

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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LET US BECOME LISTENERS

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THE LIFE of the student of Theosophy is cyclic in its progress, as is all else in Nature. Though he starts as a listener to the spoken or the written word, passes on to the student as his mind grapples with the underlying ideas, and becomes a server as he takes part in Lodge or other activities for the good of humanity, he rebecomes these three stages on a higher spiral as the years roll on, till, at last, he blends the three into one.

It is, however, a fallacy to think that the listener who attends meetings but does no obvious study or service is necessarily merely a first-stage listener. Though he does not study the books, he may study *in his mind* the teaching he hears, and thereby gain a deeper understanding of the ideas which were clothed in words. And his very presence at the meetings may serve the Cause of Theosophy as much as the actual work of others. Similarly, the student, though he studies the books, may lack the capacity to listen if he becomes enamoured of his own learning and refuses to listen to others, while he may feel he has no time to serve. So, too, with the server who gets engrossed in his service; he may feel he has time neither to study nor to listen to those who might teach him how best to serve.

Each earnest aspirant to Theosophic usefulness would do well to ask himself periodically, Am I a listener, as well as a student and a server?

The art of listening can and should be cultivated, for it is the key to real study and to real service. Through it the student can not only delve deep through words and phrases to reach the under-

hears in terms of his own language, preconceptions and knowledge, emphasizing what appeals to him, and "fighting" or ignoring what does not. It is an arresting thought that "outside of initiation" no knowledge is complete.

The art of listening is, then, to cut away all non-essentials till the idea stands clear, while at the same time taking due care of the actual words used. The next stage is to reclothe the idea in words which express it. In the early days of Humanity, Truths were taught orally, and here the great need of accuracy is seen; later, they were studied, proved and recorded. It was not the words that were recorded, but the ideas, and these were recorded on "a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs." These signs and glyphs were not a summary of the Knowledge, but the pattern or superstructure of the Whole, its life-germ. There can be no mistake here. It is in the clothing of the life-germ that mistakes occur. This life-germ is as the Root of the Aswattha Tree, which is above, or hidden, while the branches and leaves are below, expressions, on the plane of senses, of the Whole. Though our contact is with the leaves first, we can, by learning the nature of the leaf, know the nature of the Whole, provided it is the leaf as an unfoldment of the Whole that we are studying. In this case we seek first the pattern or the superstructure of the leaf, and this is wrapped in the Root.

So, too, with Man. No analysis of him as separate from the Whole or the Root-Spirit, or as separate from all the ramifications of the Whole, leaves of the One Tree, will ever give knowledge of him.

The same is true of the philosophy of Theosophy as recorded for us. The pattern or the superstructure, not only of the Teaching, but also of the Message as a whole — that part of the Secret Doctrine given out to us by H.P.B. — must be sought. It is not sufficient to study one of her books only; all are necessary for the complete picture or pattern or germ behind her Message to be seen. Though she gives out the Three Fundamental Propositions, and advises the student to use these as keys to the understanding of the rest of the philosophy, they are incomplete without both *The Voice of the Silence* and *Isis Unveiled*.

The Third Fundamental Proposition speaks of the goal of evolution as independent (conscious) existence for the divine soul — and very hard work it is to reach that point. What this means, in one aspect at least, is given in the Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled*: "The

omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit and its control over nature's forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body." But the pattern is not complete. Why should the divine soul want to have conscious existence, or to acquire control over nature's forces while still in a body? The missing piece of the pattern comes in *The Voice of the Silence*. Though the corner-stone of MAGIC or Wisdom is given in *Isis*, as it affects man and his powers in Nature, and the three basic propositions in *The Secret Doctrine* give the key to the Universe *in toto*, the Keystone of the whole philosophy is SERVICE, service of all creation. Mr. Judge puts this graphically in *The Ocean of Theosophy* when he says that it is through the Perfected Beings, "in co-operation with the whole human family," that "the further regular and workmanlike prosecution of the plans of the Great Architect of the Universe" can be carried on.

It is through listening to the ideas in *The Voice of the Silence* that the student begins to ask himself what this Movement is of which he is a part. Turning to the Preface of *Isis Unveiled*, he finds a reference to the Wise Men of the East. Here and there in *The Secret Doctrine* he comes across plain statements and hidden hints as to the work of these Great Ones, while in *The Key to Theosophy* and in certain articles he gets more intimate hints as to the relationship between the Movement, the students and Those behind the Movement. Mr. Judge found for himself, and passed on to all, the life-germ of the Message — that They, the Great Ones, need helpers in Their work.

It is now that the listener-student-server becomes the real server, because he alters the nature of his study, and his motive for listening. He realizes that he must train himself to listen in his study, to listen and not only to understand. He listens, now, for the hints that will help him. He knows that hints only will be given, for part of his training is to develop his intuition, *i.e.*, to bring his mind in tune with the mind of the Perfect Servers, and in this no outside authority can be of aid. The Master wrote:

If I were to *demand* that you should do one thing or the other, instead of simply advising, I would be responsible for every effect that might flow from the step, and you acquire but a secondary merit.

Also, only through taking hints can the student's powers and capacities be unfolded. To become an "outpost of Master's Con-

sciousness" he must be ever listening, ever wakeful. The degradation of this inner listening is to be found in the psychics who hear voices, but this is not what is meant. What has to be developed is an inner attentiveness of mind, or awareness, the capacity to hear the "whisperings of the *Buddhi* to the *Manas*."

Everything now becomes a teacher, every sentence comes to life. But he must not become so immersed in looking for hints that he misses the main idea, for if he is not careful he will interpret hints in terms of his own preconceptions and prejudices, as he formerly interpreted the Teachings. He begins to feel the need of advice, and looks for it in the books and from friends; he has passed the stage when he thought his own decisions were best, and is now anxious to take advice, or hints. Some of the ahankaric element in him has been lost and he is willing to undergo a little self-abnegation. Even the performance of his duties takes on a new phase, for the Master wrote:

See to it that the continual performance of duty under the guidance of a well developed Intuition shall keep the balance well poised.

Duty — the immediate thing to hand — is no longer easy. He has to use his Intuition before performing any duty; and not only his Intuition, but his "well developed Intuition." It is this, and not the immediate presence of a job to be done, that has to guide what he shall do. Only this will keep his balance well poised. The development of his Intuition becomes of paramount importance.

Starting again to review the Lodge, the Movement, the Teaching and the Teachers from the point of view of this wider vision, he goes through the stage of thinking primarily of the Lodge instead of himself *in* the Lodge. Expanding his conception he thinks in terms of the Movement of which the Lodge is an outer expression. The Teaching becomes not something for him to learn, but the Living Vitality or Spirit of the Movement. Passing still further on in his thought he thinks of the Teachers, not as *behind* the Movement and the Lodge, but as *in* both. The work and programme of Movement and Lodge become Their work and programme; he is but an agent to carry them out, or rather, to keep them alive by his own vital force. This force is not really his, but part of the One Vital Force at work in all, guided by him in terms of the Original Im-

pulse. He begins to see why the work of man in nature has been emphasized, he goes back to the Three Fundamentals, to the Ten Points of *Isis*, and to *The Voice of the Silence* and looks in them for hints for him, and he remembers what the Master wrote:

Watch your first impressions Let neither your personal predilections, affections, suspicions nor antipathies affect your action.

The following statements, given careful, *intuitive* thought, will be found of great value:

The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter [the sovereign, the immortal spirit], he becomes an immortal entity.

Thou hast to saturate thyself with pure Alaya, become as one with Nature's Soul-Thought. At one with it thou art invincible.

Fohat . . . is the "bridge" by which the "Ideas" existing in the "Divine Thought" are impressed on Cosmic substance as the "laws of Nature." Fohat is thus the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation; or, regarded from the other side, it is the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation, the "Thought Divine" transmitted and made manifest through the Dhyan Chohans, the Architects of the visible World.

The corner-stone of MAGIC [Spiritual WISDOM] is an intimate practical knowledge of magnetism and electricity, their qualities, correlations, and potencies.

[The] one common vital principle . . . is controllable by the perfected human will.

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 . . . Those gifts and powers are not for Self . . . then must thou shed the light acquired . . . upon the span of all three worlds.

QUEST FOR TRUTH

PHILOSOPHERS, sages and scientists have all unknowingly agreed that the purpose of life is to learn — and then to teach. Their own struggles for knowledge, whether they be the quest for truth about metaphysics, the nature of man or of the cosmos, show the universality of this dictum. Who among these has not felt the driving impulse to communicate his findings to as many as are interested?

