

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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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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OUR DUAL DUTY

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THE Immortal Self needs no instruction. It is of the nature of knowledge. It “*knows*, for it is knowledge.”

The mortal soul needs instruction. It incarnates for the sake of gaining Wisdom from the vast universe. The world is the school, the training ground of the Soul. A portion of the involved Self is each human being. This Incarnated Ray strives to realize the Source of his being, which is divine, by observing the great but unconscious quest of the Self in other human beings, in other kingdoms of Nature, in the entire manifested universe. This quest of the Without, through many successive lives of pain and pleasure, brings self-conscious man to the Hidden in Nature; he stands baffled by “the mighty magic of Prakriti.”

At last he turns within. Many more successive lives on earth in quest of the hidden Bliss convince him that the Truth vibrant in every form is somehow intimately related to that hidden Bliss whose real nature has to be comprehended not only by going Without, but pre-eminently by retreating Within. The duality of the Without and the Within has to be resolved.

Large numbers of educated men and women are imbued with the idea of serving in kindness the poor and the sick, of co-operating with kin and friends, of appreciating the genius of the artist, the philosopher, the mystic, the saint, the sage. At the same time they have the aspiration to express something of the True, the Good and the Beautiful hidden within themselves. Many are the modes consciously and unconsciously adopted by the human consciousness to seek the Divine without as also the Comforter and the Enlightener within. Egotism and pride, born of regard

for the personal self, even *that* is a shadow, however distorted, of the desire to be something better than and superior to what the proud egotist actually is. This desire to help, to co-operate, to aspire, is but an instinctive feeling at the heart of every individual that somehow, somewhere, the duality of the Within and the Without is resolvable.

Theosophy is the philosophy of the One in the many, the many as the One; but it is also the Science of Alchemy that reduces the many without and the one within to a single Unit—the God of religion, the Monad of philosophy, the Atom of science.

It is not beyond the student of Theosophy to perceive the teaching with the aid of his intellect that the Law of Interdependence is profound and farther reaching than the Law of Gravitation-Levitation in the physical world. To know and to recognize, however difficult, is easy compared to realization and practice in one's own daily life of this fundamental teaching. *To be* is the goal and it is the most difficult one we can set before us.

To be is to approximate in one's own life the working of the Macrocosm. Spirit and Matter jointly function in harmony as Soul and Body should, but as mostly they do not. This is true not only of the masses of men and even of the so-called educated classes, but also of many students of Theosophy who know something about the teachings on this subject.

Among the devoted aspirants on the Path of Training there are two types: those who, fired by the Truth of the Without, try to serve by ever-improving modes some part of the Without, often an expanding part. Then there are those who, feeling the urge of the mind-heart within, seek the Hidden One and try to emulate those who have realized their own Hidden Light and radiate it for the seekers. Either of the two methods, by itself, is insufficient and results in frustration. Service of the Without and Seeking in the Within are both necessary. He who neglects service will not know the Self within; he who neglects study and meditation will not know the Self within the myriad forms of Life. To see the Self in all creatures we must serve the Without. To see the Self within the Heart of the Mind we must study and meditate and, retreating into that silence which is the place of Peace and Light, hear the still, small Voice of God. Our service of others reveals the One in the many; contemplation founded upon right study reveals the One whose ray each human being in reality is. The Self within reveals the Self without.

THE AMELIORATION OF THE CONDITION OF MANKIND

Theosophy Shows the Way

WE are told that "Theosophy *must be made practical*"; that it has "to infuse a new current of ideas and aspirations into modern thought; in short, to supply a logical basis for an elevated morality, a science and philosophy which is suited to the knowledge of the day." It is therefore necessary for students of Theosophy to know what *are* the teachings of practical Theosophy on social problems and reforms.

In recent decades, the world has seen great revolutions or shifting of responsibility from the former "governing classes" to the masses, from the conqueror to free men. On every side the erstwhile inarticulate are making themselves heard, and new, or rather different, forms of government have come into being.

