

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

BECOME DEVOTED	397
HUMAN BROTHERHOOD	404
THEOSOPHY AND DOGMA	406
SLEEP AND DREAMS	410
THE RAINBOW BRIDGE	418
QUICK REBIRTH	420
ASPIRATION AND ENVIRONMENT	423
IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	427

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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BECOME DEVOTED

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Without devotion a vast confusion arises within us that has been likened by some to a whirling motion, by others to the inrushing, overpowering flow of turbid waters. (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 76)

Devotion must be obtained, sought after, desired, cultivated. The disciple must learn to do every act with the Divine in view, and the Divine in everything. (*Ibid.*, p. 100)

THE term devotion is variously used. In common parlance a man is devoted to his vocation and even to his recreation; a woman is devoted to her husband and children; a patriot is devoted to his country.

But the term has a more definite connotation in the sphere of religion: a devout man is faithful to his church and creed; thus a churchgoing Christian, or an orthodox Muslim, with the observance of his five-times-a-day prayer and of his *jumma* days, and his Hindu, Zoroastrian or Judaic counterparts, are all said to be men and women of devotion; all such observe the formulary of their respective creeds. Then there are those, cleaving to worldly existence but watchful of the temptations of the flesh and the devil, endeavouring to live their religion, not only in a formal, outer way by the letter of the law, but also inwardly by the spirit thereof, who are respected as truly devout. There is also the other type of sectarians who “give up the world” and pursue a discipline with its ascetic practices and sometimes even with a programme of service and altruism. All such belong to some “holy order,” to some organization with its *yogi* cult or *fakir* tradition,

etc. These also are called men of devotion and the term is used with a special significance and implication. A sectarian who practises set mystical exercises of meditation, prayer and worship, under the aegis of some organized religion, is spoken of as a devotee. The objective of such "devotional" living is the finding of Christ, or union with the Beloved, or the realizing of God—always with the desire of feeling the joy of the Spirit. Such a devotee is the Hindu *yogi* or the Muslim *fakir* or the Christian monk, and, however holy and harmless they may be, they are sectarians still.

These sectarian devotees, rising to pure heights, experience what a Thomas à Kempis or a Kabir has recorded. Such men and women of devotion, or *bhakti*, are not always possessors of knowledge about Deity—they gain in and by feeling and are often satisfied, but their realization is lacunous.

Theosophy is the Science of Devotion. W. Q. Judge in his priceless instructions has emphasized the value of devotion. He reiterates the warning to the aspirant not to be exclusive, but to attempt an all-round development, to acquire knowledge and to do good works, both on the plane of duty and on that of sacrifice; but he constantly emphasizes the importance and value of devotion.

To comprehend adequately his teachings it is necessary to note that he endows the term devotion with a special significance.

In living the higher life the objective should be, if the practitioner is to succeed, the recognition of humanity as a hierarchy of souls, divine and immortal, rooted in and related to sub- and super-mundane hosts of intelligences. To acquire knowledge of why and how this is so, to render help and service to humanity along correct lines, to be devoted to it with Compassion and Sacrifice and to attain Union with it—all these are aspects of the life of true devotion or *bhakti*.

Mr. Judge renders the term *yoga* as devotion; thus in giving names to almost all the chapters of the *Gita* he uses the word "devotion" for the original "*yoga*"—e.g., "Devotion Through Application to the Sankhya Doctrine" or "Devotion Through the Right Performance of Action" for *Karma-Yoga*, and so on. If we turn to the title of the twelfth chapter, which Mr. Judge renders as "Devotion by Means of Faith," literally it ought to be "Devotion by Means of Devotion" (*Bhakti*). This indicates that a life of devotion is a life which aims at Union with the Supreme Spirit; is a life in which *yoga*—the yoke of the lower animal nature—is recognized, its purpose perceived, and union with the Supreme,

transcendent and immanent, is achieved. Thus Mr. Judge's exposition of "Devotion" shows a lofty and sublime way of attainment for the human soul, who raises the animal in him, elevates the human in him and knows the Divine Eternal.

Next, Mr. Judge, being a true Theosophist, has naturally no use for sectarianism in ordinary life, still less in the exercises of the higher life. The object of the true devotee is the One Deity, the Sublime Spirit, the Supreme Self—above the God of any and every sectarian religion—the universal and impersonal Deity. It is necessary for us to distinguish between a Hindu or a Christian devotee, a *bhakta* or a *yogi*, and a Theosophical devotee. But unless the student of Theosophy rises above the dogmas of his creed, the sectarianism of his caste or class, the fetters forged by his nation and race, he cannot become a true devotee in the Theosophical sense. The early steps in unfolding true devotion consist in rising above such divisive forces, in feeling the Divine Presence, knowing the forces which operate in living nature, and realizing the Powers of the Spirit.

Mr. Judge values the *Bhagavad-Gita* as a book of this lofty Devotion—Union—and he instructs the student-aspirant to facilitate his attempt at living the higher life by becoming devoted.

We have culled from *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* by W. Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie some significant passages on this important subject. To begin with, the book lays down this fundamental:

The Western mind may find a difficulty in grasping the idea of devotion to that which is everywhere, for the common acceptation of the term implies an object to which one may devote himself; here, however, devotion is shown to be a quality inherent in the one who perceives and not in any object seen and is therefore applicable universally as well as in particular. (P. 145)

We would say, nowadays, that there is little difference between the so-called educated mind of an Oriental and that of an Occidental; and for the "practical man of affairs" in India, China or Japan there now exists the same difficulty as for the Westerner, to which Mr. Judge refers above.

Next, the book explains the leading thesis on the subject of devotion:

Throughout the dialogue Krishna speaks of the various paths of devotion taken by men. Most of these paths are taken in order to

obtain some coveted reward, such as freedom from rebirth, enjoyment of the individual's ideal of happiness after release from the body; individual salvation. He shows that all these rewards may be obtained by constant effort, but that all are temporary in duration, necessitating a return to earthly existence at some later period, however remote. "The Brahmacharya labouring for salvation," labours for himself alone; he "goeth to the supreme goal," but in that state is beyond the power of helping his fellow men. Although he may remain in that blissful state for an immense period of time, the duties to his fellow men which he set aside in order to obtain salvation for himself, will inevitably place him where those duties have to be faced and fulfilled. The case of such an one is quite different from "those great-souled ones who have attained to supreme perfection" in knowledge and universal duty. (P. 149)

Then the practitioner of devotion should clear his consciousness and impress it with the right doctrine regarding living in the world and fulfilling his Dharma and Karma. Mr. Judge asserts the value of the Religion of Works, or the treading of the Path of Action, *Karma-Marga*, in living the life of devotion. In one place he goes so far as to say that action and devotion can achieve what the learned man does not achieve by his knowledge. The following extract gives a good basis for a quiet reflection:

In history and in our own experience there is abundant evidence that the *Bhagavad-Gita* is right in saying "spiritual knowledge includes every action without exception," and that it is to be attained by means of devotion. Ignorant men who had no access to books have by their inward sense perceived the real truth of things, not only those round about them, but relating to the larger concerns of nature. . . . The reason is that these men have attained to devotion, and thereby cleared away from before the eye of the soul the clouds of sense whose shadows obscure our view of truth. I do not decry or despise learning; it is a great possession; but if the learned man were also a devoted one in the sense of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, how much wider would be the sweep of his intellection no one could calculate. (Pp. 75-76)

But how should a lay student, aspiring to become a devotee, begin? Our textbook advises the development of that attitude of mind which values inner faith, and the first step is overcoming the tendency to doubt.

The perfection of this spiritual knowledge is reached by strengthening faith and expelling doubt through devotion and restraint. Then occurs a verse, almost the same as one in the New Testament, "the man of doubtful mind enjoys neither this world nor the other, nor final beatitude." (P. 110)

Knowledge can be obtained by study; often doubt is the companion of mental laziness. Assimilated knowledge dispels doubt and brings faith to birth. One sure result of a growing understanding of our Theosophical teachings is the ardent wish to act rightly. Between inner motivation and outer behaviour some conflict arises and the practising devotee is given the principle of conduct in the performance of deeds. Commenting on the fifth chapter of the *Gita*, Mr. Judge writes:

In the twelfth verse we find the remedy for the difficulty, as well as the difficulty itself, clearly stated thus: "The right performer of action, abandoning fruit of action, attains to rest through devotion; the wrong performer of action, attached to fruit thereof on account of desire, remains bound." (P. 123)

Here we find the relation between devotion and action. There cannot come to birth the right kind of devotion in the lay student who has to live in the world yet be not of it, unless doubt is dispelled by growing faith, and unless in the performance of duties and sacrifices mental abnegation of the desire for fruits and mental devotion to doing right with detachment is undertaken.

When this is persisted in for a period the student-aspirant is leaving behind the plane of personality and approaching the plane of the Soul, the Watcher, who is called the Victim of our lower self. Unless a proper balance between faith-motivation and detachment in action is established, the student meets an important difficulty.

Mr. Judge, commenting on the second chapter in which *Buddhi-Yoga* is explained, says:

Many would-be occultists, as well as some theosophists, leave out of sight this chapter's teaching. Devotion has no charms for them; they leave it to those who would be good men, no matter what their creed or philosophy, and attention is paid to reading books, either new or old, upon magic, upon ceremonial, or any other of the manifold delusions. Nor is this erroneous practice newly risen. (P. 71)

Unless the "charm" of devotion is felt intelligently, the student is bound to encounter the important difficulty thus explained in our textbook. If the weakness of doubt is not eliminated it arises within the consciousness with great force. The pride and egotism of the personality strengthen that doubt and the student is sent staggering to his fall.