Evolution is a tremendous drama of education, requiring for its process both those who are old in learning and experience and those who desire to expand their knowledge with the help of wiser beings. If men seek to learn with no thought of themselves becoming teachers, their learning has not been soul-learning, for the first truth of soul-learning is that principle of reciprocity which shows each his responsibility to all. The annals of history are filled with accounts of misspent lives enacted by characters deficient in knowledge of the nature of soul and the universal sense of responsibility which such knowledge awakens. Yet those who command our respect and veneration were those who attempted to help humanity, who sought to *teach* men a better way of living. The possessor of genuine knowledge, however, realizes that whatever he may pass on to others can be of value only when those others traverse the same path to truth and make it a portion of themselves. The way can be pointed out, but the travelling must be done by each. Every milestone on the way is an integral part of the final knowledge and not to be separated from it. Theosophy, wherever found, is by its nature a recognition of this principle of education — self-development.

Dogmas and blind beliefs have always been hindrances on the path of education. To hold with tenacity to a dogma means simply to close the mind and to prohibit any further light. Dogmas have been accepted for one of two reasons. The first, because of awe and stupefaction at the knowledge of another, leading to loss of confidence in the innate ability of each to find out for himself. The second, because of wishful desire to believe whatever will justify a course of action which appeals.

Theosophy has ever been unalterably opposed to the sway of dogma, whether externally or internally imposed. Its attitude towards those who hold dogmas because of ignorance reflects the spirit of true education. The dormant spark of confidence in man's ability

to know for himself is fanned to new life through a reawakening of confidence. Such men can be reached by a dispersal of the inhibiting clouds of belief which surround them. Those who believe because every fibre of their selfish, personal nature desires to believe cannot be reached, save when they have pursued their chosen road to an *impasse*, and return confused, looking for a more enlightened path. *That* highroad is the constant quest for truth, to be followed by eager, open minds, and it is the path of evolution.

Wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever the influence of theosophic endeavour is felt, there is an attempt at true education. Amidst different races and peoples it has taken differing forms. Lao-tze, Krishna and Buddha sought to awaken directly in men a better comprehension of their own natures, the most important thing that a truly great education could reveal. Plato sought the same goal, though he realized that the minds of a decadent Greece must proceed to it from devious paths in order to make the message intelligible. Jesus came to a people who had worshipped a God of violence and sought to awaken them to a better understanding of the "god within." His message, as the others, was deliberately misconstrued by some, and unconsciously by others, through the ignorance resulting from lack of zeal and effort. Education is made up of two factors—the teacher with helpful knowledge to impart and the pupil who is eager to learn. There have always been teachers for those who recognize them, but these latter have been few.

H.P.B. was faced with a most gigantic task in education. She was forced to survey the whole history of humanity in detail to separate dogma from truth in matters assigned to religion, and appearance from reality in the findings of an infant science. She was a teacher who wished only to help men to self-instruction, that they might lead better lives. She proceeded from the fundamental basis of a philosophy which explains the two most important questions, "Who am I?" and "Where am I going?" From the penetrating view of Self which the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation engendered, those who made use of her knowledge were able to apprehend the general nature of the universe and then to proceed to a study of its hidden workings in themselves. She left a message of such a nature that no one could benefit from it save through effort of his own, yet she left a Key to the mysteries of existence which could aid education for millennia.

THE GATES OF LIFE

[*The Path* for June 1890 announced the formation of a Department of Branch Work and outlined a scheme to print from time to time selected papers read at Branch meetings of the American Section of the Theosophical Society. The following, read before the Upasana T.S., San Diego, by a member thereof, was issued in May 1893 as Branch Paper No. 33.—Eds.]

ONE who speaks in dreams came at the midnight hour
And stood beside the couch wheron I slept.
“Rise, thou of asking mind,” he said, “for I have come
To show thee that on which thou long hast pondered:—
The two straight gates which led to Life. Rise thou, and look
On that which to thy inner gaze I now unfold.”

I rose obedient to the call, and lo! above,
Around, below, a flood of golden radiance
Poured. At first mine eyes were dimmed and dazed, and then
Accustomed grown they pierced the veil of Light and saw
That which the eyes of flesh shall not behold.

Then spake my guide:—
“Look backward now to that dark Earth, thy home,
Which lieth far below. Look back, and thou shalt see
One of those births by which men pass the gateways twain —
For both are births — tho’ in their blindness men still call
The one which leadeth into Life, not Birth, but Death.”

A palace rose beneath;
And in a chamber, lofty, grand, one dying lay.
He had been one whom men call great; one to whom
The servile knee had bowed; into whose ear the tongue
Of flattery its honied sweets had poured; one for whose
Slight word or fleeting smile the sycophant had fawned
And cringed; and men his evil deeds had praised.
But this life span was o’er. The hour had struck.
The body that on earth was known, and feared, or loved,
Or hated, must be forever laid aside;
For it was not the man. Nay; but as a garment worn
And faded, rent and useless. Or as a tool
With which some cunning craftsman long hath wrought

Until its point grows blunt, its keen edge dulled and dented.
 About the body lay a shifting, yellow light,
 And, hovering near, a filmy, cloudlike shape
 Of varied dull-red, purple, violet hue.

“This is the soul,” I said.
 “Not so,” replied the one who by me stood. “Tho’ this
 Thou seest contains the essence of the Seven in One,
 The Hierarchies Seven, from each of whom
 Yet seven others spring, and from whose Rays
 Of living Light, of Spirit Flame, the interblending
 Of the Mystic Three, the soul of man is formed:—
 Yea, tho’ this contains it all, or rather essence
 Pure, divine of all, it still is not itself
 The Soul. For know, O child of earth! that man
 Hath many forms and yet that all are one.
 Herein there lies a mystery deep, too deep
 For one not yet initiate to comprehend.
 And when this change is wrought, then shall he know
 The mysteries, sacred and divine, of numbers,
 Colours, sound. Then shall he comprehend the birth
 Of Kosmos and of man.

“This form thou seest
 Is like the body — hath been that body’s mould;
 Yet it is but a form, and all forms pass away;
 So wilt thou see this fall away from the true man
 As hath already slipt the grosser outer shell.”

Then as I looked I saw that this in truth was but
 A shape of matter too — that it must change,
 As its pale counterpart, the body, changed.
 Slowly the Life-Light was from it withdrawn,
 Till, like a dim, dissolving mist, it vanished
 Into Ether thin. And yet not all: an essence
 Fine, impalpable, went forth and sought again
 Reunion with the Self — the Man; as even
 An essence fainter still had from the body
 So commingled. Yet still a form was there, a form
 Like that of man, tho’ of a more angelic mould.

And then again this form, or forms, did separate,
 And one was of majestic port, the form
 And features of a God. Then with One higher yet
 It seemed to blend till both in One All-Radiant
 And divine were folded in. And from that All in One,
 The One All-Radiant, a flood of golden Light
 Was poured. A Light whose quick vibrations were of Life —
 Eternal Life — of whose intense, ecstatic thrill
 No man entombed in flesh hath ever dreamed.

While I gazed,
 In longing lost to enter in and taste that Life
 Whose radiance blinded one to earth yet chained,
 The guide spake soft again to me.

“Withdraw thine eyes;
 For thou hast seen all that now may be made known.
 Yet follow that other form that thou mayest
 Learn its end, and what strong power it yet doth hold
 To draw men down from that All Radiant One
 To seek again the grave of flesh, the prison-house
 Of sense and pain.”

I turned and looked, and lo!
 This other form, of all its Godlike beauty shorn,
 But mirrored forth the evil deeds of life; the lusts
 And passions of the flesh. All envy, malice,
 Greed; the love of riches and of power;
 The brutal strength which ground to powder all
 That fell beneath its iron heel; the cruelty which
 Heeded not the prayers or burning tears by its own
 Actions wrung; the selfishness which made of self —
 The lower self — a God — and all upon its altar laid.

All these and myriad more,
 A host of living shapes, of aspect hideous, dread,
 Came from his form, and scowling, threatening,
 Slunk away until in darkness they were swallowed
 And engulfed. And yet there was of each a part,
 An essence, subtle, fine, which went with that bright form
 And with it entered in. And thus I saw,
 Tho' severed as all were, that all were still again

United. And thus I read the Mystery deep
Of the All-One, the One in All. And while I mused
The guide spake yet again:—

“Thou now hast seen,” he said,
“The passing of the soul, its passage thro’ one gate:
Which of the gateways twain — the first or last —
It matters not, since thro’ them both man passes
Myriad times. But thou hast seen the essence
Of each part return again into the One.
That essence is the soul of man — that which endures —
And shall endure while the One Absolute yet is.
It is that part of man and God which *was* and *is*
And ever shall have Being. No time was there
When it was not: nor will there come a time
It shall not be: for it is one with the All One:
Its golden Light is Life of the Eternal.

