basis of life, as to the basis of matter, and as to the basis of force, and of all these things; and therefore, I say, that in presenting this subject to the attention of the Western world we have no hesitation whatever in saying that the basis — the scientific basis — of the Theosophical philosophy stands in no fear whatever of modern science, that it can maintain itself against all comers, that the gaps or the missing links of science are filled without a single exception in these ancient philosophies, and furthermore that in the problems of mind, of thought, of reason, of consciousness, in all the higher problems in the life of Man, there is given here a basis which cannot be found at all outside of the ancient Wisdom-Religion.

LIFE is a battle without armistice, without mercy, in which he who wishes to be a man, worthy of the name of a man, must for ever fight against whole armies of invisible enemies, against the murderous forces of nature, uneasy desires, and dark thoughts treacherously leading him to degradation and destruction.

Sincerity is a gift as rare as intelligence or beauty and it cannot be justly expected of everybody.

Genius is measured by the power of life, by the power of evoking life through the imperfect instrument of art.

To create is to triumph over death.

— ROMAIN ROLLAND

WHAT IS LIFE?

THE WORD "Life" has innumerable meanings and aspects, for one can equate it with "existence" at many levels—physical, psychic, emotional, mental, moral, spiritual. Thus it can be correlated with Nature, visible and invisible, the Anima Mundi, the Soul of the World, the One Life or the Manifesting Deity. But if we refer to *Absolute* LIFE, then it is neither Being nor Non-Being, but Be-ness.

The word can also be equated with "energy," vitality, *i.e.*, living vitality, and thus also with intelligence, in many different degrees, since each living being has intelligence of its own kind. There is no real distinction between organic and inorganic, between forces generated by living beings (biology) and those of physics—electricity, magnetism, heat, light, sound, etc. The whole Universe is One Life, for the innumerable infinitesimal "lives" (sentient points that respond to stimuli) are themselves only aspects of the One Life. Thus Life is one whole—Spirit, Matter (Nature), Universal Mind, as a Tri-unity, whose "energy" is Motion (*i.e.*, Law), producing, sustaining and destroying forms through which experience is gained and consciousness unfolded.

Three universal symbols, that allegorize the three fundamental truths of Theosophy, may help to make this clearer:

The tree of Life. This expresses Universal Unity under three aspects, the unseen root, the one trunk, and the branches with their leaves, flowers and fruits.

The root is the One Reality, eternal, omnipresent, infinite, without beginning or end; absolute consciousness that the finite mind cannot grasp; yet from this rootless root the visible tree draws its manifesting, ever-changing life. The trunk is the first cause of that existence, the One Manifesting Life or Deity, the Logos or Over-Soul—differentiating into a vast diversity of hierarchies of beings and powers of all degrees, yet drawing their substance and sustenance, being and vitality, from the One Trunk.

Hence, Theosophists are at one with those who declare that we must reverence all life, must help and work with Nature, since it is living and divine in essence, whatever the outer appearance may seem to be.

The Wheel of Life. The tree has cycles of growth, yet each year something remains, while other parts appear and disappear with the seasons. So with life itself, there are cycles of activity and rest, of objective existence and subjective mystery. LIFE ABSOLUTE as the One

Reality ever remains, but cycle by cycle, Life as Energy, as Motion or Law, works eternally, bringing the differentiated Life into being and drawing it inwards again. Thus everything lives and acts under cyclic law. Scientists recognize this in many fields, and some historians also see its pattern in the panorama of human progress, the rise and fall of civilizations. Its universal character is just beginning to be recognized, and anyone can study its action in the cycles to which we are all subject — waking-sleeping, life in a body followed by death, etc.

Hence the need to examine our thoughts, feelings and actions in the light of the law. Most important are the moral and ethical cycles, for reincarnation and karma are vital keys to the understanding of life. Action springs from thought and motive, and produces its exact cycle of reaction. So by learning to work the law of life instead of drifting with conditions or following personal desires and ambitions inspired by ignorance, we may at length become both Masters and Servants of all Life, human and non-human. Modern ecology is but a faint sketch for this vast universal idea, but it points the way.