Running through the different ideas of change we find the demand for rights. Rights for those who have been denied them; unwillingness on the part of those who have always had them to see the rights of others. Very rarely do we see right principles of action spoken of, for the basic conception of life is still "selfishness." Ordinary people as well as the highly educated still confuse principles and the capacity to carry them out correctly. To further their own ideas they will try to kill a good principle by showing intellectually that it will not work, or that it has not worked, when the fault has been the incapacity of those whose duty it was to put the principle into action. Altering forms may but give a new incarnation to old, bad principles.

Students who think of Theosophy as "a bundle of metaphysical ethics, epitomized in theoretical dissertations," do not seek out the Theosophical principles which should underlie the various changes that have taken place and so miss a valuable opportunity to guide the new current, at least in the realm of ideas. When, in some of the following quotations, H.P.B. speaks of the "cultured" classes, students of Theosophy should include themselves in this class, for they have the true culture. It is a humiliating experience so to see ourselves, especially in connection with social reform.

Since the days of more general education in many lands, the mind of the "common people" or the masses has begun to awaken, and it is this mind that is clamouring for its "rights." H.P.B. says that the "poor working-classes" are the "heart" of a nation. To help the heart to become articulate without letting the mind be-

come self-centred or selfish, the aid of right philosophy is required. The heart of the physical body is the organ by means of which the blood, life itself, courses throughout the body, keeping it alive. But it is more than this. It stands for the spiritual, throbbing heart of that universal aspect of nature called Maha-Buddhi, Compassion Absolute. When this aspect is focalized in any form, we see what its nature is, for it has been portrayed by the Buddhas and the Christs of the Race. When the physical heart is diseased or irregular in its working, or allows itself to be diseased, *i.e.*, to become self-centred, a diseased condition of the nation and of the world arises.

Two aspects of the functioning of the heart are its selflessness, keeping nothing for itself, and its responsibility as the means for keeping the body alive. These two aspects are shown in the human character as the willing helpfulness which the poor always show to their fellow poor, and the sense of responsibility they show in doing their work to the best of their ability. Giving a square deal, in fact. Often we do not take into account the value of the sense of responsibility shown by the "workers" towards their employers and towards the State. We only observe the chaos caused when that sense is lost!

Is the awakening mind ruling the heart and demanding freedom and rights without paying the due price for them, *i.e.*, the acceptance of responsibility? If so, the condition of the world will be the same as before, only the cause of the bad condition will be the masses instead of the former rulers. The sense of responsibility must be strengthened in and by the masses themselves, or the condition of mankind will be worse than before, for the rot will permeate body, mind *and* heart.

It is difficult to generalize too much, but a deeper understanding of the whole question can be gained by a study (and not a mere reading) of various articles and letters of H.P.B.'s, and sections in her *Key to Theosophy*.

Though it is true that the Theosophical Movement does not take part in politics, yet it is interesting to note what is the function of the Movement:

Intrinsically, Theosophy is the most serious movement of this age; and one, moreover, which threatens the very life of most of the time-honoured humbugs, prejudices, and social evils of the day—those evils which fatten and make happy the upper ten and their imitators and sycophants, the wealthy dozens of the middle classes, while they positively crush and starve out of existence the millions of the poor.

Two important points are garnered from a study of H.P.B.'s writings on this subject: (1) The responsibility for the *condition* of the poor lies largely at the door of the rich who gain money and power at the expense of the poor. (2) The responsibility also for the *conduct* of the poor lies in not inconsiderable part at the door of the rich.

We also learn something not always accepted with regard to the improvement of physical conditions. Many people who mean well and are beginning to think more about these things are decrying the movement toward the mere improvement of *conditions*, because they say that it is no good to alter conditions if you do not alter the *character* of those who are going to live in those conditions. Students often quote H.P.B.:

Mere physical philanthropy, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, is worthless.