“But earthward turn thy gaze,
For I will show thee now the other gate —
The gate of Birth thro’ which the souls of men shall pass
And pass again and yet again until the forms
Thou sawest have all been conquered — have no more power
Or will to drag them back to forms of flesh.
He who hath triumphed thus, for him the weary round
Of lives on earth is done. He who hath not trod
With iron heel of Will, with Mind forever bent
Upon the One, these writhing serpents down
Till all their might is turned to good, will seek again
Perforce the gates of flesh, and thro’ the body
With its passions and desires the strife again renew.
Nor is there any power can hold therefrom:
It is the Law; and from the highest, yea! the highest
Of the Builders Seven, down to the tiniest thing
That creeps in dust, none may one tittle or one jot
Evade. Look, then, and see how man again
After ages long of rest, in bliss beyond compare,
Comes forth from out the One — yea! from out the One
Is fashioned all again anew — that is, all forms
Which reunite to build again the walls of flesh

In which ye say men live."

I looked and saw again
The red and violet form emerge from out
The All in One, the One All-Radiant.
And swiftly as a line of light it sped,
And clung to one who was to be a mother.
And there as month by month the body grew
Until the seven Mysteries were wrought,
It was the mould on which the fleshly form
Took shape. And then I saw how to that body
Came again, in sequence orderly and fair,
The selfsame atoms which had formed the body
Of the long ago: and how the selfsame Life —
From the great golden fount of Light and Life —
Informed and filled the whole.

While this wonder grew,
And shaped itself into a living, breathing child,
There came all silently the other forms
Which of the man's soul were a part. Aye, from out
The One All-Radiant they came, and hov'ring near
They waited for the hour of birth. Came too those others,
Dark and fierce, whose lives that soul's past life had fed,
And waited there, by right, to enter in and share
And mar the new abode.

So when at last
A babe new-born lay on its mother's breast,
It was not new, but old! Aye, older than the stars!
For 'twas the selfsame soul whose essence was
The gathered Rays from Hierarchies higher far
Than present man with his small brain can dream!
The Hierarchies who their essence draw
From the One Absolute.

Nay! nor was the body new, except in shape,
But formed of that which is imperishable;
Whose atoms had built many forms, the abodes
Wherein this Soul had dwelt — this pilgrim old —
Yet ever young — in its long journeying

Thro' the vast Eternities.

Then spake the guide:—

“Thou now hast seen the gateways twain; the twain
Which are as one; for both upon one highway
Stand; and one upon the other follows on
As sunrise follows eve; as eve still follows dawn.
This is the appointed way of man; and through
These gateways shall he come and go until
The last faint shadow of the dark, fierce forms
Which thou hast seen, has faded and fallen from him
Quite away. For they — and they alone — the children
Of his thoughts and deeds while dwelling in the flesh —
Have power to drag him down to pass again
And yet again the gateway of rebirth.

“So shall it be with him until thro' countless,
Countless lives, his ignorance to knowledge
Swift and sure has grown; until the lusts of flesh
And sense have changed to aspirations pure and strong;
Until all passions have been curbed and reined
Into obedience to the Higher Will. For then —
And only then — these evil forms which crowd
Around him at rebirth, which feed and thrive
On evil thoughts and things, will have no longer
Life or power — be vanquished quite.

“Think not

This is a work of ease. Nay! he who would grow
To perfectness; he who would pass no more
The gates of birth or death; must toil and strive;
Must watch and pray; must cease to think or care for that
Which bringeth selfish good alone. Yea! the self —
It must be merged and lost in other selves —
The selfhood of the world. 'Twas thus that Buddha,
Krishna, Christos wrought. And to that Perfectness
Must all men come. Yea! all men! the lowest yet
That breathes, thro' these two gates of birth and death
The Godhood in himself shall find.”

HUNGER : OF BODY, MIND AND SOUL

PERHAPS never before in human history have social strains, ideological conflicts, economic competition and political friction between groups, classes and nations reached such a pitch as they have in recent times. Men and women everywhere are fearful and undecided. There is the problem of nuclear weapons of mass destruction which threaten the very survival of our civilization; even more serious is the problem of the black misery that exists in our world, and the state of malnutrition, disease, famine and death in which large masses of people are compelled to live.

The statistics of the U.N. specialized agencies corroborate the fact that for the vast majority of mankind the most urgent problem is hunger. It is being recognized that overpopulation is not the real cause of starvation. It has been shown that world resources are more than sufficient to provide adequate food for everybody, everywhere. The fundamental cause of a great many evils that are dominant in the world, including hunger and starvation, is considered to be the extreme economic inequality between the materially well-developed countries and the underdeveloped regions. The economic and social development of the so-called backward peoples is a much-discussed topic at international congresses, and is looked upon by many as a kind of panacea for bringing about the salvation of humanity.

Many indeed feel the need for ameliorating the condition of the great disinherited masses; but few have a remedy; probably none an effective remedy. Why is it not recognized that the crux of the problem lies on planes other than the physical? Does not history teach that the more material standards are raised the more discontented people seem to become? If we consider food, clothing and shelter — necessary as they are — to be the only things that assure the well-being of man, then the sages of all time have taught in vain. Physical poverty and hunger, of course, need to be eliminated, but should nothing be done about spiritual poverty and hunger?

The materialism of the age is nowhere more clearly shown than in this, that among thousands of mortals who toil and moil to procure the bread which feeds the body, a single one perhaps hungers for the bread of Wisdom, which alone makes the life abundant possible. The bread called "the staff of life" is the bread which

strengthens man's heart and mind and soul.

Just as a healthy body feels hungry at the appointed hour, eats and relishes its food, so too should a healthy mind behave. But if perfectly healthy bodies are rare, rarer still are normal, healthy minds, whose development is regularly attended to. What food is to the body, that knowledge is to the mind. Just as children at play do not feel hungry and refuse to answer the call for food, so too there are playful minds which never seek knowledge. Just as men absorbed in worldly affairs forget the meal hour, so also there are minds so absorbed in their own mundane avocations that they care not about the woes and worries of mankind. Just as the sick loathe the very sight of food, so there are sick minds in whom the very sight of a book produces nausea. Mental unfoldment stops, for many, with school or college. Such people would consider it lunacy if a body, having come of age, were to refuse to eat; they are not taught that the mind also decays and dies without proper nourishment.

If the mind is neglected more than the body, the soul is even more neglected. It is uncared for because its very existence is denied or its nature misdefined. The world is full of child-souls, sick souls, dying and dead souls — because a right philosophy of life, which alone is fitted to supply the needs of the Inner Man for spiritual food, is not sought or applied.

Man is more than his physical body — this is acknowledged by many. And yet they give care and attention only to the body. Bodily hunger and starvation are looked upon as the gravest of problems confronting us; while the “starvation,” “disease” and “death” resulting from ignorance (which should not be equated with mere illiteracy) are taken scant notice of. But ignorance is not the only problem to be dealt with; what works even greater havoc is the incessant stuffing into the mind of the wrong kind of food. False knowledge is the cause of the disease of the modern mind; men everywhere are afflicted with this disease. Truly has it been said: “They are sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing.”

The “indigestion” and “disease” resulting from the possession of false knowledge is the great enemy of spiritual progress. Our civilization suffers from wrong notions and false standards of culture. The vigour to face facts and seek truth is noticeably absent in most

men. Social and religious shibboleths are tolerated, and in the affairs of daily life people feel and think and act in small ways. Why? It is because of the absence of a basis to think broadly and in a truly liberal fashion. The cosmic vision, the cosmopolitan viewpoint, the humanitarian outlook, are foreign to many; to the growing and maturing minds, in schools and colleges, these were never presented.

What can make men's minds broad and provide them with wholesome food for thought? The liberal mind with its discriminative quality does not and cannot come to birth by chance. It has to be evoked, its unfoldment must be attended to and its nurture looked after. Regular dwelling on impersonal and universal ideas enables the mind to acquire the habit of thinking impersonally and universally.

Mere attempts to alleviate physical misery, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, will be of little avail. Are we even sure that such attempts do not do more harm than good? May the Master of His own Mercy forgive us for suggesting such an idea to a selfish and callous population who are bound to take mean advantage of it. But, for the helper of peoples, the social servant and the philanthropist, it is necessary to ponder over this problem — alleviation of physical hunger and misery without touching the cause and core of mental and moral starvation has its dangers and withal is bound to fail.