To be a true renouncer of action and a devotee one must put the problem on another plane. On the physical brain plane there is no way of reconciling a contradiction such as appears to exist in the direction to perform actions and yet renounce their performance. It is exactly here that many readers of the *Bhagavad-Gita* stop and are confused. They have for so long been accustomed to thinking of the physical and living in it, the terms used for their thought are so material in their application, that, seeing this contradiction, they say that the book will not benefit them. But considering the difficulty from the view that the real actor is the mind, that acts are not the dead outward expressions of them, but are the thoughts themselves, we can see how one can be both a renouncer and a devotee. (P. 127)

In this dual practice of developing faith and doing deeds with detachment the student learns, if he is assiduous, that "the real actor is the mind." In learning this lesson he distinguishes between the influences generated by his sensorium and the function of the mind gaining more and more of detachment. If he is successful in taking this step and in maintaining the ground gained he finds himself more an intelligence in the world of mind and soul and the unfoldment of his devotion makes him a potent altruist who has calmness of heart and tranquillity of senses. Of this Mr. Judge writes:

Let this right attitude be taken, and what follows is described in this chapter [Chapter IV]:

"A man who perfects himself in devotion finds springing up in himself in the progress of time this spiritual knowledge, which is superior to and comprehends every action without exception."
(P. 115)

Instruction received from books and meetings, from assimilation and application, from reflection and meditation, from companions or in dreams points to the goal or the object of devotion—it "has Me alone as the object." This simple idea is the soul of practice on the path of devotion.

Mr. Judge has thrown light on this stage of the would-be chela's effort to develop devotion. He writes:

This devotion is what is inculcated by the Adepts to their Chelas. It involves a mental abnegation not agreeable to our modern mind, but that must be acquired or real progress is impossible. We must by means of this mental devotion to the Divine, which means abnegation of all the rest, dismiss all results of our actions. It is not ours to say what shall be the result of an action; the Law will bring about a result much better, perhaps, than we had imagined. If the results, if the passing daily circumstances, are not those we expected, then by means of Devotion we accept them as just what the Law intended. But if we fix our desire on accomplishing even a seeming good result, we are bound by that desire, no matter whether our wish is accomplished or not.

This exhortation to devotion is at once the most simple and the most difficult. Some deride it because they want powers and "development"; others because they think it is too simple; but the wise student, even when he cannot at first grasp its meaning, will revolve it in his mind, strive after it, and make it a thing to be attained by him. (Pp. 68-69)

Robert Crosbie throws further light on the obstacles of this stage:

With the "discerning power" there must also be the "power of steadfastness," for unless we are constant in devotion to the higher life, and the ideal of a conscious life in spirit, not matter, we will be recreant to the best we know. (P. 230)

Discernment and steadfastness not only sustain our devotion but strengthen it. The devotee's aim in becoming a pure and blessed channel is the summation. And so it is written:

Krishna puts it clearly enough in the twenty-fifth verse [Chapter V]:

"Effacement in the Supreme Spirit is gained by the right-seeing sage whose sins are exhausted, who hath cut asunder all doubts, whose senses and organs are under control, and *who is devoted to the well-being of all creatures.*"

If the last qualification is absent, then he is not a "right-seeing sage" and cannot reach union with the Supreme. It must follow that the humblest imitator, every one who desires to come to that condition, must try to the best of his ability to imitate the sage who has succeeded. (Pp. 124-25)

HUMAN BROTHERHOOD

THE wheel is a common symbol of the cyclic course of men and of civilizations. The wheel of change on which they all are bound carries them now to heights of glory and anon returns them to the dust. The wheel can symbolize as well humanity itself, of which each unit represents a spoke. The spokes spring all from the same central hub, from the One Life of which all lives are but the radiations. This unity of life, a common source, many admit while yet they cannot see that there must be that also in the present which unites each man to all his fellows. Brotherhood is no dream of visionaries but a fact which each flouts at his peril. Human brotherhood in terms of the wheel of life is the synthesizing rim on which strength and utility depend. A wheel of hub and spokes perhaps could jolt downhill alone, but spokes would snap off, or at least be wrenched out of line, and soon the sorry semblance of a wheel collapse. Useless and purposeless, it obviously could sustain no weight, nor serve to carry forward any load.

There is a great deal of cant about Brotherhood, but the solution of our problems lies only in its practical application. It is not mushy sentimentality that is required, nor hare-brained prating of equality. Man's possession of free will rules out every possibility of equality for humankind. To paraphrase an old proverb, when choice comes in at the door, equality flies out of the window. *Quot causae, tot consequentiae*. But in the smaller human family of every day, brothers are not equals—and yet the spirit of brotherhood is there. The older children in the normal home protect and teach and help the younger, who, in their turn, look up to them and strive to emulate. So, in the larger family of all Humanity, the brotherhood of all must be expressed in reverence and gratitude to our Elder Brothers; respect and good-will to our contemporaries; justice and kindness to those whom we regard as our inferiors.

If the action of one reacts on the lives of all, and this is the true scientific idea, then it is only by all men becoming brothers and all women sisters, and by all practising in their daily lives true brotherhood and true sisterhood, that the real human solidarity, which lies at the root of the elevation of the race, can ever be attained. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 232)

Brotherhood exists as an all-potential fact, but it can become a

potent factor in our lives only as, one by one, we put forth the effort. Now, with the fate of our civilization trembling in the balance, it is no time for pious platitudes. It is imperative that every man who grasps, albeit imperfectly, the great ideal, shall straightway scrutinize all his relationships to see in what respect his practice fails to measure up to his professions. Is he a householder? Does he treat his wife with respect as well as with affection? Is he kind but firm with his children?—Is he an employer? Is he fair and generous to those who work for him? Does he treat servants like automata or brother-men?—Is he a merchant? Does he seek fair profit and no more? Does he refrain from using to his brother's hurt such information as his sharper wits may glean?

Let but a few give thus the wheel of life its proper rim! The force of their example may yet lift our culture and civilization to new heights.

KNOWLEDGE must precede all love; for we could not love anything we had not first known to be good. Nor can we love anything before we conceive of it as an actuality. Our mind is a mirror and model, or to be more specific, an image of real things. Therefore we can love nothing, until we can perceive its existence as reality.

It cannot be denied that knowledge precedes desire. Knowledge is not only concerned with what *is*, but also that which *is not*. For our mind judges things as it perceives them to be; it judges things which are not, in the same fashion. Thus I would say that love presupposes a knowledge of things which are, and a desire of those things which are not or which we lack.

Knowledge without love is of those things which are not beautiful, and therefore not desirable; or of bad and ugly things that are hated; or of things which are neither desired nor hated. All other knowledge of good and beautiful things either has love or desire as its end.

—JUDAH ABRAVANEL

THEOSOPHY AND DOGMA

[Reprinted from *Lucifer*, June 1889.—EDS.]

THEOSOPHY has many aspects, and derives its inspiration not from one source only, not from one teacher merely, or from one set of sacred writings, but from all.

This is a fact which it appears most difficult to impress upon the world at large, and upon the opponents of Theosophy in particular. Men are so accustomed to regulate their opinions by some particular creed or dogma, which they suppose to rest upon some *authority* beyond which there is no appeal, that they cannot grasp the wider aspect of human duty and human destiny which Theosophy presents.

If we examine any of those exclusive and contradictory religious systems on which, in some form or another, men blindly rely, we find at once a broad distinction drawn between believers and unbelievers, between those who are within and those who are without the favour of God, between the lost and the saved. But Theosophy knows no such distinctions as these, neither any difference of race, colour, or creed.

The spiritual sun shines alike on the good and on the evil, and the water of life descends both on the just and on the unjust. It rests with each individual to make the proper use of those spiritual forces which are ever emanating from the Divine source of our being.

We must do this first by faith, and secondly by knowledge. If we have no faith in the divine spark that burns within us, we shall make no efforts to let that spark illumine and guide our life; and on the other hand if we have faith without knowledge, we shall still be groping in the dark, and will surely mistake the false light of some earth-born system of religion, for the divine light that burns only in the innermost sanctuary of our own hearts.

We must use the spiritual forces in nature in the same way that we make use of physical forces. If a man does not work in harmony with the laws of nature, he will find opposition instead of help; if he sows not in accordance with nature's law, he will reap naught but disappointment and pain. We need faith in the first place, faith in the unity and continuity of natural laws, and faith in our own divine nature, but no amount of faith will enable us to produce the desired result if we do not add to faith knowledge. Theosophy carries this principle right up to the highest

spiritual plane, and does not recognize at any point the intervention of an arbitrary personal will, which can make a man other than that which he himself chooses. All are subject to the law of Karma, but Karma is that which each individual makes for himself, it is the law of cause and effect in relation to his own free will.

The will of man is as free as the divine will, and becomes, indeed, that will itself when the man has realized his divine nature, and by crucifying his lower principles has effected the at-one-ment.

It is the most common misconception, then, and the hardest to eradicate, that Theosophy consists in a belief in certain doctrines; that it is in fact nothing more or less than a religious creed.

What then we shall be asked are those doctrines which Theosophists everywhere profess to hold, and which they appear most anxious to teach the world? What is Esoteric Buddhism and the Secret Doctrine, or Reincarnation and Karma, if not a body of doctrines which are intended to supplant other religious creeds and dogmas?

The answer to this is, that these doctrines are the embodiment of certain broad generalizations concerning the history and evolution of humanity; that they are the key which enables us to harmonize certain facts which would otherwise appear isolated and antagonistic. They are in no way analogous to the dogmas and creeds of the religious sects, but answer more nearly to such generalizations of science as the laws of gravity or the conservation of energy. It is not claimed for them that they are necessary articles of belief, neither that they are in their present form accurately and literally true. They are stepping-stones to a higher knowledge of the divine element in human nature, and of the laws physical, psychical, and spiritual by which we are conditioned. If we ask a scientific man what gravity or energy are, he cannot tell us, but no one will deny that the laws which have been formulated respecting their action or manifestation have been most powerful aids in scientific investigations. Now it is precisely thus with the doctrines of Theosophy. Once these doctrines are understood they give a man an immensely wider view of humanity, and raise him above those narrow and limited conceptions of God and his dealings with individuals, of which so many contradictory assertions are made by various religions, and the innumerable sects into which they are split up.