But there are other statements of H.P.B.'s which, taken in connection with the above, will give a truer picture of Theosophic principles on social reform. Her pen was ever used on behalf of "orphan Humanity," and her warm heart felt with the suffering of the people.

In the present state of society, especially in so-called civilized countries, we are continually brought face to face with the fact that large numbers of people are suffering from misery, poverty and disease. Their physical condition is wretched, and their mental and spiritual faculties are often almost dormant. On the other hand, many persons at the opposite end of the social scale are leading lives of careless indifference, material luxury, and selfish indulgence. Neither of these forms of existence is mere chance.

This is not merely a statement that the law of Karma brings to each the conditions he has earned, for the next sentence shows what was in her mind: "Both are the effects of the conditions which surround those who are subject to them." In other words, the conditions are one thing, the cause; the effects are those things arising from the cause. We find Aphorisms 12 and 13 on Karma illuminating:

Karmic causes already set in motion must be allowed to sweep on until exhausted, but this permits no man to refuse to help his fellows and every sentient being.

The effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects

represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects.

Though it may be a person's Karma to be born in the most terrible of slums, that is no reason why we should build the slums or allow them to exist. Slums can be taken to mean crowded houses and districts, narrow streets, too many people forced to live in one room, no facilities for real cleaning, appalling lavatory conditions, old buildings full of insects, no place for children to play in. There are also the thousands of dwellings of the not-so-poor who create slum conditions in untidy cupboards, rooms, etc.

H.P.B. leaves us in no doubt about where the onus rests for the condition of the dwellers in our slums: "The neglect of social duty on the one side is most closely connected with the stunted and arrested development on the other." What is social duty?

Contrast the lives not only of the masses of the people, but of many of those who are called the middle and upper classes, with what they might be under healthier and nobler conditions, where justice, kindness, and love were paramount, instead of the selfishness, indifference, and brutality which now too often seem to reign supreme. . . .

Whereon is spent the enormous wealth accumulated through private enterprise by the more enlightened through the ruin of the less intelligent? Is it to relieve human suffering in every form that riches are so greedily pursued? Not at all. . . what good has all this great civilization and progress done to the millions in the slums, to the armies of the "great unwashed"?

Let us look at the conditions. There are two methods of tackling this aspect: (1) To cease to make bad conditions; (2) to make better ones. But what should be the principle underlying the better conditions?

Now, true evolution teaches us that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man. . . .

If humanity can only be developed mentally and spiritually by the enforcement, first of all, of the soundest and most scientific physiological laws, it is the bounden duty of all who strive for this development to do their utmost to see that those laws shall be generally carried out.

There are so many implications in the last quotation that it would better be left to the individual student for his earnest study and meditation.

One such effort towards training and development in her day was the endeavour to spread education. H.P.B. wrote:

I quite agree that there is a great advantage to a small child bred in the slums, having the gutter for playground, and living amid continued coarseness of gesture and word, in being placed daily in a bright, clean school-room hung with pictures, and often gay with flowers. There it is taught to be clean, gentle, orderly; there it learns to sing and to play; has toys that awaken its intelligence; learns to use its fingers deftly; is spoken to with a smile instead of a frown; is gently rebuked or coaxed instead of cursed. All this humanises the children, arouses their brains, and renders them susceptible to intellectual and moral influences. The schools are not all they might be and ought to be; but, compared with the homes, they are paradises; and they slowly are reacting on the homes. . . .

Every Theosophist. . . is bound to do his utmost to help on, by all the means in his power, every wise and well-considered social effort which has for its object the amelioration of the condition of the poor.

True it is that, side by side with physical improvement, there must be mental, moral and spiritual upliftment. But how is this to be attained? Normally we take it for granted that it is the poor who need the moral upliftment, but the following extracts are illuminating:

Such efforts [for the amelioration of the condition of the poor] should be made with a view to their ultimate social emancipation, or the development of the sense of duty in those who now so often neglect it in nearly every relation of life.