The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths alone will revolutionize the face of civilization. Wisdom is a far more effective panacea for evil than the mere tinkering with material misery. The crying need of the hour is the infusion of a new current of ideas and aspirations into modern thought; a logical basis for an elevated morality is needed. It is futile to hope that men can be made happy and contented by bettering their physical conditions. The efforts that are made to eliminate physical poverty, misery and starvation doubtless reflect credit on those engaged in such work; but the redemption of mankind cannot be brought about so long as individuals remain ignorant and unable to grasp the meaning and purpose of existence. Each one must be taught to redeem himself. "Within yourselves deliverance must be sought; each man his prison makes."

What food is to the body, that Wisdom and Holiness are to the Inner Man, as is also pointed out in the following Buddhist parable:

Just as food is the support of life of all living beings, so also Nibbana, once realized, is the support of life, for it destroys old age and death.

But again further — food increases the strength of all living beings. Precisely so Nibbana, once realized, increases the strength of the Power of Magic of all living beings.

But again further — food is the source of the beauty of all living beings. Precisely so Nibbana, once realized, is the source of the beauty of the virtues of all living beings.

But again further — food relieves the wear and tear to which all living beings are subject. Precisely so Nibbana, once realized, relieves the wear and tear to which all living beings are subject because of the Depravities, one and all.

But again further — food dispels the weakness of hunger in all living beings. Precisely so Nibbana, once realized, dispels the weakness of hunger produced by all manner of sufferings in all living beings.

OF ALL the schemes of life which man has devised for his own edification and guidance, the most practical is that which Buddha, as the inheritor and interpreter of the wisdom of the Upanishads, gave to the world. In it both religion and philosophy are resolved into ethics. The path of life, as Buddha mapped it out, is the path to Ideal Good. It is also the path to Ideal Truth. Knowledge of Reality, the goal of every thinker, is to be won, not by intellectual activity, but by a life-long effort to become real, to find one's real self. And each of us must work out his salvation for himself. There is no need for him to invoke the aid of the priest, the spiritual director, the theologian, the metaphysician. He must take himself in hand and be a lamp unto himself — a lamp which will shine more brightly, the more it is used and trusted. The life of self-control, self-sacrifice, self-development — the life, in plainer words, of unselfishness, of moral goodness — will enable him at last to overcome all the forces that war against the soul, and solve all the riddles that perplex the mind.

—EDMOND HOLMES

SOME THOUGHTS ON THOUGHT

SINCE Thought is, for all of us, a constant activity throughout our waking hours, and even to some extent in sleep, it is interesting, and should be helpful, to know what others have to say of it, especially if one of those others is the American sage, Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Thought, we might say, is of three kinds: more or less automatic as we go about our daily round, but helpful to us as we perform our daily tasks; secondly, it enables us to maintain contact, that inevitable, inescapable life-long contact, with the here and now; and, thirdly, there is meditative thought, a state of quiet, reflective brooding, part memory, part receptivity of what the inner Self may either create or awaken for us.

Emerson pays tribute to Thought with regard to this last-mentioned aspect of it. "By virtue of the Deity," he writes in one of his Essays, "Thought renews itself inexhaustibly every day, and the thing whereon it shines, though it were dust and sand, is a new subject with countless relations."

Might not there seem to be something almost intimidating in this ceaseless mental activity? Emerson does not see it so. He avers, rather, that "in every sane hour the service of Thought appears reasonable," and in fact warns against the alternative to it, "the despotism of the senses," which state of existence he does not hesitate to call "insane."

The word is by no means too strong. Cannot we recall from the pages of history many instances of such despotism, which, in view of their results, can indeed be only classified as insane? H.P.B. describes them well in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, her words being even more appropriate today. Writing of the Mazdean religion, she refers to its philosophy with its profound allegorical teaching of the two Brother Powers, Ormuzd and Ahriman, representing Good Thought and Evil Thought, and she indicates plainly that from the beginning of things *Thought* is potent to rule, or, alas, to *misrule* all.

With this view Emerson would have fully agreed.

As Thought is of all things the most personal to us, we are naturally entitled to keep much of it private, but Emerson would have those whose Thought is valuable give it out freely to others for

their good. "Who," he asks, "is the better for the philosopher who hides his thoughts from the waiting world?" And as though the very idea seems preposterous, "Hide his thoughts!" he adds. "Hide the sun and moon! Thought is all light and publishes itself to the universe."

In a particularly vivid metaphor he speaks of "a jet of luminous thought," thus suggesting the light and refreshment that some inspired thought can bring to us when we hear it voiced or come upon it in the course of our reading.

This view that the power of Thought can release us from bondage, whether due to circumstances or to some wrong attitude of mind, Emerson repeats in another of what we may call his aphorisms, which, were they all to be garnered, would surely form a helpful little book of daily readings. "The revelation of Thought takes man out of servitude into freedom. . . . If Truth come to our mind, we suddenly expand to its dimensions."

This freedom, freedom from man-made creeds and ologies, can, as H.P.B. tells us, be put to good use. We are "to be ever striving," she tells us, "to help the divine evolution of *Ideas*," and this we can do only through the medium of Thought.

As a basis for the worth, and largely, too, for the enjoyment of life, Emerson commends Thought. "The revelation of Thought" mentioned above can immeasurably widen our horizon or, as readily, it can give new meaning to the minutiae of our days.

Of course, to live *without* Thought, totally without it, is something we cannot conceive of, for it would mean total non-entity, whereas we *can* conceive, can even experience, the truth of another of Emerson's aphorisms, namely, that "the soul contains the event that shall befall it, for the event is only the actualization of its thoughts."

Oh, potent Thought! What else but Thought fashions our lives? All the teachings of Theosophy would avail us nothing if we could not *think* in response to them. And how varied the effects of Thought can be, too varied for even an attempt to be made to enumerate them! Some good, some bad, some creative, some destructive, but all of them inescapable when once set in motion.

There is an impressive paragraph to be found in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 22*, impressive because it occurs in a Master's letter:

Every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world, and becomes an active entity by associating itself, coalescing we might term it, with an elemental — that is to say, with one of the semi-intelligent forces of the kingdoms. It survives as an active intelligence — a creature of the mind's begetting — for a longer or shorter period proportionate with the original intensity of the cerebral action which generated it. Thus, a good thought is perpetuated as an active, beneficent power, an evil one as a maleficent demon.

Such a fact, given out on a Master's authority, must both gladden and solemnize us, for it shows us how our thoughts can affect others, all unconsciously to ourselves.

Emerson was a Theosophist by nature, though not in name. That he believed in the inner Self rather than the orthodox Christian "soul" seems indicated by his statement that "silence, seclusion, austerity, may pierce deep into the grandeur and secret of our being, and so diving, bring up out of secular darkness the sublimities of the moral constitution."

Here is a brief statement of his view of life. "Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood." We agree, but must needs regret that he knew not the clarification forthcoming from the teachings of Theosophy. On these he might have written most helpfully. Does not he tell us that "the imaginative faculty of the soul must be fed with objects immense and eternal," and where are these more certainly to be found than in H.P.B.'s inspired teaching?

One thing we may be sure of — he never lacked what we may call the material for thought or failed in the creative use of it, one of those who benefited from this being the young American writer, Louisa M. Alcott, who wrote of him thus after his death:

Let critics and philosophers judge him by his intellect; in the hearts of this family and in many an humble home besides he will always be remembered as the tenderest, most sympathetic, most loyal of all friends, whose bounty fell on them silently as the dew from heaven, and whose presence could brighten the highest joy and soothe the keenest sorrow.

As to the quality of Thought, and the exercise of it, habitual to one of whom that could be written, there is surely little need to speculate. Like Mr. Judge, Emerson lived by the Heart Doctrine.

THE BASIS OF ACTION

KARMA may be considered as the union of Spirit, Mind and Matter *in action*. Being filled with earthly ideas, full of erroneous conceptions derived from modern science, religion and philosophy, we do not realize the power that lies within ourselves; so we think of Karma as an external thing. Karma is a synthetic word which means the progress of a being. There is no action without an intelligence; no intelligence without a consciousness; no consciousness except as a centre of energy in the One Life.