The Ladder of Life. This is connected with the purpose of life, with the concept of all life as embodied consciousness, in many degrees of unfoldment. The wisdom, knowledge and power that lie at the heart of the One Life as Deity is potentially there in every spark of life, in the tiniest atom. Life as Motion carries each one round the cycle of experience, through all the basic forms of evolution and all degrees of intelligence, so that the latent potentiality may gradually develop into potency. The cycles of time, space and form return and repeat themselves like successive days and nights, but for the souls, or sparks of life as consciousness, it is a ladder of upward progress through elemental, mineral, plant, animal, man, and then beyond the ordinary state of mankind to higher spiritual levels.

As for the human being, however, endowed as he is with self-consciousness and free will or choice, Life no longer carries him upwards, unaware, as with the lower kingdoms. He has to take his destiny in his own hands, climb the ladder by his own individual efforts and merit (not in isolation, but always against the background of universal brotherhood, *i.e.*, linked with all the other selves, higher and lower, that, collectively, are the One Life). The goal is conscious union with that ALL. Here again, reincarnation and karma help to fix the right attitude. For, to reach the goal of Perfection (whose other side is Universal Brotherhood), the man's whole nature has to be universalized, and

the limitations of personal, egotistical identification transcended.

As *Light on the Path* puts it (pp. 4-5), we must seek out the way, but not just by one way that seems personally the most desirable, since "All steps are necessary to make up the ladder."

IN the same manner as lovers gradually advance from that beauty which is apparent in sensible forms, to that which is divine; so the ancient priests, when they considered that there was a certain alliance and sympathy in natural things to each other, and of things manifest to occult powers, and by this means discovered that all things subsist in all, they fabricated a sacred science from this mutual sympathy and similarity. Thus they recognized things supreme in such as are subordinate, and the subordinate in the supreme: in the celestial regions terrene properties subsisting in a causal and celestial manner; and in earth celestial properties, but according to a terrene condition. For how shall we account for those plants called heliotropes, that is, attendants on the sun, moving in correspondence with the revolutions of its orb; but selenitropes, or attendants on the moon, turning in exact conformity with her motion? It is because all things pray, and compose hymns to the leaders of their respective orders; but some intellectually, and others rationally; some in a natural, and others after a sensible manner. Hence the sunflower, as far as it is able, moves in a circular dance towards the sun; so that if anyone could hear the pulsation made by its circuit in the air, he would perceive something composed by a sound of this kind, in honour of its king, such as a plant is capable of framing. Hence we may behold the sun and moon in the earth, but according to a terrene quality; but in the celestial regions all plants, and stones, and animals, possessing an intellectual life according to a celestial nature. Now the ancients having contemplated this mutual sympathy of things, applied for occult purposes both celestial and terrene natures, by means of which through a certain similitude they deduced divine virtues into this inferior abode.

— PROCLUS (*paraphrased by Thomas Taylor*)

OUR MENTAL MOON

THE MOON, all adown the ages, has been loved for its tranquil beauty by those who look up to it from this earth where tranquillity has sadly diminished. More, it has been worshipped by many who held it in reverence because of its mystery and the strange influence it was known to exert in various ways. But on the material level, until the present century, almost total ignorance about it prevailed. Telescopes could tell observers a good deal, but they had limits. Whether man ever had, or ever could set foot on its surface was unknown.

On the night, not so many years ago, when man did, the world was thrilled. Some may have stood at their windows, gazing up at it, unable to take their eyes from the golden ball. It may have seemed incredible that perhaps at that very moment one solitary human being might perhaps be setting foot on it. What did he feel? What did he see? Would he be able to come back to earth and tell us? How awesome it must be to think that one was actually in another world, presumably the only mortal to have moved and breathed there since time began!

Would men have been right in so thinking? Theosophy might have told them, no. "It is taught in *The Secret Doctrine* that the moon is the parent of the earth and has given to us all that we are now working over in our world."¹ Mr. Judge in that invaluable book, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, devotes several pages to the relationship between the Moon Chain and the Earth Chain (each composed of seven Globes), describing the stream of Monads from the former to the latter.