A terrible responsibility lies on the shoulders of those whose contribution to the welfare of humanity should be to set the example of a true spiritual life, and who, instead, lead the masses downwards on the path of selfishness and degradation.

Those intellectual classes reacting upon the ignorant masses—which they attract and which look up to them as noble and fit examples to be followed—degrade and morally ruin those they ought to protect and guide.

The work of Theosophy is, therefore, both for the amelioration of the condition of the poor and for the upliftment of their moral standard through the upliftment of the moral standard of the rich. For this reason, she tells us:

To seek to achieve political reforms before we have effected a reform in *human nature*, is like putting new wine into old bottles.

Make men feel and recognize in their innermost hearts what is their real, true duty to all men, and every old abuse of power, every iniquitous law in the national policy, based on human, social or political selfishness, will disappear of itself. . . . No lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old.

Though "as a Society, we carefully avoid politics," yet Theosophy must show us the way to right principles and throw a clear light on wrong principles in the political field.

It is not violence that can ever insure bread and comfort for all; nor is the kingdom of peace and love, of mutual help and charity and "food for all," to be conquered by a cold, reasoning, diplomatic policy. It is only by the close brotherly union of men's inner SELVES, of soul-solidarity, of the growth and development of that feeling which makes one suffer when one thinks of the suffering of others, that the reign of Justice and equality for all can ever be inaugurated. This is the first of the three fundamental objects for which the Theosophical Society was established, and called the "Universal Brotherhood of Man," without distinction of *race, colour, or creed*.

Finally:

Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. We are the friends of all those who fight against drunkenness, against cruelty to animals, against injustice to women, against corruption in society or in government, although we do not meddle in politics. We are the friends of those who exercise practical charity, who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight of misery that is crushing down the poor. . . . The function of Theosophists is to open men's hearts and understandings to charity, justice, and generosity, attributes which belong specifically to the human kingdom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being. Theosophy teaches the animal-man to be a human-man; and when people have learned to think and feel as truly human beings should feel and think they will act humanely, and works of charity, justice, and generosity will be done spontaneously by all. . . .

"How many of you have helped humanity to carry its smallest burden, that you should all regard yourselves as Theosophists? . . . Feel yourselves the vehicles of the whole humanity, mankind as part of yourselves, and act accordingly."

There is plenty of practical Theosophy for all students in the

above. There is the fight against drunkenness. Have we the courage to learn first and then speak against the whole trade with its power of bringing revenue to the country at the price of the degradation of human beings? Though individually we may refuse to take shares in the trade, as citizens of any country that gains revenue from this trade we are morally responsible. Does our fight against cruelty to animals end with the saving of the life of a mouse which dirties our larder and home, or do we go on to learn the facts of the systematic scientific, diabolical cruelty to animals practised for the alleged purpose of the good of humanity? Do we take the trouble to learn about the pseudo-scientific physiological laws imposed on the masses through financial interests in the name of health?

The number of those who make Theosophy a *vocation* is small, but the field of application is very large.

BACK of the dramatic discovery of atomic energy is a long history of generation after generation of inquiring minds, restlessly questioning, testing, doubting, probing, seeking the truth about the nature of the physical world, about the procession of the seasons, about the sun in its power and warmth, about the very stars in their courses.

Was this release of the basic energy of matter an event over which we should rejoice, or should we tremble with apprehension that man had at last let out of the bottle an evil jinni too powerful to be tamed? . . . Whatever answer the future holds, this much I believe we must accept: There can be no putting the jinni back into the bottle. To try to bury or to suppress new knowledge because we do not know how to prevent its use for destructive or evil purposes is a pathetically futile gesture. It is, indeed, a symbolic return to the methods of the Middle Ages. It seeks to deny the innermost urge of the mind of man—the desire for knowledge. . . .

Greater knowledge about the world will, I think, be the keystone of the immediate future. But greater knowledge alone will not be enough. There must also be greater love and understanding among men. And there must also be greater faith in humankind and in the purposes of the Universe. Knowledge, love, faith—with these three the atomic age, the age in which we live, can become an age of mercy, of joy, and of hope, one of the blessed periods of all history.