As a man thinks, so he acts. If we think we are derived from forms, then our sense of Self is contingent upon a given form, and when the form is dissolved, where is our sense of Self? It dissolves with the form. If our sense of Self is contingent upon this or some other idea of mind, then upon the dissolution of that mind our sense of Self is dissolved; we survive but we have no sense of Self. But if our sense of Self is identified with the One Life, the One Spirit, the One Consciousness, which is the eternal, infinite, boundless, immutable container, pervader of all, then how can that sense of Self ever be destroyed? Once this idea is grasped, a new cycle begins to manifest immediately in the sphere of intelligence, because the processes of correct cognition are three: the *perception* we have of the One Self and our identity with It; *inference* from within, without, instead of from without, within; and *living* what we have seen and inferred.

When we start acting from the basis of the One Self, we begin to practise Brotherhood, to treat other men through the body as spirits, as souls, as the One Self. We deal with forms as forms, with ideas as ideas; but whenever we are touching a form, we know that invisible within that form is intelligence, and that when we strike the body, we bruise the intelligence. Within that intelligence is soul, identical with our Self, and when we bruise the intelligence we bruise the soul, which in reality is the same as our Self; just as a tidal wave, the bruise comes back to us; that is *testimony*. Every man's body is a visible testimony of how he understands matter and how he treats it and how he makes use of it. It is a visible reflection of his so-far acquired intelligence by experience in and through forms of this kind. His treatment of his own body and the bodies of others, his treatment of his own mind and the minds of

others is the visible and standing witness of how far the Christ-processes, the genesis, the conception, the antenatal preparation of the spiritual being have gone on in him.

We see three lines of evolution everywhere in nature, but highest of the three, because all-inclusive, is spiritual evolution — the perception of Self as Self apart from body or form, apart from mind or intelligence, apart from beings of any kind — the sense of Self. When we set our mental house in order so as to conform to that idea we shall see how this triple cycle, the spiritual, the intellectual and the physical, conjoined in one, operates to illumine us within. In our minds there are faint fires lighted here and there by isolated true ideas, fraternal actions, longings and aspirations for a better life, to know better, to do better, to understand better. When in that inner world, which is our mind, a sun bursts into endless luminosity we have the state of a Christ, of a Buddha, of a Krishna. These fundamental ideas have over and over again been shed on the world by men who before us passed from the human to the supreme, from the intellectual to the spiritual consciousness, from physical knowledge, psychic knowledge, intellectual knowledge, into the full blaze of Wisdom. When the most ordinary man seizes hold on them, he will work that very evolution in himself which is in truth a revolution, because it will transform him into a new order of being. Then, instead of dwelling amidst the funeral tapers of time, he dwells in the shadowless light of the eternal illumination.

WHEN men are rightly occupied, their amusement grows out of their work, as the colour-petals out of a fruitful flower.

—JOHN RUSKIN

WHAT IS MATTER AND WHAT IS FORCE ?

II

[This is the second and concluding portion of an article published in *The Theosophist* for September 1882. The first part appeared in our September issue.—EDS.]

“FORCE, energy, physical agent, are simply different words to express the same idea,” observes our critic. I believe he errs. To this day the men of science are unable to agree in giving to electricity a name, which would convey a clear and comprehensive definition of this “very mysterious agent,” as Professor Balfour Stewart calls it. While the latter states that electricity or “*electrical attraction may PROBABLY be regarded as peculiarly allied to that force which we call chemical affinity*”; and Professor Tyndall calls it only “a mode of motion,” Professor A. Bain regards electricity as one of the five chief powers or forces in nature — “One *mechanical* or molar, the momentum of moving matter,” the others “*molecular, or embodied in the molecules, also SUPPOSED (?) in motion* — these are, heat, light, chemical force, *electricity*” (*The Correlations of Nervous and Mental Forces*). Now these three definitions would not gain, I am afraid, by being strictly analysed.

No less extraordinary appears a certain conclusion “A Theosophist” arrives at. Having reminded us that by no “scientific apparatus yet known is it practicable to weigh a ray of light,” he yet assures us that “. . . the universal ether of science, which exists in extreme tenuity, *can be proved to possess some weight.*” This assertion made in the face of those who regard ether as a reality, and who *know* that since it pervades the densest solids as readily as water does a sponge, it cannot, therefore, be confined — sounds strange indeed; nor can the assumption be supported by modern Science. When she succeeds to weigh her *purely hypothetical* medium, the existence of which is so far only a convenient hypothesis to serve the ends of her undulatory theory, we will have, indeed, to bow before her magic wand. Since our Brother is so fond of quoting from authorities let him quote next time the following:

Whether there are such things as waves of ether or not, we represent these dimensions to our imagination as wave lengths . . . and every student of physics will bear me out . . . that though our theory may only be a phantom of our scientific dreaming,

these magnitudes must be the dimensions of something. (Magnitudes of Ether Waves, p. 25)

It becomes rather difficult, after such a public confession, to believe that science can *prove* the universal ether "to possess some weight."

On the other hand, our critic very correctly doubts whether there ever was any instrument devised "to weigh a ray of light"; though he as incorrectly persists in calling light "a force, or energy." Now I beg to maintain that even in strict accordance with modern science, which can be shown to misname her subjects nine times out of ten, and then to keep on naively confessing it, without making the slightest attempt to correct her misleading terms — light was never regarded as "a force." It is, says science, a "*manifestation of energy,*" a "mode of motion" produced by a rapid vibration of the molecules of any light-giving body and transmitted by the undulations of ether. The same for *heat* and *sound*, the transmission of the latter depending in addition to the vibrations of ether, on the undulations of an intervening atmosphere. Professor Crookes thought at one time that he had discovered light to be a *force*, but found out his mistake very soon. The explanation of Thomas Young of the undulatory theory of light, holds now as good as ever, and shows that what we call light is simply an impression produced upon the retina of the eye by the wave-like motion of the particles of matter.

Light, then, like heat — of which it is the crown — is simply the ghost, the shadow of matter in motion, the boundless, eternal, infinite SPACE, MOTION and DURATION, the trinitarian essence of that which the deists call God, and we — the One Element; Spirit-matter, or Matter-spirit, whose septenary properties we circumscribe under its triple abstract form in the equilateral triangle. If the mediaeval Theosophists and the modern Occultists call the Spiritual Soul — the *vahan* of the seventh, the pure, immaterial spark — "a fire taken from the eternal ocean of light," they also call it in the esoteric language "a pulsation of the Eternal Motion"; and the latter cannot certainly exist *outside* of matter. The men of science have just found out "a *fourth* state of matter," whereas the Occultists have penetrated ages ago beyond the *sixth*, and, therefore, do not infer but KNOW of the existence of the *seventh* — the last.

Professor Balfour Stewart, in seeking to show light an energy

or force, quotes Aristotle, and remarks that the Greek philosopher seems to have entertained the idea that "light is not a body, or the emanation of any body (for that, Aristotle says, would be a kind of body) and that, therefore, light is an energy or act." To this I respectfully demur and answer, that if we cannot conceive of movement or motion without force, we can conceive still less of an "energy or act" existing in boundless space from the eternity, or even manifesting, without some kind of body. Moreover, the conceptions about "body" and "matter" of Aristotle and Plato, the founders of the two great rival schools of antiquity, opposed as they were in many things to each other, are nevertheless still more at variance with the conceptions about "body" and "matter" of our modern men of science.

The Theosophists, old and modern, the Alchemists and Rosicrucians have ever maintained that there were no such things *per se* as "light," "heat," "sound," "electricity"; least of all — could there be a vacuum in nature. And now the results of old and modern investigation fully corroborate what they had always affirmed, namely, that in reality there is no such thing as a "chemical ray," a "light ray," or a "heat ray." *There is nothing but radiant energy*; or, as a man of science expresses it in the *Scientific American*, radiant energy — "motion of *some kind*, causing vibrations across space of *something* between us and the sun — *something which without understanding fully* (verily so!) we call 'ether,' and which exists everywhere, *even in the vacuum of a radiometer.*" The sentence, though confused, is none the less the last word of science. Again: "We have always one and the same cause, radiant energy, and we give this one thing different names, 'actinism,' 'light,' or 'heat.'" And we are also told that the miscalled chemical or actinic rays, as well as those which the eye sees as blue or green, or red, and those which the thermometer feels — "are all one thing, the effects of — motion in ether." (*The Sun's Radiant Energy*, by Professor Langley)

Now the sun and ether being beyond dispute *material* bodies, necessarily every one of their effects — light, heat, sound, electricity, etc., — must be, agreeably to the definition of Aristotle (as accepted, though slightly misconceived, by Professor Balfour Stewart) also "a kind of body," *ergo* — MATTER.