"While studying these ancient ideas," he writes in *Echoes from the Orient*, "we may as well prepare ourselves to have them clash with many long-accepted views. But since Science has very little save conjecture to offer when it attempts to solve the great problems of genesis and cosmogenesis, and, in the act of denying old dogmas, almost always starts with a hypothesis, the Theosophist may feel safe. In important matters, such as the heat of the sun or the history of the moon, there is no agreement between scientists or astronomers." He therefore does not hesitate to add that "if we find the Adepts stating that the moon is not a mass thrown off from the earth in cooling, but, on the contrary, is the progenitor of this globe, we need not fear the jeers of a Science that is as certain and unsafe in many things as it is positive."²

¹*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 82.

To date we know nothing of the moon's history, though men have walked on its surface and found it solid. Only the small area around their landing point has been "explored," if one can use the word when movement has been so limited. There is still the dark side of the moon, of which little is known. So it is not for Theosophists, who have ever found W.Q.J. a wise teacher, to dismiss what he tells them concerning this particular matter. It could any day be confirmed by modern space exploration, as the solid shores of America were eventually proved to be real though for long only a matter of surmise to dwellers in Europe.

In this short article, however, we take up simply a phrase of Mr Judge's, one inducive of thought and study, to be found on page 82 of *The Heart Doctrine*. Referring to the *Secret Doctrine* teaching quoted above, he continues thus: "Our former mental state" — *i.e.*, before contacting Theosophy—"is our mental moon, and has given us certain material which we must work over." His use of the phrase "mental moon" is explained by what he tells us in the *Ocean* about the Seven Globes of the Moon Chain and the Seven Globes of the Earth Chain which played a vital part in the stream of human evolution. He is taking the migration of the Monads from the one to the other as symbolical of our mental transition to knowledge of Theosophy, whereas previously we were ignorant of it. It is our former state of mind that he sees as our mental moon. We have indeed migrated to a new Globe, and have brought with us "certain material which we must work over."

Just what *is* the "material" he refers to? Surely, firstly and basically, our consciousness. We must adjust to life here on our Earth, fully aware of our inner self, developing its capacities and following its threads of guidance as they become apparent to us. In the second place, we have unity. We former Monads have become Earth Dwellers and are all in the same human circumstances. So the sense of brotherhood is essential to us. We must cultivate it, put it into practice. Only so will our time-span on the earth prove mutually beneficial and valuable. Thirdly, some portion of our material could well be dormant memories. Certain words, *e.g.*, Adepts, or Mahatmas, may tend to awaken them, however faintly. Certain beliefs, too, *e.g.*, Reincarnation, may seem reasonable to us, though others decry them. We must hold fast to them against all odds. Instinctive knowledge of them may derive from our mental moon.

²*Echoes from the Orient*, p. 12.

On all these matters Mr. Judge is informative. They were familiar to him long before moon landings were dreamt of. Our twentieth century scientists were astounded that moon rock specimens brought back by the astronauts proved older than any to be found here on earth, but had Mr. Judge been told so a hundred years ago, it would merely have confirmed what he knew already. Does it please us, this verification of what Theosophy has always held to be fact? Some of us might say that we did not need it. H.P.B. and W.Q.J. had long since convinced us. The latter, in the course of a lecture delivered to the Convention of the American Section of the T.S. at Chicago in April 1892, draws a wonderfully vivid picture of what may have occurred at a period of time too remote to be calculated:

Imagine that before this earth came out of the gaseous condition there existed an earth somewhere in space, let us call it the moon, for that is the exact theory. The moon was once a large and vital body full of beings. It lived its life, went through its cycles, and at last having lived its life, after vast ages had passed away, came to the moment when it had to die; that is, the moment came when the beings on that earth had to leave it, because its period had elapsed, and then began from that earth the exodus. . . . And so these human birds migrated from the moon to this spot where the earth began (I don't know where it is—a spot in space) and settled down as living beings, entities, not with bodies, but beings, in that mass of matter, at that point in space, informed it with life, and at last caused this earth to become a ball with beings upon it. And then cycles began to prevail, for the impressions made upon these fathers when they lived in the ancient—mind fails to think how ancient—civilization of the moon, came back again when they got to this earth.³

Such was our origin as Earth-dwellers, as Mr. Judge believed (or perhaps knew) it to have been, and such the basis for his term “our mental moon” as applied to memories too remote even to be classified as such; hence our resort to the word “intuitive” when we try to describe them. Whatever we may call them, let us value them as the guidelines that we are meant to follow in our present incarnation, gladly accepting them as our spiritual heritage.