—DAVID E. LILIENTHAL

MISTAKEN NOTIONS

“THE teachings of Theosophy are all recorded. There can be no question as to what they are. We need no interpreters or interpretations. Doubts as to their meaning are unnecessary. It is all there in the books. All we have to do is consult them.” (This presupposes, of course, that their meaning is always plainly evident.) “He who runs may surely read aright. Truth is obvious.” By this curious admixture of truth and error, by this subtle distortion of truth in every assertion, the mind can be ceaselessly self-deceived. There is no dogmatism like that which springs from a notion of infallibility. There is a vast difference between the illusion of knowledge and the acquirement of a conviction of truth.

The grooves of thought against which Mr. Judge so wisely warned stem from human bias, prejudice and the illusions of the age. The greatest of these is the illusion of “I” and “my,” the deceptive concept of the lower self, which involves mistaken notions of inferiority and superiority, in short, the heresy of separateness. Such is the Maya to be overcome.

An egotistic assumption of near-infallibility of perceptive power blinds the mind to the eternal living verity. Failure to distinguish between the letter of the law and the spirit thereof is not uncommon. Yet the great task is to separate head-learning from soul-wisdom and to make the former subservient to the latter instead of *vice versa*. To get out the kernels of wisdom, to discern the root meanings of application, and to check these by means of the fundamental principles of Theosophy is a work of years and lives. Yet it is this practice that not only corroborates the essentials of Theosophy but also establishes them in our own consciousness as a sure guide to right thought and action.

We may not need to go to the interpreter’s house, but the fundamental question regarding the true meaning of any Theosophical teaching is not one of interpretation or no interpretation. It is a question of true or false interpretation. The books themselves are renditions or interpretations. It is easy to overlook that fact. Our understanding is itself an interpretation. The study of any Theosophical text or communication or even of ourselves, requires the student, the recipient, or the searcher to interpret correctly the meaning, first to his own mind and consciousness, and then, when and as necessary, to others. Otherwise, study and promulgation turn into mere parrot-like repetition without the needed fire of honest conviction, the power of truth realized. Understanding is an inner soul process of digestion, assimilation and evaluation.

That the deeper meanings of Theosophical teachings are not always evident on the surface is a fact that becomes evident with soul experience. This is surely discerned by every earnest, patient and perserving seeker for the truth. It is especially so when the motive is to serve the Cause. It is a lesson that has been plainly pointed out by Those who brought the Message. Such indication is with no desire to confuse the issue. It is only to show that unfamiliar truths are not easily learned and cannot be grasped at all without earnest effort.

False notions, however popular, obscure the way to truth. The would-be Theosophist is not exempt from the fetters and delusions of the race-mind. These have to be overcome one by one and often with herculean effort. Mr. Judge wrote in *An Epitome of Theosophy*:

As this knowledge deals with laws and states of matter, and of consciousness undreamed of by the "practical" Western world, it can only be grasped, piece by piece, as the student pushes forward the demolition of his preconceived notions, that are due either to inadequate or to erroneous theories.

It is all too easy to forget the significance of the affirmation: "Theosophy is that ocean of knowledge which spreads from shore to shore of the evolution of sentient beings." This is not merely poetical; it is profound, comprehensive and true as well as beautiful. Theosophy is "unfathomable in its deepest parts," but that does not mean that it is always obvious near its shallower shores. Mr. Judge has pointed out in a number of instances how unprepared many people are to understand correctly certain aspects of Theosophical teaching. This is no fault of the teaching, but of human inhibitions. Thus, for instance, regarding the method of reincarnation, there are details that "would not as yet be received even by Theosophists with credence, although one day they will be" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, Chap. VIII). Again, in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* (Chap. III, pp. 86-7) Mr. Judge observes:

Although I have had some acquaintance with Occidental reasoning based on Occidental knowledge, it seems hopeless in the present century to elucidate much that is in this chapter. There are numerous points touched on by Krishna for which I find no response in Western thought. Among these are the verses on sacrifice. To say all I think about sacrifice would only expose me to a charge of madness, superstition, or ignorance; it certainly would on every hand be received with incredulity. And while sneers or disbelief

have no terrors, it is needless to advert to certain points in the chapter. Yet in passing them by, some sadness is felt that a high civilization should on these subjects be so dense and dark.