What practical relation then has Theosophy to our everyday life? We reply that practical Theosophy is identical with practical

religion. It comes from the heart and not from the head. It is the spontaneous love for one's fellow creatures, which—taking possession of a man, leads to noble acts of self-sacrifice; to right action done simply because it is right, and without any reference to the merit of the act, or any thought of recognition or reward.

Theosophy aims at nothing short of perfection of character; but character as expressed in outward acts is the result of an inward condition. The root of action lies deep down in the inner consciousness. It is the man's thoughts, desires, and innermost convictions which give rise to action. Act does not produce character, is not even a true indication of it, for a right action may be done from a wrong motive. Act is the result of character.

Right action must be based upon right thought, right motive, and right knowledge, and it is just here that the study of the doctrines of Theosophy is of such value to those who are seeking for firm ground to stand upon amid all the conflicting dogmas and controversies of the age, for it provides a basis which is independent of any religious system, and yet includes them all in their inner or esoteric meaning. There is not much difficulty in distinguishing between a right and a wrong action *per se*, but there is a great difference between the man who is merely moral through habit or temperament, and one who is actively beneficent because of the love for humanity which animates him. Moreover there will be a great difference in the actions of a man who believes in the doctrine of original sin and atonement, and one who believes in reincarnation and Karma.

Theosophy therefore, as a system, seeks to influence men by giving them a right basis of thought. It seeks to counteract, on the one hand, the materialistic and atheistic teachings of modern science, and on the other hand, the narrow exclusive and demoralizing teachings of dogmatic and formal religion.

But Theosophy as a system is something more even than this. Theosophy does not seek merely to destroy superstition, but it seeks to build up a new edifice constructed of those very materials which have been so perverted in their uses by centuries of priestcraft and ecclesiasticism. Theosophy is based upon a deeper wisdom, a more interior meaning of those sacred books of all nations, which form the foundation of so many religious systems.

Each one must verify the doctrines of Theosophy for himself, and in doing so will probably find new light and fresh inspiration in those particular records which he has been accustomed to regard as the basis of his faith; and he will also be able to recognize the same meaning in the sacred books of other faiths, which

hitherto he may have been accustomed to regard as "heathen," and as being contradictory and opposed to his own.

Theosophy, then, has two main aspects, the theoretical and the practical. These two must harmonize: practice must be based upon theory, and if the theory has been rightly understood, the practice can hardly fail to be in accord with it. Theosophy offers a motive and a moral stimulus free from fear, superstition, or lip worship, but full of divine love. It is practice that makes a Theosophist, and not profession. The Theosophical Society as a body and an organization seeks to teach the theory, while each individual member must practise so much of the theory as he has been able to assimilate, in his everyday life, in his relations with his fellow men, and in his inmost thoughts and desires.

Standing free from fear or superstition, let each one make obeisance only to the dim star that burns within. "Steadily, as you watch and worship, its light will grow stronger. Then you may know you have found the beginning of the way. And when you have found the end its light will suddenly become the infinite light."

—WILLIAM KINGSLAND

To hunt any animal, for the love of hunting, for the love of seeing it gradually falter, stumble, and die an agonizing death, is cruel. . . . It is no use to say, in excuse, that life is cruel. To dare to propose such truisms is sheer effrontery. But that is no argument for extending its cruelty. If we allow ourselves to quote the cruelty of life as an extenuation for all the abuses and sorrows of human society, we immediately adopt an attitude of despair. The doctor who is fighting disease would throw his tubes out of the window, the sociologist who is fighting slums would draw the blinds and stay at home, the educationist who is fighting ignorance would take down a novel from his book shelves and lose himself in an unreal world.

—BEVERLEY NICHOLS

SLEEP AND DREAMS

SLEEP and dreams are among the commonest experiences of human life, yet, like so many other common things, the prevailing ignorance about these subjects has so far been stupendous. Though controversy about the true meaning of dreams has raged for centuries, until quite recently they were not considered suitable subjects for scientific study.

According to ancient Oriental psychology, to understand sleep and dreams we must have a clear conception of what man is. This is necessary for knowing who or what it is that dreams; how dreams are caused; how many varieties of dreams there are; what the real meaning of dreams of various kinds is; whether there is a science whereby the dream state can be used for practical purposes of the spiritual life. The first idea that we must grasp is this: that man, the self-conscious, thinking intelligence who speaks of himself as "I," is a distinct entity. I who think with the help of my mind, I who feel through the help of my emotions, I who sense with and through the help of my senses and sense-organs, am a distinct entity who uses these instruments which are ever changing. This consciousness manifests different inherent properties of itself at different times. In reference to the body, it is called waking consciousness. We are all at this moment in the condition of waking consciousness; but even while awake we sometimes enter into that condition of consciousness which is spoken of as the state of brown study; while at other times, though awake, we go into a condition of day-dreaming, fancy, inattentiveness, and yet our senses and brain are not asleep.

As our body goes to sleep, our consciousness enters into a condition of waking-dreaming. Consciousness works in and through the brain; it is not a product of the brain, but uses and controls the brain. Its own inherent condition produces certain effects on the brain, and that something inherent in consciousness produces the various states of consciousness. Our consciousness at the present moment is fully awake, that is, it is using the brain deliberately, consciously, and its chief characteristic is the characteristic of attention. At the present moment, as self-conscious beings, we are fully alert in our brains, are following the line of argument presented, and choose and pick and analyse what can be right, what wrong, what is plausible, and what is not plausible. What is the condition of that consciousness, the "I," which is thinking now, which is feeling now, which is analysing now, when the body is asleep? It must be in some kind of a condition,

and all of us pass through it night after night. What is this dreaming consciousness of which we have experience? Is it entirely a condition of the brain? In other words, are all dreams the direct product of the process which takes place in the brain which is asleep, in the body which is sleeping?

We know there are certain dreams which are the direct result of the processes taking place in the sleeping body. Most nightmares are the result of the activity of the brain, sometimes affected by bad or incorrect digestion, and there is a variety of dreams that are not nightmares but that are the result of brain processes. But all of us have had from time to time dreams which cannot be traced merely to the activity in the sleeping body and brain. If we take into account that as self-conscious beings we live a life independent of the body, we begin to see an avenue opening out before us for the understanding of dream phenomena which would otherwise remain inexplicable.

Let us proceed on the basis that there is in us a consciousness that functions apart from the body. In this light, let us examine the phenomenon of sleep, for all dreams are related to it. The general notion about sleep is that when the body gets exhausted, it becomes numb, kind of paralysed, and sleep comes over it. But we must get at the cause—why does the body get fatigued? In gaining the answer to this question we learn how we dream. Theosophy teaches that the sleep of the body results from the struggle between the life forces that flow into the body and the body's response to these forces. At the present moment the life forces are flowing into us; they have been flowing into us from the moment we woke up in the morning; we have been saturating ourselves with the vitality of these life forces. Our brain gets so saturated after a certain number of hours that it is not able to make a response to the life forces which come to it through the sense organs. The waking state is the result of the capacity of the consciousness to respond to the impressions that come to it on the plane of senses and brain. When the body is fully saturated with life forces, it becomes temporarily numb, and time is required to assimilate the forces which it has absorbed. That accomplished, it is once again in a position to absorb more and therefore wakes up. That is why babies sleep for longer hours than we do. What fatigues a baby although it hardly exerts its limbs is the life forces. In the baby body the senses are not able to respond to the life forces as they are able to respond in a grown body.

The whole of the brain is active in waking consciousness. The

brain goes to sleep by degrees and in parts and sets the consciousness free, and he who was awake in the body is awake still, but has entered into a condition of dream-consciousness. When in waking consciousness our attention is relaxed and we fall into a condition of brown study, a certain portion of the brain, other than that with which we reason and think, begins to operate. Sleep is a similar process; our thinking, active brain stops functioning and another part of it takes command and causes certain kinds of dreams. All our nerves are continually receiving and transmitting messages from and to this portion of the brain, though the consciousness which we speak of as the "I" is temporarily away from the body. This portion of the brain registers all the messages that come from all parts of the body. This same portion of the brain sometimes receives impressions from the consciousness—the "I"—and transmits to it its own messages. These messages both ways are registered in this portion of the brain and are remembered in the waking state of consciousness.

This double phenomenon is responsible for at least three common kinds of dreams. First, those caused in the dreaming-brain by the action of the body and its various organs; second, those caused in the dreaming-brain by the impressions made on it by the dreaming-consciousness of the "I"; third, a mixture of these two. Most of our confused dreams belong to this category.

Something else happens to the consciousness that is set free. This consciousness is a ray of the larger consciousness which we call our Ego-consciousness. This Ego-consciousness which is spiritual is all the time active. The personal consciousness which we speak of as the "I," is the personality which is the reflection of the real "I," the Ego. This personal "I"-consciousness is either waking or in a dream condition in reference to the body; when in sleep it is set free by the body, it comes into a closer relationship with the Soul or Ego-consciousness. When the disturbances in the body are at a low ebb, the dreamer is not disturbed and turns more within himself. When the sleeping body enters the state of dreamless sleep, that is, when even the dreaming brain has come to a low ebb in its activities so that it does not any more affect the consciousness, the sleeper goes into a condition which we must now examine.

When the body is about to fall asleep, the consciousness is still in contact with the body; in the early stages of sleep, though out of the body, the consciousness is affected by the body and affects it in turn. What takes place in the body is impressed upon it. What we are brooding over affects the brain. Thus we get two

distinct classes of dreams.

One is caused by the automatic activity of the body and the brain, irrespective of the "I"-consciousness. The "I"-consciousness, when it returns on waking, seizes what the brain has been thinking, feels what the brain has been feeling, identifies itself with the brain activity—and we have one kind of dreams which we remember on waking. They are not the activities of the "I"-consciousness, but the activities of the brain and the body, apart from the "I"-consciousness.