Granted, there may be a price to pay for doing so. Those dearest to us, through our new earthly ties, may have very different ones. Well, argument is profitless—it only embitters. We and they are entitled to

³*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 24, pp. 7-8.*

follow our own path, though surely with goodwill. It must all be recognized as our Karma, and therefore accepted, if at this present we are genuine students of Theosophy. "Our deserts are meted out to us," says Mr. Judge, "while we are associating in life with each other, and not while we are alone, nor in separateness."

As to the moon, Science is unlikely to have finished with it, though black holes and the alleged shrinkage and cooling of the sun may temporarily distract its attention. Given our mental moon, however, we can, in the main, ignore it, only regretting its blind materialistic attitude. What do we lose by not being *au fait* with its achievements, one of which, hailed only recently with jubilation, was the successful causing of a horse to give birth to a donkey, and a donkey in its turn to a horse (*i.e.*, a foal)!!

Writes Mr. Judge in *Echoes from the Orient*, which at the outset was a series of articles appearing in a new American paper called *Kate Field's Washington* and therefore addressed to a mixed readership, for whom he by no means "pulled his punches": "Let Science laugh as it may, the Adepts are the only true scientists, for they take into account every factor in the question, whereas Science is limited by brain-power, by circumstance, by imperfection of instruments, and by a total inability to perceive anything deeper than the mere phenomena presented by matter."⁴

Mr. Judge likewise took every factor into account, one of them being that which he designates "our mental moon." In this wholly materialistic scientific age let us, his students, keep our "inward eye" fixed upon it.

HE who seeks to find the inward in the outward, is in better case than he who only finds the inward in the inward.

— HENRY SUSO

⁴p. 8.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“If You Look Hard Cycles Are All Over” is the title of an article by Ritchie R. Ward in the February *Scientific American*. Recognizing them in any phenomenon, better yet their causes, can make our world less random and more predictable. There are crests and troughs in all kinds of social and economic affairs, and in every natural science, including medicine. Researchers have come up with more than 500 different phenomena in 36 different areas of knowledge that fluctuate in rhythmic cycles. Says the author:

Cycles — and the rhythms within them — are as mysterious as they are common in Man and Nature. We take for granted the rhythmic regularity of the heartbeat, the 24-hour pattern of our cycles of sleeping and waking, and the annual turning of a young man’s fancy in the spring. But explaining these mysteries presents baffling problems.

Edward R. Dewey is president of the Foundation for the Study of Cycles in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and has been an intimate student of cycles and cycle theory for nearly 40 years. He believes that the mystery of cycles in human affairs will eventually be solved and, when it is, that we should be able to anticipate floods, famines, epidemics, even depressions and wars. Armed with such foreknowledge, we should be able to avoid disaster, or at least defend ourselves against some of its worst consequences. . . .

The word “cycle,” Dewey had pointed out [in his book *Cycles: The Mysterious Forces That Trigger Events*], comes from the Greek word for “circle,” and when we speak of cycles we imply only that something is coming around again to its place of beginning. It does not have the additional implication that there is a regular period of time before it returns to the place where it started. When these time periods are reasonably uniform, the cycle is more accurately called a “rhythm.” . . .

The theoretical interest that Dewey and his co-workers have is based on the hope — or better say faith — that at some future time they can arrive at a satisfactory explanation of the whole cycle mystery: what causes cycles, whether some can be regulated to Man’s advantage, and whether Man can make a better adjustment to others.

“Actually,” Dewey told me, “I feel that these studies are at the very heart of the universe, dealing with structure, with pat-

tern, that is perhaps universal. We are dealing with something that is of tremendous importance in understanding the universe — for understanding ourselves, and for making forecasts in many areas of biological, economic, and social activity. . . . Frankly, we have large areas that are purely speculative. But we *can* say that we have overwhelming evidence that some kinds of environmental forces must exist that alternately stimulate and depress mankind in the mass. These same forces also affect things like plant life, weather and disease. To say what they are at this stage would be rash.”