But what is in reality Matter? We have seen that it is hardly

possible to call electricity a force, and yet we are forbidden to call it matter under the penalty of being called unscientific! Electricity has no weight — “a Theosophist” teaches us — *ergo* it cannot be matter. Well, there is much to be said on both sides. Mallet’s experiment, which corroborated that of Pirani (1878), showed that electricity is under the influence of gravitation, and must have, therefore, some weight. A straight copper wire — with its ends bent downward — is suspended at the middle, to one of the arms of a delicate balance, while the bent ends dip in mercury. When the current of a strong battery is passed through the wire by the intervention of the mercury, the arm to which the wire is attached, although accurately balanced by a counterpoise, sensibly tends downward, notwithstanding the resistance produced by the buoyancy of the mercury. Mallet’s opponents who tried at the time to show that gravitation had nothing to do with the fact of the arm of the balance tending downward, but that it was due to the law of attraction of electric currents; and who brought forward to that effect Barlow’s theory of electric currents and Ampère’s discovery that electric currents, running in opposite directions, repel one another and are sometimes driven upward against gravitation — only proved that men of science will rarely agree, and that the question is so far an open one. This, however, raises a side issue as to what is “the law of gravitation.” The scientists of the present day assume that “gravitation” and “attraction” are quite distinct from one another. But the day may not be far distant when the theory of the Occultists that the “law of gravitation” is nothing more or less than the “law of attraction and repulsion,” will be proved scientifically correct.

Science may, of course, if it so pleases her, call electricity a force. Only by grouping it together with light and heat, to which the name of force is decidedly refused, she has either to plead guilty of inconsistency, or to tacitly admit that it is a “species of matter.” But whether electricity has weight or not, no true scientist is prepared to show that there is no matter so light as to be beyond weighing with our present instruments. And this brings us directly to the latest discovery, one of the grandest in science. I mean Mr. Crooke’s “radiant matter” or — as it is now called **THE FOURTH STATE OF MATTER.**

That the three states of matter — the solid, the liquid and the

gaseous, are but so many stages in an unbroken chain of physical continuity, and that the three correlate or are transformed one into the other by insensible gradations, needs no further demonstration, we believe. But what is of a far greater importance for us, Occultists, is the admission made by several great men of science in various articles upon the discovery of that fourth state of matter. Says one of them in the *Scientific American*:

There is nothing any more improbable in the supposition that these three states of matter do not exhaust the possibilities of material condition, than in supposing the possibilities of sound to extend to aerial undulations to which our organs of hearing are insensible, or the possibilities of vision to ethereal undulations too rapid or too slow to affect our eyes as light.

And, as Professor Crookes has now succeeded in refining gases to a condition so ethereal as to reach a state of matter "fairly describable as ultra-gaseous, and exhibiting an entirely novel set of properties," why should the Occultists be taken to task for affirming that there are beyond that "ultra-gaseous" state still other states of matter; states, so ultra refined, even in their grosser manifestations — such as electricity under all its known forms — as to have fairly deluded the scientific senses, and let the happy possessors thereof call electricity — a Force! They tell us that it is obvious that if the tenuity of some gas is very greatly increased, as in the most perfect vacua attainable, the number of molecules may be so diminished, that their collisions under favourable conditions may become so few, in comparison with the number of masses, that they will cease to have a determining effect upon the physical character of the matter under observation. In other words, they say, "the free flying molecules, if left to obey the laws of kinetic force without mutual interference, *will cease to exhibit the properties characteristic of the gaseous state, and take on an entirely new set of properties.*" This is RADIANT MATTER. And still beyond, lies the source of electricity — still MATTER.

Now would it be too presumptuous on our part to remind the reader that if a *fourth* state of matter was discovered by Professor Crookes, and a *fourth* dimension of space by Professor Zöllner, both individuals standing at the very fountainhead of science, there is nothing impossible that in time there will be discovered a *fifth*, *sixth*, and even *seventh* condition of matter, as well as seven senses

in man, and that all nature will finally be found septenary, for who can assign limits to the possibilities of the latter! Speaking of his discovery, Professor Crookes justly remarks that the phenomena he has investigated in his exhausted tubes reveal to physical science a new field for exploration, a new world — “a world, wherein matter exists in a fourth state, where the corpuscular theory of light holds good, and where light does not always move in a straight line, but where we can never enter, and in which we must be content to observe and experiment from without.” To this the Occultists might answer, “if we can never enter it, with the help of our physical senses, we have long since entered and even gone beyond it, carried thither by our spiritual faculties and in our *spiritual* bodies.”

And now I will close the too lengthy article with the following reflection. The ancients never *invented* their myths. One acquainted with the science of occult symbology can always detect a scientific *fact* under the mask of grotesque fancy. Thus one who would go to the trouble of studying the fable of *Electra* — one of the seven Atlantides — in the light of occult science, would soon discover the real nature of Electricity, and learn that it signifies little whether we call it Force or Matter, since it is both, and so far, in the sense given it by modern science, both terms may be regarded as misnomers. Electra, we know, is the wife and daughter of Atlas the Titan, and the son of Asia and of Pleione, the daughter of the Ocean. . . . As Professor Leconte well remarks: “There are many of the best scientists who ridicule the use of the term *vital force*, or vitality, as a remnant of superstition; and yet the same men use the words gravity, magnetic force, chemical force, physical force, electrical force, etc.,” and are withal unable to explain what is life, or even electricity; nor are they able to assign any good reason for that well-known fact that when an animal body is killed by lightning, after death the blood does not coagulate.

Chemistry, which shows to us every atom, whether organic or inorganic in nature susceptible to polarization, whether in its atomic mass or as a unit, and inert matter allied with gravity, light with heat, etc. — hence as containing latent electricity — that chemistry still persists in making a difference between organic and inorganic matter, though both are due to the same mysterious energy, ever at work by her own occult processes in nature's laboratory, in the mineral no less than in the vegetable kingdom. Therefore do the

Occultists maintain that the philosophical conception of spirit, like the conception of matter, must rest on one and the same basis of phenomena, adding that Force and Matter, Spirit and Matter, or Deity and Nature, though they may be viewed as opposite poles in their respective manifestations, yet are in essence and in truth but one, and that *life* is present as much in a dead as in a living body, in the organic as in the inorganic matter.

This is why, while science is searching still and may go on searching for ever to solve the problem "What is life?" the Occultist can afford to refuse taking the trouble, since he claims, with as much good reason as any given to the contrary, that Life, whether in its latent or dynamical form, is everywhere. That it is as infinite and as indestructible as matter itself, since neither can exist without the other, and that electricity is the very essence and origin of — *Life itself*. "Purush" is non-existent without "Prakriti"; nor can Prakriti, or plastic matter, have being or exist without Purush, or spirit, vital energy, LIFE. Purush and Prakriti are in short the two poles of the one eternal element, and are synonymous and convertible terms. Our bodies, as organized tissues, are indeed "an unstable arrangement of chemical forces," *plus* a molecular force — as Professor Bain calls electricity — raging in it dynamically during life, tearing asunder its particles, at death, to transform itself into a chemical force after the process, and thence again to resurrect as an electrical force or life in every individual atom. Therefore, whether it is called Force or Matter, it will ever remain the Omnipresent Proteus of the Universe, the one element — LIFE — Spirit or Force at its *negative*, Matter at its *positive* pole; the former the MATERIO-SPIRITUAL, the latter, the MATERIO-PHYSICAL Universe — Nature, Svabhavat or INDESTRUCTIBLE MATTER.

SOME of the ancients, divining the truth yet from far away, reckoned that the soul knows things because it is composed of them.

—ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY

LIFE'S varied human activities are sometimes included in three major specializations — spirituality, aestheticism and utilitarianism. Almost always individuals as well as nations tend to emphasize one of the three at the expense of the others. Co-ordination of the three, so that human life can become more meaningful than it is today, is shown by experience to be very difficult. The present phase of man's existence shows predominant signs of being still in the specialist's stage, though the objective which life appears to have as its aim is an eventual co-operation of spirituality, aestheticism and utilitarianism.

These three modes of life-expression respectively spring from the three basic qualities of the human soul or self-consciousness, *viz.*, *Jnana*, *Ichchha*, and *Kriya*, the power to know Life, the aspiration to feel Life, and the strength to manifest Life. In Indian philosophical literature the three ways are well known as those of knowledge, devotion and works. These correspond to the realization of the true, the beautiful and the good which the Greeks advocated.

It is true that, in groping towards the Light, the human soul readily and easily takes a special way, particularly in this age of specialists! But such soul treatises as the *Gita* emphasize the fact that the ways are not three but one, and that is a triple way. Now, races of men differ in spiritual gifts and expressions, and racial and national Karma overtaking the individual human soul pulls him away from an all-round progress. The human soul wearing an Indian body forgets its own inherent nature and identifying itself with the racial and national atmosphere calls itself Indian; so in the Occident.