The second kind of dreams are cogitations, image-makings, reflections of the "I"-consciousness apart from the body. Something has been going on within the consciousness; that is impressed on the brain. Two sets of forces get mixed up—the automatic activity of the brain, the activity of the dreamer. Thus we have those curious dreams of which people say, "I do not understand what I dreamt; I cannot make head or tail of it." To take an example: Suppose something happened to us in the course of the day which is worrying us now; it lingers at the back of our mind, and, as we go on with the day's activities, those worrying thoughts come up over and over again; images of the experience pull us back, we become inattentive to what is in front of our brain, and there is a jumble. Thus also are incoherent dreams.

What are coherent dreams? Imagine the body in a fully healthy condition. The brain receives a clear-cut impression of the brooding taking place in the dreamer, in the self-conscious "I," and we have a clear-cut dream. It would indicate what we would do, or how we would feel, or in what manner we would think, unaffected by the body, and that does not always mean that we will be better without the discriminating and without the sense of inertia which the body exerts. When the consciousness is in that condition, any disturbance in the body brings it back to the body, and we suddenly awake. On the other hand, this "I"-consciousness, this dreamer, is energized, affected, by its own spiritual Ego-consciousness. All those rare and wonderful dreams which psychology is not able to explain fully, become clear in the light of the teachings of Theosophy. When the body is quiet and has set us free, when the senses do not hinder, and when we are turned within ourself, we are drawn towards the parent source, our own higher consciousness.

All of us are not able to bring back the memory of our nightly Ego-contact in the dreamless state because of the condition of our brains. The chaotic condition of the physical brain makes it impossible for it to be fully impressed; but something else hap-

pens, and that experience all of us must have had. While the dreamer is learning from his higher consciousness, he projects the gist of his experience on to his brain; and it falls on the brain like a distant shadow. The brain catches what it can and still another kind of dream has resulted. In catching it, the dream-brain uses the language of symbols and emblems, which the "I"-consciousness does not understand, but which with proper and painstaking analysis each one can ultimately decipher for himself.

Something else happens to the "I"-consciousness. It goes into a condition which can best be described as unison with the Ego-consciousness. The very reaching of this state depends on the nature, moral and mental, of the "I"-consciousness, and it has intimate relation to the wakefulness and growth of the Ego itself; for there are child-Egos as there are grown-up Egos. Having touched that highest state—it is very difficult to bring back the memory of that to ordinary minds and brains—the "I"-consciousness returns by the way it had gone; it comes from its condition of unison or dreamlessness or dreaming into the condition of waking-consciousness. Let it be understood, however, that the "I"-consciousness touches the dream, the dreamless sleep and the unison states in terms of its own contents. How long or short our "I"-consciousness abides in these states depends on the nature, the disposition, the character of the "I." Materialists and sceptics devoid of all idealism do not touch the depths of the dreamless-sleep state, much less enjoy the benefits of the unison-state. The mentally lazy and all those who are limited by the life of the senses and emotions often fail to rise to the dreamless state, and so on.

Dreams can, therefore, be classified as follows: (1) automatic activity of the brain; (2) automatic activity of the brain which affects the "I"-consciousness; (3) its activity which affects the brain; (4) activity of the Ego which affects the "I"-consciousness only, and (5) through the latter touches the brain, which weaves a tale in the language of symbols; (6) high and spiritual dreams, the memory of the contact, the unison, the yoga, between ourselves and the higher spiritual consciousness which we really are, and which has also its correspondence in our waking consciousness, namely, in the deep creative activity of meditation; and (7) dreams which are harbingers of good tidings, which come as a gift from Those whose mission of mercy and love is to help and bless. Of that the profane world knows naught.

Can we in any way regulate the process of dream activity? Yes, says Theosophy. Train the body and the brain in the ways of

quietude, of being collected and calm, so that when the "I"-consciousness has gone, it behaves as it ought to behave. Let the controller rule the body, set the pace in quality and quantity for the automatic activity of the body. The training of the body, its senses and sense-organs, the training of the brain in alertness and attention, all assume importance.

The "I"-consciousness, once freed of the trammels of the body, has great advantages, but there is one grave disadvantage. On the one hand, the inertia inherent in the body acts as a check, which gone, the lower tendencies of the personal "I" can have full play. On the other, in waking consciousness the higher or Ego-consciousness has a better hold on his ray, the personal "I." During the sleep of the body his voice is not heeded even to the extent that the waking-consciousness does—such are the illusions and powers of the perfidious regions of the dream world.

How shall we use this knowledge on the subject of sleep and dreams? If it is a fact, and it is a fact, that we have the higher spiritual consciousness, then we must try to handle the personality in a definite way. We should obtain in our waking consciousness the freedom of action for that higher spiritual Ego which is our real Self. We must get out of the habit of thinking that we are the lower self, and that our higher Self is different, somewhere far away; get into the habit of recognizing ourselves as spiritual, as the higher, affecting, energizing, embodying the lower self. At the present moment we go along one line of thought, feeling and action without ascertaining whether these are the lines of thought, feeling and action that the spiritual consciousness, the Ego-consciousness, adopts. We do not bring this "I"-consciousness in line with the higher spiritual consciousness.

How does this "I"-consciousness work? Who guides it at the present moment? Mostly our senses. Outside impacts drag us down into a particular line of thought, of feeling, of action, and the higher consciousness is helpless, more or less. That is the condition of a large majority of people; but, by training, the higher consciousness can control the personality and make it move as we please. How can we get at that consciousness of the Soul? The laws of the Science of the Soul are as definite and precise as are the laws of any physical science; and the relationship which exists between the personal consciousness and the Ego-consciousness, once understood, enables us to get energized in our lower consciousness by the help of the higher. Suppose we find the way whereby the lower "I"-consciousness thinks as

the higher consciousness is thinking, feels as the higher consciousness is feeling, is willing to act as the higher consciousness would act, there would be altogether a different kind of life for the personality. There would be no action impelled by the senses only. All life would be self-engendered, all actions would be Ego-born. There are certain actions and no others, certain feelings and no others, certain thoughts and no others, which are those of the Ego, and they are entirely spiritual. The Ego is not interested in anything that is non-spiritual. All the emotions that it can express are rooted in the great emotion of Compassion, all its activities are for the energizing of its personalities. If all our actions were of the nature of sacrifice, all our love was of the nature of wisdom, all our knowledge was of the nature of strength spiritual, we would be living the life of the Ego. Does our knowledge give us spiritual strength? The lower knowledge makes us dependent on books, encyclopaedias and what not. The lower kind of love is not wise; the quality of wisdom is absent from it. The lower kind of actions are not sacrificial, but bind us to the objects of possession and cause sorrow. The knowledge which is power, the love which is wisdom, the action which is sacrifice—those are the marks of Ego-consciousness functioning in the personality. Such function would transform the brain, and there would ensue that phenomenon of which the *Gita* speaks: "What is night to those who are unenlightened is as day to his gaze; what seems as day is known to him as night, the night of ignorance."

From the point of view of the higher consciousness we are dreaming now. We are all in a condition which is shadowy. Some lives are nightmares, some lives are inchoate and incoherent dreams, some lives are pleasant and fanciful dreams, but the life of the spiritual consciousness is purposeful, and transforms the brain, the senses, the feelings and thoughts into energies and instruments of the higher consciousness. To so energize and train the personal consciousness that it becomes self-luminous, enlightened, that it does not shine by borrowed light but by the inherent light of its own Parent Soul, that would make births and deaths illusions. That is *yoga*, union with the Lord. There is no other Lord save our own Higher Self; and that is the real practice; not breathing, sitting in postures and gazing at the tip of the nose. The real spiritual development begins when we regard ourselves as immortal Egos, whose actions are sacrifices, whose knowledge is power, whose love is wisdom, and that makes the heart enlightened, the brain sympathetic, which is a very differ-

ent thing from having a sympathetic heart and an intelligent mind. The difference between the good man and the spiritual man lies in the fact that the good man has a sympathetic heart and an intelligent mind, but the spiritual man has a compassionate intelligence and an enlightened heart. In the case of the latter, mercy and justice are one.

Therefore it is that the Great Ones are spoken of as Masters of Wisdom and of Compassion. They are beings who have enlightened hearts and sympathetic intelligences. They are in full waking consciousness of the real kind, above the conditions of dreams and death, sleep and waking. The practice of attaining that begins with the assumption of our rightful heritage as immortal beings, our efforts to transform the personality so that through it streams forth the radiance, the glory, and the light of the Self. That is the spiritual life. That can come to us as an experience every day when the body is asleep and the dreamer goes Home, however momentarily. And if we would train our senses, feelings, emotions, thoughts, we would see in sleep not the refreshment of the body only, but the real refreshment and recreation of the Soul, who, in contact with its Parent Ego, gains additional knowledge which cannot be gained in the world of mortality, and returns with that to transform the world of mortality into an immortal world. That is the teaching of Theosophy, and sleep, dreams, death, all become but instruments, wonderfully useful instruments, of self-conscious beings that we are, if we would intelligently use all our faculties and powers by the right understanding of this great master-philosophy.

IF we are to have vision, we must learn to participate in the object of the vision. The apprenticeship is hard.

—ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

THE RAINBOW BRIDGE

ALL sacred teachings have a present and immediate use and application. By such they pass beyond the superficialities of intellect into the heart as an *awakened* or living reality within us.

The post-mortem states, for example, may be regarded as instructions in practical occultism. They indicate the steps whereby the aspirant may gain control of his Kamic and personal nature. That which occurs *involuntarily* after the death of the body, may be accomplished voluntarily during bodily existence.