Dewey added, “We have evidence that forces of some sort — whatever their real nature may be — do exist, and it runs like this: many things fluctuate in waves or cycles that are so dominant, so regular, and have repeated so many times that they cannot reasonably be chance. Some of these nonchance cycles are no doubt caused by feedback, or by predator-prey relationships — as the abundance of the Canadian lynx may depend on the abundance of the snowshoe rabbit, its favourite food. That is, some cycles are caused by factors internal to the organism itself, or by factors obvious in its immediate surroundings. On the other hand, there are hundreds of cycles which, for one reason or another, cannot have an internal or immediate cause. In such cases we are forced to conclude an *external* cause.”

Among biologists, the question of whether external or internal causes are primary in influencing the rhythms of plants and animals is still a matter of some controversy.

People have no trouble accepting the idea that they have good days and bad days in a recurring pattern. These cycles in an individual's physical and emotional well-being, now known as biorhythms, are being taken seriously by some airlines and factory managers. . . . Small calculators now on the market are designed to help people anticipate their good and bad days. . . .

The implications that Dewey sees in cycles are fundamental. If he is correct, order, regularity and pattern exist in many types of phenomena hitherto thought to be random. A discovery of this sort would be akin to the discovery by the ancients that the planets (so-called from the Greek word meaning a “wanderer”) have entirely regular and predictable movements, or that the elements can be arranged into a periodic table. Dewey says he can think of nothing that will extend order into more different areas, more different disciplines, more different phenomena, than cycle study.

If these cyclic forces are for real, there is much greater inter-

relationship within nature than has been realized. The same cycles appear in many different natural and social sciences. The implications are of a wholeness, instead of the emphasis that we so often see upon smaller and smaller sections of knowledge.

Students of Theosophy should take note of pronouncements such as these and correlate them with what is said about cycles in Theosophical literature.

The Indus Valley script, which was considered undecipherable, has now been deciphered. This is the claim made by Dr. S. R. Rao, a well-known archaeologist, who is of the opinion that "we have to rewrite Indian history in the light of the decipherment and its implications." The Indus civilization, he believes, laid the foundation of the Vedic society. The inscriptions on the seals belonging to this period reveal that the Harappans, as the Indus Valley people were known, spoke a language belonging to the Indo-European family, which had no relation to the Dravidian languages spoken elsewhere in the Indian sub-continent during the period. He, however, concedes that a few non-Indo-European words appearing on the seals prove that other ethnic groups co-existed with the Aryans who formed the bulk of the population. These groups could have enriched the Indus civilization.

The decipherment has also brought to light that the pioneers in progressing from a picture-writing to an alphabetic one were the Harappans; and thus it could be said, Dr. Rao urges, that the greatest contribution of that civilization to the progress of mankind was the invention of the alphabet. It appears from the findings that both the Semitic writing and the Indo-European alphabet originated in India.

The Times of India for September 15, reporting this "epoch-making" discovery of the century in the field of epigraphy, as some noted archaeologists the world over have hailed it, states:

The Indus Valley civilization, also called the Harappan civilization, in its heyday covered an area far more extensive than the Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations put together — from Afghanistan to Delhi and from Kashmir to Tapti valley.

It is famous for its clean and well-planned cities, such as Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro (now in Pakistan) and Lothal and Kalibangan (in India). The Harappans carried on a flourishing overseas trade. Before losing their identity, they made several

contributions to the progress of mankind. One of them is the development of a partly pictographic writing into an alphabetic system facilitating quick diffusion of ideas.

As a highly literate people, the Harappans have left behind some 3,000 seals, mostly steatite (soft stone), of which Dr. Rao has deciphered 1,800 to unlock the mystery of a Haze-Hung era. . . .

Dr. Rao has come to the conclusion that the Indus script, originally a mixed writing of 62 signs, including pictures, was disciplined into an alphabetic script of 22 signs and its consonantal signs formed the basis of the Semitic (including Phoenician) consonantal (alphabetic) system. Both wrote from right to left.