Every true spiritual Teacher tries to awaken the recognition of the soul to its own impersonal, non-sectarian, non-communal nature. In spite of this repeated cyclic effort and impact from the Lodge of Pure Cosmopolitans, men tend towards the personal, for the other "is with difficulty attained by corporeal beings."

Real human progress lies along the impersonal path, *i.e.*, in an all-round culture of the soul. The West cannot gain spirituality from the East by any vicarious process, any more than the East can learn the ways of utility by copying the West. The Westerner as the Easterner is a human soul. He need not go East or West in search of Wisdom; he must turn within — on the north pole of

his brain he will obtain knowledge; in the east of his heart he will find the City of the Lord — Vishnupuram; when harmonious communication is established between brain and heart he will participate in the sacrifice which is active in the whole of Nature, and for which really his strong arms, supple hands and deft fingers are fashioned.

Spiritual Integrity can be fully maintained not only by our rising above the distinctions of caste, creed and community, but by an inner recognition that to learn, to love, and to labour is the triple birthright of the Soul.

KARMA-NEMESIS, or the Law of Retribution — whether Conscious or Unconscious — predestines nothing and no one. It exists from and in Eternity, truly, for it is ETERNITY itself; and as such, since no act can be co-equal with eternity, it cannot be said to act, for it is ACTION itself. It is not the Wave which drowns a man, but the *personal* action of the wretch, who goes deliberately and places himself under the *impersonal* action of the laws that govern the Ocean's motion. Karma creates nothing, nor does it design. It is man who plans and creates causes, and Karmic law adjusts the effects, which adjustment is not an act, but universal harmony, tending ever to resume its original position, like a bough, which, bent down too forcibly, rebounds with corresponding vigour. If it happen to dislocate the arm that tried to bend it out of its natural position, shall we say that it is the bough which broke our arm, or that our own folly has brought us to grief? Karma has never sought to destroy intellectual and individual liberty, like the God invented by the Monotheists. It has not involved its decrees in darkness purposely to perplex man; nor shall it punish him who dares to scrutinize its mysteries. On the contrary, he who unveils through study and meditation its intricate paths, and throws light on those dark ways, in the windings of which so many men perish owing to their ignorance of the labyrinth of life, is working for the good of his fellow-men. KARMA is an Absolute and Eternal law in the World of manifestation; and as there can only be one Absolute, as One eternal ever present Cause, believers in Karma cannot be regarded as Atheists or materialists — still less as fatalists: for Karma is one with the Unknowable, of which it is an aspect in its effects in the phenomenal world.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 304-6

THE VALUE OF ORGANIZATIONS

THE INTIMACY existing between man, the individual, and humanity is but an aspect of that vaster intimacy between him and all Nature, visible and invisible. Individuals and groups of individuals use this indissoluble intimacy for a variety of purposes, in a variety of ways. The friend or lover uses it to exhort one individual; a prophet, to arouse the masses; a priest or politician, to influence the many; a tradesman, to exploit the purchaser. One poet or philosopher may inspire thousands without particular effort and without ever knowing how deep his influence has penetrated. On the other hand, a statesman or even a saint, meaning to do good, often succeeds only in precipitating harm; fine deeds, even those which spring from noble motives, sometimes fail in their intended purpose. Advice given so that good may result may not only confuse the recipient but may even push him into doing wrong.

In the stupendous and baffling task of reconstructing the social order, different schools of educators use this principle of intimacy differently; but most of them seem convinced of the final efficacy of action from without. By legislation, by direct influence exerted over the feelings, by a pull of a muscle or a push to the mind of humanity, reformers expect to restore order here, there and everywhere. Modern knowledge supports the doctrine of reform from without. Belief in that doctrine is so strong that the very existence of its complement is not even suspected. The pivotal doctrine of the ancient spiritual philosophy is that man himself can and should regenerate himself. Unless the pupil is ready to receive instruction, the teacher can do but little. Lasting reform, like true immortality, has to be secured by the individual, not only with the aid received from others, but by self-effort and self-mastery within.

In the modern world-order the individual's place is determined on the principle of egocentricity. Egotism flourishes, and its catch-words are many, *e.g.*, "self-expression," "magnetic personality," "knowing and speaking one's own mind," etc. And universal and impersonal bases of conduct are never thought of. Thus the individual occupies a position detrimental to his own well-being and that of the society to which he belongs.

In our civilization the individual has lost his rightful position; family and state absorb him so completely that he has no time to

ascertain if he can call his soul his own. That organizations are not the end but a means is recognized theoretically; practically, organized religion enslaves the soul; organized education curbs the mind; organized society colours the morals; organized politics dominates the body. The perception and conduct of the individual are, generally speaking, superior to those implicit in the programme of his party, club, or church. He suffers more than he recognizes from the limitations of the organizations to which he gives allegiance.

How to raise the status of the individual? This is the question before modern civilization. Collectivism — socialistic or capitalistic or of any other type — is bound to fail if the individual is not given the place he deserves. On the other hand, individualism as a political philosophy has failed because it has not assigned its proper place and its legitimate value to the organization.

Organizations are necessary. They are but the manifestations of interdependence subsisting between the objects in, and the principles of, Nature. But interdependence is complementary to self-dependence; therefore, the value of any organization depends upon its inherent capacity to arm the individuals it affects with the power to raise themselves individually and with the faculty to enjoy freedom on all planes without injuring other units or groups of units. The moral elevation of the individual by state and society can take place only when the ideals and the programme of the latter energize him to soul-choice, to soul-induced action, to soul-devised effort. A new type of organization is overdue, an organization that — strange paradox — is not an organization, not to be governed by votes and committees and rules, but by wisdom, sacrifice and discipline — a patriarchal order, in which the wise and the wealthy practise greater philanthropy and sacrifice than the ignorant and the poor, while observing the principles of universality and impersonality.

Our civilization needs such organizations — organizations which will free men and women to think for themselves while educating them in the *principles* of free thought, which will not interfere with their character but seek its ennoblement, and which, finally, will train their perceptions to recognize truer values so that the number of individual altruists will increase.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

"Shall man go down or go ahead?" is a question that is exercising many minds today. It reflects an underlying malaise that all is not well with our civilization and our society. Crisis, an overworked word, is bandied about freely. Sisirkumar Ghose, writing in *The Times of India* for September 9, characterizes it as "a crisis in evolution," a turning point of history that should prove momentous. It is what we do to the crisis rather than what the crisis does to us that will decide the fate of man.

If nothing else [states the author] there is the growing unlivableness of life in a plundered planet. Yet even the alarm over pollution hides a lost secret: that Nature and Spirit are one and the same. Maybe we are poised for an Aquarian Age, when all that lives is holy or nothing is. Is the old wound, inflicted differently by western science and religion, about to heal? . . .

Culture against man, an enormous developmentomania stalks the cowed world. Replacing theology by technology, we have entered a new Dark Age. We claim to have conquered Nature, a silly boast. But have we conquered ourselves?

Actually we have built a top-heavy civilization too big for our limited mental and even more limited moral and spiritual capacities. How can we live in a house divided against itself, without justice, freedom, wisdom and charity? The promptings of insight and conscience cannot be indefinitely trifled with. There has not been and cannot be a good life without self-restraint. . . .

The enemy is not without but within. Without inwardness we are doomed. No knowledge can be evil, not even the knowledge of evil. But where is the wisdom, the self-restraint that we have lost in the explosion of expertise? How to be modern as well as man? . . .

The crisis of man is precisely here, that the two eyes, the within and the without, do not match. The human mind cannot be the last word in evolution. Man has to will his own surpassing, to find out the subjective discipline, a whole inner science, to do so. . . .

This is the latent content or thrust of the continuing crisis: without an inner conversion nothing avails the race. Utopia, the just society, is not a place, out there, that some ideology or party boss will build for us in which we shall live (un-)happily ever after. It must be a part of us, a part of our growing being

before it can be reflected in the group life. As within, so without, it is not safe or easy to dislodge that paradigm. The crisis has only one permanent cure: we have to bring the light of higher levels of consciousness in our dark house. . . .

Not Change from Without but Change from Within is what the crisis cries out for. This means a refinement of the instruments of culture, will and motive, a resurrection of the imagination. . . .