There are seven classes of Elementals, with four of which we deal incessantly in every motion of our four lower "principles." We call them "principles" because they are our basis of action in "matter." But in themselves they are the four Elements of "earth, water, air, and fire." There are three higher Elements or classes of Elementals which compose our Spiritual form as the exact antithesis of the fourfold human body of "matter." Our "Mind" is neither the one form nor the other, but a temporary combination of the two.

Call this "mind" the rainbow bridge, the *Antaskarana*, the gleam of give-and-take between the Father and the Son, if the personal man runs not loose and astray into material pollution. The seven steps or worlds of *Antaskarana* are avenues of ascent for the pure in heart; while, as a "highway of sensations, the rude arousers of Ahankara," it presents a duality, a puzzle truly for him who refuses to die before death, who refuses to attenuate, transform, or sacrifice those life-atoms devoted to name and form.

Reducing these seven steps to a "pair of opposites," we see that both Spirit and Matter are actively present in the living man, who identifies himself, now with the one, now with the other. One might call humanity an *equilibrized* kingdom of light and darkness, representing spirit's utmost descent into matter—the turning point. The seven, or the two, are, in each of us, "in coadunition but not in consubstantiality." During life, each individual man deals with both the Spiritual and the Material elements of all Life. He is always Perceiver, sometimes Perceiver and Creator, sometimes Perceiver and Creature of his own "creations"—all dependent on his "will and yoga." After death, and until a new birth, he is wholly the Creature, the sufferer or enjoyer of his own creations, in both cases merely the passive Perceiver. Here we have the calamity of him who refused to *live* during life, who having wasted the golden vessel of heavenly fire must meet involuntarily after death what he should have met during life.

In *The Voice of the Silence*, one of the instructions reads: "Before thou standest on the threshold of the Path; before thou crossest the foremost Gate, thou hast to merge the two into the One and sacrifice the personal to Self impersonal, and thus destroy the 'path' between the two—*Antaskarana*." In a footnote, *Antaskarana* is defined as "the lower *Manas*, the Path of communication or communion between the personality and the higher *Manas* or human Soul. At death it is destroyed as a Path or medium of communication, and its remains survive in a form as the *Kamarupa*—the 'shell'." To destroy the "path" between the personal and the Self impersonal would, therefore, mean the killing out of desire and of the mere thirst for sentient existence. The effect of such action while in the body is to dissipate the material for the formation of a post-mortem *Kamarupa*.

Occultists explain *Antaskarana* as the *path* or bridge between the Higher and the Lower *Manas*, the divine *Ego*, and the *personal* Soul of man. It serves as a medium of communication between the two, and conveys from the Lower to the Higher *Ego* all those personal impressions and thoughts of men which can, by their nature, be assimilated and stored by the undying Entity, and be thus made immortal with it, these being the only elements of the evanescent *Personality* that survive death and time. It thus stands to reason that only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man, can testify in Eternity to his having lived. (*The Theosophical Glossary*)

As Arjuna, we find ourselves caught in the great war between what we "have been" and what we "would be." But likewise with Arjuna we have that blessed gift of sacred Instructions given us for use in the *present*: the war itself. This line of golden thought speaks a dual language befitting our equilibrated life of light and darkness. By it we are taught of man and Man, of self and Self, of the Eye and Heart. The first will enable us to purify, elevate, and strengthen our personal nature to the point that *light shines through*. Then the Heart Doctrine becomes more than a dream and a vision; it becomes an Ariadne's thread into the world of *Synthesis*:

All this universe is pervaded by me in my invisible form; all things exist in me, but I do not exist in them.

This soul is the Self of all that is, this is the Real, this the Self.
That thou art.

QUICK REBIRTH

STUDENTS of Theosophy, when they study the post-mortem states and come across statements such as these: "Life is better than death, for death again disappoints the Self; death is *not* the great informer or producer of knowledge"; or when they learn that *Devachan* or the heaven world is a state of illusion, in which the soul dreams its dreams for a period lasting on an average from 1000 to 1500 years, sometimes ask: "What can be done to shorten the *Devachanic* interlude so as to hasten the process of fulfilling our mission on earth?" Nothing can be done once the curtain is dropped and death has taken place, but a good deal can be done now and here in embodied existence, by forming the necessary desire-aspiration and by right endeavour.

These words of H.P.B.'s contain an important hint: "All workers for the Lodge, no matter of what degree, are helped out of *Devachan* if they themselves permit it." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 162)

What entitles one to be called a worker for the Great Lodge of Masters? There has to be the quality of one-pointed devotion, which not only enables but compels the aspirant, from within himself, to serve the Cause of Masters, which is the Cause of Brotherhood—*i.e.*, the Brotherhood of Humanity for which the Lodge of Brothers, who are all of one mind, one will, one aim and one purpose, stands as an example and a focus. This Great Lodge labours for human brotherliness on earth broadly speaking in a twofold fashion: first, by sending from time to time a suitable Messenger, a Saviour-Teacher, to our world to instruct and stir up our minds and hearts; and, secondly, by influencing and guiding individual human souls. To be a "worker for the Lodge" implies something very definite. It means a firm faith in and devotion to the Great Gurus, and strenuous labour to further Their Work by studying, applying and promulgating the Secret and Sacred Knowledge which is in Their custody. This point is being stressed because H.P.B.'s words quoted above are apt to be taken lightly by all and sundry.

So we need, first, to clarify our motive for wanting to shorten our *Devachanic* stay. Is it a strong aspiration for the uninterrupted service of our fellow men, according to the plan and programme of the Masters, that motivates us, or is it our own personal progress that matters most to us, so that we may free ourselves from the round of births and deaths as quickly as possible and enjoy the peace and bliss of *Moksha*—Liberation? Unless our motive is pure and unselfish—to live to benefit mankind—there is very

little hope of our being helped out of *Devachan*.

Right motive has to be combined with right preparation. Certain faculty-virtues have to be developed, the most important of which is adaptability. Quick reincarnation implies that one must become more and more ready to deal with any type of body and environment. This power (adaptation in modern terms) has to be developed by study and exercise. One requires love which understands and an application of the Aphorisms on Karma to adapt oneself to persons and circumstances. Again, to develop adaptability, *Vairagya*—higher indifference or true resignation—is needed. One has to be prepared for all eventualities: a rich person may find himself reduced to poverty, or *vice versa*; a Hindu accustomed to the Indian ways of life may be reborn in highly Westernized surroundings; one used to a male body may have to take rebirth in a female body. New physical surroundings raise obstacles, and frustration and failure result unless adaptability has been developed.

We have to learn to adapt ourselves not only to the outer environment but also to our inner environment—our character and inner make-up. To change our own inner attitude to life, in terms of our increasing knowledge and experience, we require mental adaptability; otherwise we shall find ourselves unable to get out of our old mental grooves and develop breadth of vision.

The unfolding of the faculty of adaptability is useful and desirable also for other reasons than *Devachanic* preparation. On the path of discipleship all kinds of tests and trials have to be encountered, and these cannot be passed successfully without the aid of this power. All tests are but aspects of the One Test—the test of the disciple's power to adapt himself to his environment. In the higher stages of discipleship, when the chela has seen his Master "face to face," he is sent wherever the call of service is heard. Therefore the probationer has to get ready to adapt himself to all climates, psychic conditions and races of men, otherwise he cannot help in the Service of Humanity planned by the Masters.

Every aspiring neophyte develops this quality slowly and gradually as he goes on with the living of the higher life. We are called upon to *hasten* the process of mastering our environment. Ordinary human life has its own speed; for neophytes and chelas the speed increases.

Another factor that would facilitate quick reincarnation is the assimilation of experiences now and here in incarnated existence. For average individuals this assimilation of the food of experience takes place in *Devachan*. It is one thing to pass through an ex-

perience; it is altogether another thing to assimilate that experience—to learn its lesson and make it part and parcel of ourselves—just as the food we eat has to be assimilated before it can be of any benefit to the body.

Also, the renewal of spiritual stamina has to take place during embodied existence if the period of rest and repose the soul enjoys in *Devachan* is to be shortened. Through self-induced and self-devised ways and means of discipline and service a superior quality of *Prana* flows into the disciple. Right motive, ideation and imagination are a help.

To have a deeper insight into this subject student-aspirants need to examine *de novo* the whole process of bodily death and post-mortem states. It is not enough to repeat to oneself, “I want to be helped out of *Devachan*.” One requires an inner clarification of the aspiration with the help of the knowledge of why and what *Devachan* is and how to facilitate its shortening.

EVER present and operant is *That* which never becomes a party in one's guilt, conceives never an evil thought, consents never to an unrighteous deed, never sins; but holds itself impeccable, immutable, personally holy—the Conscience—counsellor, comforter, judge, and executor of the spirit's decrees. None can flee from the spirit's presence, nor hide himself. The reserved powers are the mighty ones. Side by side sleep the Whispering Sisters and the Eumenides. Nor is Conscience appeased till the sentence is pronounced. There is an oracle in the beast, an unsleeping police; and ever the court sits, dealing doom or deliverance. Our sole inheritance is our deeds. While remorse stirs the sinner, there remains hope of his redemption. “Only he to whom all is one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy true peace and rest of spirit.” None can escape the *Presence*. The *Ought* is everywhere and imperative. Alike guilt in the soul and anguish in the flesh affirm His ubiquity. Matter—in particle and planet, mind and macrocosm—is quick with spirit.

—AMOS BRONSON ALCOTT

ASPIRATION AND ENVIRONMENT

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IT has been wisely remarked that the old adage, "The truth lies between two extremes," does not necessarily imply that it lies exactly in the *middle*. That can only be the case where the exaggerating and the underrating have been precisely equal, which can very seldom occur, if ever. The truth will generally be found to lie much nearer to one extreme than to the other, according to the preponderance of abuse over disuse or the reverse.

With regard to the subject of this paper there are two diametrically opposed schools of thought. One asserts that man is in the most absolute sense the *creature* of his surroundings, that character is merely a mechanical product of circumstance. The other declares that by subtle but invariable laws man is the *creator* of his surroundings, that circumstance is merely the fruit of character. The truth lies between the two extremes, but much nearer to the latter than to the former.