The greatest contribution of the Indus civilization is the alphabetic system of writing evolved from a syllabic one. The Brahmi script, which meticulously followed the Indus principle of forming conjunct consonants (*samyukta aksharas*) and using auxiliary signs for vowel value, seems to have been evolved from the late Harappan script. The Indus language is an earlier form of the old Indo-Aryan (Rig Vedic) language and does not belong to the Dravidian family.

Theosophical literature contains hints as to when the alphabet and the art of writing originated, according to esoteric records. In *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 439) we are told:

... writing was invented by the Atlanteans, and not at all by the Phoenicians. Indeed, such a claim as that writing was known to mankind many hundreds of millenniums ago, in the face of the philologists who have decreed that writing was unknown in the days of, and to Panini, in India, as also to the Greeks in the time of Homer, will be met by general disapprobation, if not with silent scorn. All denial and ridicule notwithstanding, the Occultists will maintain the claim, and simply for this reason: from Bacon down to our modern Royal Society, we have a too long period, full of the most ludicrous mistakes made by Science, to warrant our believing in modern scientific assumptions rather than in the denials of our Teachers.

Does a creature like the tent caterpillar have a purpose? To what end does this complex system of life appear to operate? Is there a plan?

V. G. Deither's book, *The World of the Tent-Makers: A Natural History of the Eastern Tent Caterpillar*, from which the following is excerpted, seeks to answer these questions.

The moth encircled the cherry twig with a final packet of eggs. Gradually her grasp of the smooth bark relaxed, and she fell exhausted to the ground. The earth had completed one circumnavigation of the sun since she herself had begun life as an egg. In a sense the moth was back where she had started. Eggs had striven mightily to produce more eggs. Through the action of other organisms, parasites, predators, bacteria, viruses, all cycling to the same purpose, and through attrition by weather and accident, the net gain in eggs this year was zero.

To what end the exquisitely complex and meticulously synchronized machinery, the hormones, nerve impulses, biochemical syntheses, cell divisions, gene actions? Was the whole adventure a mere charade? An exercise in futility? Was it all a means of perfecting the cherry by challenging it to response? Or was it trial by ordeal to perfect the moths?

Perhaps only the genes counted after all. If the true essence of life on earth, the essence that perpetuated itself, was the genes, then the caterpillars were just one of many dwellings that genes had built for themselves. Their survival would depend on the success with which the body they constructed competed for a place in the sun.

Still, to what end? How can one explain such an expenditure of energy to perpetuate motion for the sake of motion, perpetuation of moths not for the sake of moths but for the perpetuation? Is it unthinkable that so much planning should go for naught? Perhaps there is no plan. Perhaps only chance rules events. On the other hand, could it be that there is an inexorable march of events, that events transpire as they do because it is impossible for them to do otherwise? In that case there is no chance.

In the cosmic view the caterpillar is more than an insect, more than a fragment of life. The tent caterpillar is the universe. One cannot ask the purpose of the tent caterpillar. One can only observe it and marvel. But in observing it one cannot escape wondering of the universe, *why?*

When the impulse to destroy any creature, however lowly, overtakes us, let us ponder its life's purpose.

Baljit Singh Jabbal, who returned recently from London achieving celebrity, exhibited his mental prowess before a large audience in Raipur, Madhya Pradesh, by igniting an earthen lamp by staring at it. A small piece of dry cotton was kept in the earthen lamp which contained neither ghee nor oil nor anything else. In London, he had lighted an electric bulb by emitting mental waves.

This is not for the first time that lamps have been enkindled in this fashion. Mr. Judge explains in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (pp. 146):

The genuine psychic — or, as they are often called, magical — phenomena done by the Eastern faquir or yogi are all performed by the use of natural forces and processes not even dreamed of as yet by the West. . . . The lay mind infected by the materialism of the day wonders how all these manipulations are possible, seeing that no instruments are spoken of. The instruments are in the body and brain of man. In the view of the Lodge, “the human brain is an exhaustless generator of force,” and a complete knowledge of the inner chemical and dynamic laws of Nature, together with a trained mind, give the possessor the power to operate the laws to which I have referred. This will be man’s possession in the future, and would be his today were it not for blind dogmatism, selfishness and materialistic unbelief. Not even the Christian lives up to his Master’s very true statement that if one had faith, he could remove a mountain. A knowledge of the law when added to faith gives power over matter, mind, space, and time

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