A denial of the Higher Self is bound to recoil. The moral of the crisis is fairly clear: without an expansion of awareness, the mind is a reality-killer and destroyer of souls. Reason by itself cannot long maintain the race in its progress, because — let us admit, as we must — reason is not the highest power in man, not the highest possibility. A means and not an end, there are ranges and realities beyond. Reason can serve man and society only if it is a mediator between life and something greater within him. . . .

It is this recovery of non-temporal values that alone can form the basis of a higher order. Seemingly remote, such a radical change remains the only viable solution, the sole possibility for man at the cross-roads. The whole of evolution has been a slow preparation for this breakthrough.

Faced with a crisis which threatens to destroy not only our material civilization, but moreover that which is human in men, we know no need more pressing than that of a change in the mind and the heart of the Race, and that is what Theosophy aims to bring about. The prime duty of every human being is to make clean and clear his own nature, to make it *true*, to make it accord with the great object of all life, the evolution of the Soul. Self-reform through self-energization is the only royal road to salvation. The exhortation of the great Buddha to overcome anger by love, evil by good, greed by liberality, and the liar by truth, is to be applied first and foremost to the work in and on ourselves.

Pico della Mirandola stated in the 15th century: "The human race is somewhere at the midway point of creation, capable of rising towards the angels or of descending towards the beasts." This observation, writes Minhaz Merchant in his article, "The Role of the Scientist in the 'New World'" (*Sunday Mid-day*, August 29),

is especially relevant today "when technological sophistication implies the ability to destroy more people, more quickly, when scientists are being increasingly used as pawns by politicians to serve their own geocentric ends, and when for every scientific discovery used to further human happiness another is employed to destroy it." Truly has it been said that as civilization advances, civilized behaviour regresses. Men and women of the future might be able to travel in outer space or to communicate by interstellar radio waves. yet not know how to handle the emotional, social, cultural and psychological pressures that these technological times will inevitably bring.

Since science cannot exist in a vacuum [writes the author], it is vulnerable to various external pressures. How these can be resisted, and why they must be, is probably more important than individual scientific discoveries themselves.

Science today, more than ever before, needs to draw heavily from the arts and philosophy, without which it will, to use a Cartesian term, "have a head but not a heart." Either, without the other, as we all know, can be pretty inadequate.

The early decades of the 21st Century will probably bring seminal changes. Space travel, superior artificial intelligence and extensive "robotization" will create a wholly new science-social equation. We are now entering an era where science and technology will move so fast that the social sciences, humanities and other non-scientific disciplines will be left far behind. The dangers of this have not yet been fully understood by either scientists or non-scientists. It is high time they are, and corrective measures applied.

At their pinnacle, science and religion (*not rituals*) even meet, complementing each other. Indeed, we can hope that one day science with its logic and underlying precision will evolve its own "religion" — an idea first propounded by Sir Julian Huxley — which would teach that rational thinking and theological philosophy are not necessarily irreconcilable.

Bertrand Russell, the finest example of a mind straddling the worlds of science and philosophy (he was both a brilliant mathematician and a marvellous philosopher), once said: "I think it is the duty of the philosopher to make himself as undistorting a mirror as he can. But it is also his duty to recognize such distortions as are inevitable from our very nature. Of these, the most fundamental is that we view the world from the point of view of the *here* and *now*, not with that large impartiality

which we attribute to the Deity. To achieve such impartiality is impossible for us, but we can travel a certain distance towards it. To show the road to this end is the supreme duty of the philosopher."

To traverse that road is the supreme duty of the scientist.

Dr. Lewis Thomas' close scrutiny of the biological world has led to sagacious observations about human society and behaviour, which he expresses in his writings. His essay, "Altruism: Self-Sacrifice for Others" (*The Saturday Evening Post*, May-June 1982) is a case in point.

Examples of altruism abound in Nature. Not only social insects like the bees and the ants, but also some birds and larger animals are known to sacrifice themselves for the defence and protection of their fellow creatures. It might be argued that this is genetically determined behaviour, while helpfulness, self-sacrifice and altruism among human beings have nothing at all to do with genetics and must be learned from society, acquired by cultures, taught by example. Dr. Thomas, while conceding that this is a valid view, still takes, for the purposes of his essay, the side of the sociobiologists who contend that we get along together in human society because we are obliged by instructions from our genes to be useful to others.

I maintain [he writes] despite the moment's evidence against the claim, that we are born and grow up with a fondness for each other and that we have genes for that. We can be talked out of that fondness, for the genetic message is like a distant music and some of us are hard of hearing. Societies are noisy affairs, drowning out the sound of ourselves and our connection. Hard of hearing, we go to war. Stone deaf, we make thermonuclear missiles. Nonetheless, the music is there, waiting for more listeners.

But the matter does not end with our species. If we are to take seriously the notion that the sharing of similar genes imposes a responsibility on the sharers to sustain each other... then the whole world becomes something to be concerned about on solidly scientific, reductionist, genetic grounds... The human family is only one small and very recent addition to a much larger family in a tree extending back at least 3.5 billion years. Our common ancestor was a single cell from which all subsequent cells derived... Cells like ours appeared in the first marine invertebrates, and these were somehow pieced together

by the joining up and fusion of the earlier primitive cells, retaining the same bloodlines. Some of the joiners, bacteria that had learned how to use oxygen, are with us still, part of our flesh, lodged inside the cells of all animals, all plants, moving us from place to place and doing our breathing for us.

Even if I try to discount the other genetic similarities linking human beings to all other creatures by common descent, the existence of these beings in my cells is enough, in itself, to relate me to the chestnut tree in my backyard and to the squirrel in that tree. . . .

Even if we wanted to, we cannot think the sense of obligation away. It is there, maybe in our genes, or, if not, because we have learned about the matter. Altruism, in its biological sense, is required of us. We have an enormous family to look after, or perhaps that assumes too much, making us sound like official gardeners and zoo keepers for the planet, responsibilities for which we are probably not yet grown-up enough. We need new technical terms for concern, respect, affection, substitutes for altruism. But at least we can acknowledge the family ties and, with them, obligations. If we do it wrong, scattering pollutants, clouding the atmosphere with too much carbon dioxide, extinguishing the thin carapace of ozone, burning up the forests, dropping the bombs, rampaging at large through nature as though we owned the place, there will be a lot of paying back to do and, at the end, nothing to pay back with.

Altruism is based on kinship; and there is a sense in which we are kin to all of life. "By preserving kin, one preserves one's self," is Dr. Thomas' message for us all.

The developing of harmless methods that would take the place of animals in medical experiments has been a long-standing scientific problem. In Britain alone more than 4.5 million scientific tests were carried out last year on living animals, often causing extreme distress and pain. For instance, anti-epilepsy drug trials frequently involve electric shocks given to induce convulsions. (*The Observer*, June 13)

Scientists at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, have reported the successful screening of epilepsy medicines using chemicals derived from the moong bean. Their research, led by Professor John Gilbert, head of the University's pharmacy department, has shown that this common variety of bean is an important source of a special enzyme,

known as nitrophenyl-phosphatase. The activity of this chemical, which also occurs in brain cells, is affected by drugs used to treat epilepsy.

The researchers hope that other scientists will now investigate and confirm the technique, which may also be used one day to screen other drugs, such as anti-depressants.

As already noted in "In the Light of Theosophy" for February 1982, the Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments has launched a major research programme to seek alternatives to animal toxicity tests. This will concentrate on development of tissue cultures which can be used in laboratories to test the effects of new drugs.

The grim, horrifying research practices involving animals are still far too wide-spread, but it is good that the spirit of humanity is beginning to make itself felt with the recognition of animals as sentient beings, not mere experimental subjects. The systematic study of alternative means that would eliminate or reduce animal suffering in laboratory experiments is certainly to be welcomed.

Scientists know that people with emotional troubles beyond their control, such as depression, or bereavement, or feelings of helplessness, develop cancer more often than do those with happier lives. To determine the nature of the link, whether it is depression that causes cancer, or cancer that causes depression, experiments were carried out at the University of Pennsylvania by a team of researchers. Their finding is that uncontrollable stress appears to sabotage the body mechanisms that normally kill malignant cells.

Writing in the April 23 issue of *Science*, the researchers conclude that emotional shocks themselves are not to blame for the development of cancer, but rather lack of control over the shocks. Blood and tissue analyses seem to confirm that feelings of helplessness suppress the immune system.

The study also suggests that those who can overcome shocks by themselves are in a slightly better position to resist cancer than those who have had no shocks at all. The finding, say the researchers, lends itself to an intriguing speculation: prevailing over adversity may in fact improve one's health.

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Statement about ownership and other particulars about the magazine
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