Undoubtedly we are influenced, and that most powerfully, by our environment. Until we begin to think in earnest, we have no idea of the extent to which our thoughts, feelings, likes and dislikes are coloured by the conditions of our birth, training, and position in the world. Not one man in a million is able even by the most strenuous and prolonged effort to free himself entirely from these invisible chains, or so to "purge the eyes with euphrasy and rue" that he can see Truth in what Bacon calls a "dry light." On the mists of our passions and affections the white rays of the absolute break and disintegrate, and we see, not the pure Eternal Light, but the rainbow; beautiful, indeed, but *partial*.

(I do not forget or ignore the action of Karma. The environment with which each one starts in every fresh incarnation is determined by the net product of acquired tendencies—that is, by "character"; only modified by the national and cyclic Karmas. But the self-causation of our position in the world does not affect the fact that circumstances have a powerful influence in the further development of "character," which is all for which I am contending.)

Nevertheless, that character moulds circumstance is equally patent. Books of "Good Advice to Young Men" (who are somewhat advised to distraction, by the way) abound in instances. It would be a waste of precious space to quote. Everyone knows, or at any rate has read, of scores of such cases.

Are then the two forces equal? Natural Philosophy teaches that

when two opposed forces are equal the result is a deadlock. One of the two must be the stronger. And the Higher Wisdom asserts most positively that the power of aspiration excels the power of environment. For the former is of the spirit, Divine; the latter of the body, Human. The one has the *vis inertiae* of dead matter ("dead," that is, relatively to our normal perceptions); the other the creative energy of the One-Life.

Very subtly does the higher force work, as is evidenced by the fact of its mere existence being so often denied; but so, for that matter, does the law of electrical affinity, which no one dreams of doubting. That the magnet, plunged into a heap of mingled sawdust and iron filings, should draw to itself the latter, is as mysterious every whit as that the spirit should draw to itself those material surroundings which best suit its present state. There are modes of action of which our physical senses can take no cognizance. But they are none the less real.

It should be observed that this force is what we call "moral" rather than what we call "mental." It is *Aspiration* which influences environment, rather than *Intellectuality*. A man's surroundings will be shaped more by his character than by his abilities. Doubtless the latter have much to do with the matter; they exert an influence analogous to the power of his muscles on a lower plane. But it is the former which is the chief factor in the equation of life.

"Like to Like!" it is the law of the universe. Our desires, impulses, longings, aspirations, if they do not influence the material world directly, do so indirectly, by constantly generating a stream of psychic or soul forces, which act upon the objects of the bodily senses. Too abstruse in its undercurrents to be easily traced, it can be seen at work plainly enough in some of its phases. That we seize or let slip this or that opportunity as it comes, depends very largely upon the frame of mind in which we are at the time. To the soul that aspires, circumstances are stepping-stones; to the soul that creeps, they are hindrances.

The application of this truth to the social life must for brevity's sake be left untouched, beyond the remark that the paramount aim of all reformers should be the inspiring of a better spirit. The *paramount*; not, of course, the *only*. It is true that little higher development is possible for those whose lives are one long drudgery, whose homes are kennels and whose bodies mere machines. Material progress and moral or spiritual must advance *pari passu*, with equal steps. But the material improvements must be regarded as a means, not as an end. And it must never be

forgotten that the strongest incentive to a change of surroundings is a change of spirit.

But it is in its application to the individual life that this truth is of special interest and value. How common is dissatisfaction with one's lot, not because it is particularly hard, but on account of the limitations which it imposes (or seems to impose) on one's aspirations! How frequent the cry, "O that I had more leisure, more wealth, a different station, more congenial occupations and surroundings! O that I had room to spread my wings! How I would *then* develop myself and grow like to the unattainable Ideal!" Aye? That depends. It is one of the saddest but not least unfrequent sights of life to see aspirations wither away in the very atmosphere for which they craved, it being obtained; to note how the man who, poor, longed for wealth that he might have opportunities of unfolding his higher nature, rich, forget all dreams and become like Bunyan's man with the muckrake. "Set a beggar on horseback and he will——!" Why? Because he is still a "beggar" at *heart*. Only the *clothes* are changed; the *man* remains the same. And as a rule it may be safely prophesied, that those who have so little knowledge of themselves and of the meaning of Life as to sigh idly for an Eldorado in which they might be what they have made up their minds they cannot be where they are, will not know how to use that for which they long, if Fortune is cruel enough to answer their prayers.

And anyway, it is beginning at the wrong end. "First deserve, then desire." Though the restrictions be inseparable from material conditions, though the injustice of others may surround us with barriers in which the aspirations cannot burst into glorious fruition, at any rate they can (as a rule) put forth the first tender shoots. And do not fear that the growing tree cannot shatter its prison-walls! A seed lodged in the crevice between two blocks of huge and most firmly cemented masonry can force them apart by sheer force of growth. For they are dead, and it is alive.

Is there not many a Theosophist who longs to enter with full consecration upon the Path, but is prevented by sheer force of his environment from gaining admittance into even the lowest rank of Chelas? Let such a one be wise. If the hindrance is indeed real and not merely apparent, no clearer proof could be given that he is not yet *ripe* for Chelaship. If his longing is genuine and pure, and not an emotional flash of ambition or curiosity, he will steadily set himself so to live that upon his next return to earth he may find himself environed suitably for the solemn initiation.

He who is wise will not long for better environment; he will

strive rather to "better *himself*," in the true sense of those terribly misused words, knowing that the fitter environment will come of itself. He will leave to children the desire for that for which he is not fitted. The baby would clutch at and cut himself with the razor; the modest youth leaves it alone till he needs it, by which time, it is to be hoped, he will know how to use it.

Aspire! aspire! only aspire! Believe that matter is but the shadow of spirit; it is the truth. If you are not in that condition of life where you want to be, it is strong presumptive evidence that you are not *fit* for it; and if not fit, its attainment would be a curse and not a blessing. Promotion is sure, when earned; but it must be earned first. The promotion, however, may not be—seldom is—rapid; for it is only by hairbreadths at a time that we can raise ourselves—our *Selves*, mark; perhaps not enough in one short lifetime to bring about any very appreciable change in environment. Nevertheless, making every allowance and deduction, the truth of the matter may be summed up in one sentence: if you are dissatisfied with your lot in life, and would change it, *change yourself*.

ALL of us have a gift, a calling of our own whose exercise is high delight, even if we must sweat and suffer to meet its demands. That calling reaches out to find a real and useful place in the world, a task that is not waste or pretence. If only that life-giving impulse might be liberated and made the whole energy of our daily work, if we were given the chance to be *in* our work with the full force of our personality, mind and body, heart and soul . . . what a power would be released into the world! A force more richly transformative than all the might of industrial technology.

—THEODORE ROSZAK

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In an article in *Telegraph Sunday Magazine* (U.K.) for May 26, Brian Inglis traces the changing attitudes towards dreams, describes some famous examples, and looks at research now being undertaken. Till lately, dreams were dismissed as something equivalent to idle ramblings. It is only in the early fifties that serious research into the subject began. Among other things, it was found that dreaming time was characterized by rapid eye movements (REMs), but more significantly, investigators noted that when people were deprived of dream sleep, their health suffered.

Dr. Christopher Evans of the National Physical Laboratory at Teddington in South London had made a careful study of the available evidence about dreaming from a variety of sources—myth, history, medicine and psychology—and came to the conclusion that the brain is a biological computer.

Sleep is the time, he suggested, when “programme clearance,” of the kind which is standard with computers, takes place in our brains, ridding them of unwanted material which might otherwise clog up the works. Dreams, perhaps, represented a kind of eavesdropping by the unconscious mind on this process...

Last summer Nobel prizewinner Francis Crick and a Cambridge microbiologist, Dr. Graeme Mitchison, carried the theory to what, for them, was its obvious logical conclusion. In a paper published in *Nature* they declared that the function of dreaming—or, rather, of REM sleep—is “to remove certain undesirable modes of interaction in the network of cells in the cerebral cortex, by a reverse learning mechanism” designed to protect our mental health....

“Apart from dreams which occur during REM sleep, other types of mental activity occur during sleep,” says Dr. Jim Horne [Director of the Sleep Research Laboratory at Loughborough]. “These include what is known as ‘non-dreaming mentation’ or ‘thinking sleep.’ This has none of the bizarre content of REM sleep, but is usually quite rational and relevant to the subject’s everyday life. It is quite conceivable that some of the ‘great discoveries’ attributed to dreams actually had their roots in one of these ‘thinking sleep’ states.”

There have been conflicting opinions among investigators, with some putting forth the hypothesis that dreaming is not crucial to our well being, that attempts to remember our dreams should

not be encouraged. Others know that the lessons of history cannot simply be shrugged off, that remembered dreams have made important contributions to science and to the arts and have helped many individuals in solving problems and in other ways. The following are some outstanding instances:

Organic chemistry, for instance, has its origin in a dream experienced by Friedrich Kékulé, the chemist, in 1865. He saw what looked like a chain writhing in snake-like fashion; one of the "snakes" seized its own tail; and when Kékulé awoke, he sketched the "closed ring," one of the basic structures of organic chemistry.

Niels Bohr, a Danish scientist, had a similar experience. As a student he dreamed of a planetary system which, when he awoke, provided him with the model on which atomic physics was to be based.

Some important inventions, too, have emerged from dreams.... Elias Howe, an American, dreamed of a horde of menacing savages thrusting their spears at him; noticing that the spears had holes near the tip gave him the clue he had been seeking and enabled him to make the first practical sewing machine....

Many poets, among them Goethe, Blake, Yeats and Masfield, have recorded their debt to dreams. "For once you are going to hear a dream," Richard Wagner told a friend who was to listen to *Tristan and Isolde*: "I dreamed all this." The last section of the *Messiah* came to Handel in a dream, as did Tartini's sonata, *The Devil's Trill*, which the composer regarded as his finest work.... Several artists, too, have painted what they have seen in their dreams: Blake, again; Klee and Dali.

The careers of statesmen have been changed by dreams; one experienced by Bismark in his crisis year of 1863 determined him to take the course which was to lead to the humbling of Austro-Hungary and, then, of France. So have the careers of sportsmen....

Historical research, therefore, prompts an alternative hypothesis: that dreams, far from being nature's way of helping us remove mental and emotional waste products, are an evolutionary development designed to help us fulfil our maximum potential.... If the historical evidence for the value of dreams is to be accepted, it is extremely difficult to ignore the parallel historical evidence that certain altered states of consciousness, particularly during sleep, appear to be conducive to ESP.

The soul in dreams "can apprehend what it does not know," Socrates claimed. "Either something of what has existed, or what now exists, or what will exist." As a leading American psychical

researcher at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, Robert L. Van de Castle, has described, the evidence that dreams can assist scientists, inventors and writers can be supplemented with dozens of well-attested cases where dreams have provided people with information about the past, the present and the future which they could not have known through the sensory channels accepted by orthodox science....

There are countless tales of people who have escaped some disaster because a dream has warned them not to take a certain course. Or because it has warned somebody else, who intervenes.... There are also many accounts of dreams which have enabled wrongs to be set right....

Far from discouraging people from trying to remember their dreams, therefore, an excellent case can be made for finding ways to facilitate recollection and, as the next stage, to see if the often-chaotic material they provide can be better interpreted and put to use.

J. W. Dunne suggested a pad and a pencil at the bedside and, on waking up, we should write down everything we can recall of a dream. He believed that what we saw in the next day or two would quite often be found in our dream "log." Designed specifically to elicit precognition, this worked spectacularly well for some people. Now other possibilities for making use of dreams are being explored, with promising results.

Among the possibilities being explored are the use of dreams for augmenting creativity in the arts and the sciences, as so many inventions, compositions and literary achievements have had their origin in the dream state. Other areas being researched are the use of dreams in therapy, and for "problem solving." There are still other lines of dream research, and the possibilities are said to be infinite. Over 1,800 papers have been published in the last five years in English alone, and others will doubtless be introduced.

Theosophy has a positive contribution to make in this field and attention is invited to the article "Sleep and Dreams" published in this issue.

The distinction between "shallow" and "deep" ecology was made in 1972 by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, and it has since generated much discussion. A dissertation on the subject by Warwick Fox (based in the School of Social Inquiry,

Murdoch University, Western Australia) appears in the British journal, *The Ecologist* (Vol. 14, No. 5/6). Shallow ecology views humans as the source of all value and represents that attitude to conservation that says: "We ought to preserve the environment (*i.e.*, what lies outside the boundary) not for its own sake but because of its value to us (*i.e.*, what lies inside the boundary)." Deep ecology, on the other hand, holds that the world simply is not divided up into independently existing subjects and objects, nor is there any bifurcation in reality between the human and non-human realms. In the words of the author:

Deep ecology rejects the human-in-environment image in favour of the relational, total-field image....This "total-field" conception dissolves not only the notion of humans as separate from their environment but the very notion of the world as composed of discrete, compact, separate "things."...The intrinsic value of the nonhuman members of the biotic community is recognized and the right of these members to pursue their own evolutionary destinies is taken as an intuitively clear and obvious value axiom....

Deep ecology is concerned to criticize mechanistic materialism and to replace it with a better "code for reading nature." This code can be generally described as one of "unity in process." By this is indicated both the idea that all "things" are fundamentally (*i.e.*, internally) related and the idea that these interrelationships are in constant flux (*i.e.*, they are characterized by process/dynamism/instability/novelty/creativity, etc.).... In stressing the interconnection between ethics and metaphysics, deep ecology recognizes that an ecologically effective ethics can only arise within the context of a more persuasive and more enchanting cosmology than that of mechanistic materialism....

The central intuition of deep ecology finds a profound resonance in both the mystical traditions and the "new physics." For example, the "perennial philosophy" tells us, and the meditative process is claimed to reveal, that "Thou art That." In other words, it is claimed that by subtracting your own self-centred and self-serving thoughts from the world you come to realize that "the other is none other than yourself: that the fundamental delusion of humanity is to suppose I am here and you are out there."...

It is now becoming commonplace to point to the fundamentally similar cosmologies embodied in the mystical traditions on the one hand and the "new physics" on the other. What is structurally similar about these cosmologies is that they reveal a "seamless web" view of the universe....

We should be clear that the central intuition of deep ecology does not entail the view that intrinsic value is spread evenly across the membership of the biotic community.... As Charles Birch and John Cobb have remarked: "Justice does not require equality. It does require that we share one another's fate." There is, however, a shallow and a deep sense of sharing one another's fate. The shallow sense is simply that of being subject to the same forces. It does not involve caring. The deep sense, intended by Birch and Cobb, involves love and compassion. It involves the *enlargement of one's sphere of identification*. The lesson of ecology is that we do share one another's fate in the shallow sense since we all share the fate of the earth. The message of deep ecology is that we ought to care as deeply and as compassionately as possible about that fate—not because it *affects* us but because it *is* us.

For some people, financial success does not bring the power and satisfaction that they seek; instead, it creates more problems than it solves. The quest for more and more money is so all-consuming for the very rich that it extinguishes all other aspects of life. Psychologists are now probing the pitfalls of overambition. *Science Digest* for September reports on their findings:

Scientific studies of the problems that stem from an obsession with wealth are conspicuously absent from psychological journals. However, by reviewing individual case histories, clinicians see certain patterns emerge.

The cause of the compulsion to make enormous sums of money varies with the individual, but often money is a substitute for something a person's life lacks. Says Jay Rohrlich, a psychiatrist in New York's Wall Street district whose clients are mostly executives in the financial field, "To some, money means security. To some it means power. To others it means they're going to be able to buy love, and to a fourth group it means competition and winning the game." The belief that money can produce these things, psychologists say, often leads to impotence, insomnia, heart attacks and problems with a spouse or children.... These people often have an enormously unrealistic feeling of powerlessness....

Rohrlich speaks of clients who see their identity completely in terms of their money and, therefore, are loath to part with it.... Making money for its own sake can be addicting, says Jacqueline Horner Plumez, a psychologist in Larchmont, New York. "like

high-stakes gambling." Bonnie Jacobson, a clinical psychologist, adds, "Some very wealthy people work so many hours, so hard and at such an intense pace that they totally neglect themselves. They don't eat right. They don't sleep right. They just work."

Rohrlich also points out that many wealthy people are driven by the need for approval. "But as you make more money and achieve greater power, others view you as less needy and themselves as needing more from you," he says. This "paradox of power," as he calls it, can lead to feelings of isolation and anxiety. There is no one to pat you on the back and assure you that you're doing a good job.

In the words of a prominent psychiatrist, "The more you strive, the more you want; the more you want, the more you strive." The tragic irony about most strivers is that they do not know what they really want. Success is relative, and there is always another person doing a little better than the one who is obsessed with success. So he has to keep pushing and pushing to gain a little more status. Too much is never enough. Isn't counting one's blessings, however scant they may be, immeasurably wiser and psychologically healthier than counting on one's dreams?

Norman Cousins, the author of *Anatomy of an Illness* and a professor at UCLA's School of Medicine, speaking at Sinai Hospital of Detroit, had some comments on the perception of pain in the modern world. His remarks are addressed to Americans in particular, but are equally applicable to people elsewhere who consider themselves "civilized":

It seems apparent that the American people are illiterate about pain. We tend to think that we're immortal until we get a cold, when we think we're going to die within the hour. We have no educational or emotional background for comprehending pain or coping with it. We have been taught to reach for a pill to get rid of the pain. We haven't been taught to make the connection between pain and things in our life-style that may be causing it. So long as our education pushes us in this direction, it's inevitable that we're going to have to deal with hypochondria on an increasingly large scale. (*Science Digest*, September 1985)

**INDEX
TO
"THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT"**

VOLUME 55 : NOVEMBER 1984 - OCTOBER 1985

INDEX TO "THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT"

VOLUME 55 : NOVEMBER 1984 - OCTOBER 1985

GENERAL INDEX

Acquired Habits (A.I.R.) ..	334	The Three Mirages ..	259
Adoration, Prayer — Propitiation— ..	113	The Three Gunas ..	311
AE and Theosophy (P. G. Bowen) ..	298	Dreams, Sleep and ..	410
All Alone (Poem) ..	31	Duality—Contrast and Complement (Reprint) ..	73
Arrogance of Achievement, The	4	Endowers of Mind, The ..	193
Aspirant, The Work of the	237	Energy, The Source of ..	345
Aspiration and Environment ..	423	Environment, Aspiration and ..	423
Balance Between Opposing Forces ..	379	Environment, Clearing the ..	160
Balanced Perception ..	26	Evoking the Best ..	88
Become Devoted (Reprint) ..	397	Existence, The Purpose of ..	120
Best, Evoking the ..	88	Existence? Why ..	219
Beyond the Pairs (Reprint) ..	37	Fail! Not to Fall, Not to (Reprint) ..	217
Birth, The Second ..	371	Faith and the Tests of Faith (B.M.) ..	64
Brahm (Poem) ..	122	Family, The (B.M.) ..	135
Bridge, The Rainbow ..	418	Fire, Kindling the (B.M.) ..	280
Brotherhood, Human ..	404	Forces, Balance Between Opposing ..	379
Chain, Links in the ..	268	Forward, Looking ..	123
Clearing the Environment ..	160	Foundational Principles, The ..	349
Communion With the Divine ..	306	Four States and Tabernacles, The (The Dream of Ravan)	189
Consciousness, The True ..	90	Garden of Karma, The (Poem)	188
Cultivating Discernment ..	278	Gulf, Spanning the ..	342
Devoted, Become (Reprint) ..	397	Gunas, The Three (The Dream of Ravan) ..	311
Divine, Communion With the	306	Habits, Acquired (A.I.R.) ..	334
Divine Presence, The ..	197	He Kept the Lines Unbroken (Reprint) ..	253
Dogma, Theosophy and (W. Kingsland) ..	406	Hearing, On (B.M.) ..	172
Dream of Ravan, The:		Heart Doctrine, The ..	364
The Four States and Tabernacles ..	189		
The Silent and Desolate Land	224		

Heaven and Hell (B.M.) ..	29	Minds, Machine Minds vs. Living (Reprint) ..	325
Helping Hand, The ..	187	Mirages, The Three (The Dream of Ravan) ..	259
Holy Hour, The (Poem) ..	150	Motive, A Matter of ..	385
Human Brotherhood ..	404	Mystery of All Time, The (Reprint) ..	23
Humanity, The Servants of ..	351	Mystery Language, The ..	232
Imagination, A Potent Help ..	255	Not to Fall, Not to Fail! (Reprint) ..	217
In the Light of Theosophy (Separate Index)		Occult Axioms and Their Symbols 8, 43, 81, 125, 162	
Inquiry, The Spirit of ..	154	On Hearing (B.M.) ..	172
Judge, W. Q., The Philosophy of (Reprint) ..	145	Opening Out a Way ..	168
Just Retribution ..	273	Organism, A Living ..	14
Kindling the Fire (B.M.) ..	280	Oriental Gleanings (C.J.) ..	240
Kindness, Little Deeds of Love, Little Deeds of ..	39	Our Possessions (Reprint) ..	109
Ladder, Steps in the ..	382	Our Wants ..	303
Language, The Mystery ..	232	Pairs, Beyond the (Reprint) ..	37
Lean Back on the Self ..	347	Panacea, Our Lures and Our Path, Progress on the (Reprint) ..	331
Life, The Rhythm of ..	343	Path, Steps on the ..	93
Lines Unbroken, He Kept the (Reprint) ..	253	Peace, The Quest for ..	228
Links in the Chain ..	268	Perception, Balanced ..	26
Little Deeds of Kindness, Little Deeds of Love ..	39	Personalities (A. P. Ril) ..	271
Living Organism, A ..	14	Philosophy of W. Q. Judge, The (Reprint) ..	145
Lonely Rose, The (Poem) ..	58	Possessions, Our (Reprint) ..	109
Looking Forward ..	123	Prayer — Propitiation — Adoration ..	113
Luggage, Shed Your ..	266	Principles, The Foundational ..	349
Lures and Our Panacea, Our ..	331	Progress on the Path (Reprint) ..	361
Machine Minds vs. Living Minds (Reprint) ..	325	Progressive March, The ..	51
Man's Vast Potentiality ..	292	Psychic Purity ..	49
March, The Progressive ..	51	Purpose of Existence, The ..	120
Matter of Motive, A ..	385	Quest for Peace, The ..	228
Men, Seven Classes of ..	130	Quick Rebirth ..	420
Mind, The Endowers of ..	193		
Mind, The Structure of the (B.M.) ..	316		

Rainbow Bridge, The ..	418	Structure of the Mind, The (B.M.) ..	316
Real First Step, The (Reprint) ..	1	Student, the Server, the Seeker, The ..	59
Rebirth, Quick ..	420	"Suffering," "Woe to Those Who Live Without ..	77
Reincarnation, Some Thoughts on (W. Kingsland) ..	374	Sustaining Undercurrent, The ..	296
Religion of Responsibility, The (Reprint) ..	328	Symbols, Occult Axioms and Their ..	8, 43, 81, 125, 162
Religion, The True ..	133	Teachings of Shankara, The ..	203
Renunciation—True and False (B.M.) ..	98	Theosophist and the Theosophical Movement, The (Reprint) ..	289
Retribution, Just ..	273	Theosophist's Task, The ..	62
Rhythm of Life, The ..	343	Theosophy, AE and (P. G. Bowen) ..	298
Second Birth, The ..	371	Theosophy and Dogma (W. Kingsland) ..	406
Seeker, the Student, the Server, The ..	59	Theosophy, In the Light of (Separate Index)	
Self-Deception and Truth ..	94	Thought, The Wheel of ..	97
Self, Lean Back on the ..	347	"To Appear as Nothing" ..	19
Servants of Humanity, The ..	351	True Consciousness, The ..	90
Seven Classes of Men ..	130	True Religion, The ..	133
Shankara, The Teachings of ..	203	Truth, Self-Deception and ..	94
Shed Your Luggage ..	266	Undercurrent, The Sustaining ..	296
Sight of the Soul, The ..	151	Wants, Our ..	303
Silent and Desolate Land, The (The Dream of Ravan) ..	224	Way, Opening Out a ..	168
Sleep and Dreams ..	410	Wheel of Thought, The ..	97
Some Thoughts on Reincarnation (W. Kingsland) ..	374	White Lotus Day (Reprint) ..	181
Soul, The Sight of the ..	151	Why Existence? ..	219
Source of Energy, The ..	345	Wise One, The (B.M.) ..	207
Spanning the Gulf ..	342	"Woe to Those Who Live Without Suffering" ..	77
Spirit of Inquiry, The ..	154	Work of the Aspirant, The (B.M.) ..	237
Step, The Real First (Reprint) ..	1		
Steps in the Ladder ..	382		
Steps on the Path ..	93		

INDEX TO "IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY"

- | | | | |
|---|-----|--|-----|
| Aeroplanes, allusions to, in Sanskrit texts | 211 | Dreams: new research, changing attitudes | 427 |
| Americans, new generation of, appreciating wealth in Indian heritage | 67 | Earth, man's relationship to the planet | 288 |
| Animal experiments in science —religious perspectives | 251 | Ecology, deep: a new philosophy of our time | 429 |
| Animal intelligence, new findings | 133 | Ecology, science of, sees humanity as part of the living environment | 388 |
| Atlantis, evidence for, discovered by Soviet scientists | 108 | Educating the Information Society | 357 |
| Birthmarks projected by mother's imagination | 394 | Education, formal, and true culture, distinction between | 139 |
| Blood transfusion from a donor, autotransfusion an alternative to | 324 | Education, reorientation of, in light of Vivekananda's teachings | 34 |
| Child, unborn, influenced by mother's thoughts and actions | 246 | Einstein's philosophical legacy | 106 |
| Colour, how it affects moods and health | 213 | Electric current emitted by the body — instances, explanation | 395 |
| Conservation, benefits of, today and tomorrow | 180 | Embryo experiments to create half-human half-animal creatures | 33 |
| Cosmology, new, its mystical appeal | 101 | Ethical responsibility, individual and collective | 32 |
| Cow slaughter to keep up price of milk, a crime against man and beast | 143 | Emotional arousal, chronic, injurious to health | 359 |
| Creativity and innovation, importance of, for human survival | 69 | Eyesight, new discoveries in complexity of | 214 |
| Culture versus scholarship | 139 | Fables, myths, fairy tales used for treating psychological disorders | 28 |
| Cultures, creative process as unifying theme | 248 | Foetus capable of reacting to sounds, mother's thoughts and feelings | 24 |
| Death penalty, society's culpability | 283 | Genetic engineering, a moral issue | 3 |
| Dentistry, India cradle of | 36 | | |
| Disasters, natural, humans real cause of | 141 | | |

- | | | | |
|---|-----|--|-----|
| Heart implant, artificial, and quality of life | 103 | Pain, perception of, in modern world | 432 |
| India, ancient — achievements in medicine and surgery .. | 321 | Paranormal phenomena, increased acceptance of .. | 216 |
| India and U.S.A. linked by invisible bonds | 67 | Peace, alien to our reality in today's world of violence .. | 320 |
| Indian texts, compressed treatises of technological knowledge | 211 | Personality—flexible or stable? | 245 |
| Information explosion does not make a new society .. | 357 | Physicians study effects of nuclear war | 210 |
| Intuition's role in quick decision-making by executives .. | 250 | Physics, new, mystical and religious elements in .. | 101 |
| Intuitive faculty a means of knowledge acquirement .. | 70 | Population growth, conflicting views | 140 |
| Karmic law and natural disasters | 141 | Pythagoras' teachings, relevance of | 71 |
| Knowledge faculties, explicit and implicit | 70 | Religion and quest for Self .. | 177 |
| Lotus symbol, significance of .. | 322 | Religion's place in new cosmological scenario | 101 |
| Lucifer, the light-bringer's gift to humanity | 286 | Responsibility as an ethical problem | 32 |
| Management by intuition .. | 250 | Science, religious dimensions of, probed today | 101 |
| Mediterranean sea once a desert | 142 | Seven, root nature-number in present life-cycle .. | 389 |
| Mind-body relationship, symposium on | 358 | Stress-related ailments, eminent medical practitioners' views | 358 |
| Mind, unconscious, can shape our behaviour | 175 | Suicide, causes, after-condition | 284 |
| Money, pursuit of—psychologists probe pitfalls of over-ambition | 431 | Susruta, ancient Indian surgeon's amazing genius .. | 321 |
| Nuclear war, challenge of our age | 179 | Swastika, a symbol with many meanings | 177 |
| Nuclear war, doctors' appeals for prevention of | 210 | Technological wonders of the ancient world | 211 |
| | | Transplantation of bodily organs from animals to man raises ethical controversy .. | 103 |

Tree symbol, ancient and universal	391	Vedanta philosophy, a beacon of light for the future
Unconscious learning abilities and memory	175	Violence, growing cult of, today's world ..
Universe, Pythagorean concept of, based on mathematical harmony	71	Zarathushtra, prophet of Iran

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DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissension or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too important to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end are the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF, and a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and whenever situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. It aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and to help others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

U.L.T. LODGES

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