Thus, concerning even the teachings that are given out, every student has to guard against misconceptions. It is said of the constitution of man, in *An Epitome of Theosophy*:

If the present sevenfold division, as given by Theosophical writers, is adhered to strictly and without any conditional statement, it will give rise to controversy or error. For instance, Spirit is not a seventh principle. It is the synthesis, or the whole, and is equally present in the other six. The present various divisions can only be used as a general working hypothesis, to be developed and corrected as students advance and themselves develop.

In the attempt to explain the Universe as governed by Law, illustrations such as the ebb and flow of the tides may be given. A Theosophist would not accept as the whole explanation the statement that the ocean is attracted by the moon. He will not overlook the hint thrown out by Mr. Judge in regard to "Cyclic Impression and Return and Our Evolution":

...as we have the tides in the ocean, explained as they say by the moon—which in my opinion does not explain it, but of course, being no scientist, my view is not worth much—so in man we have tides, which are called return of these impressions. . . .

This is something to start the student on the path of search. Students of Theosophy are naturally of different grades, some higher and some lower, according to the efforts made through few or many lives. A reason why Theosophical teachings are often misconceived is plainly suggested by Mr. Judge:

It is claimed by these higher students that, in the Occident especially, a false method of reasoning has for many centuries prevailed, resulting in a universal habit of mind which causes men to look upon many effects as causes, and to regard that which is real as the unreal, putting meanwhile the unreal in the place of the real. (*An Epitome of Theosophy*, p. 9)

It is the habit of mind induced by this false method of reasoning that has to be overcome if worldly ideas are not to make a pseudo-theosophy obscure Theosophy itself. A better understanding of Theosophy and of ways to apply it can be attained with the help of a knowledge of its fundamental principles and eternal Truths.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Ravan, Ravan, thou erreth, beware!
Hearken to this truth sublime—
To the spirit is no time,
Past or future—space or clime—
 Before or after—here or there,
In its own, its primordial state
 Of unity, purity, power and grace,
In itself it mirrors all finite fate,
Possessing in one-ness, gazing on all
That hath befallen, or shall ever befall
 Its evolution in time and space;
Events and relations, persons and things,
Actings and thinkings, and utterings,
 Been or to be, in its finite race,
All are in unity seen and possessed,
 As present at once, without where or when,
Such is the universal range
 Of the spirit's boundless ken,
 Such the eternal spirit life,
Without succession, devoid of change,
 Duality, passion, or strife.

—*The Dream of Ravan*

CAN Truth be caught by the mind, no matter by whom, no matter by what means? As Madame Blavatsky puts it:

No man can know the Truth unless he studies the secrets of the Pleroma of Occultism; and these secrets are all in the Theogony of the ancient Wisdom-Religion, which is the Aletheia of Occult Science.

Aletheia is a Gnostic term for Truth, and it is the Gnostics, it is stated, who were the first to introduce and reveal to the world that which had remained concealed for ages. According to *The Secret Doctrine*:

The early Gnostics claimed that their Science, the GNOSIS, rested on a square, the angles of which represented respectively *Sigè* (silence), *Bythos* (depth), *Nous* (Spiritual Soul or Mind), and *Aletheia* (Truth). (II, 573)

From the above quotations, it can be seen that Truth is an abstract idea, and one may be tempted to ask: "Of what avail is this concept in daily life?" Everyone is trying to avoid hunger,

poverty, distress, disease and disgrace. But is there anyone who is void of these sufferings? If one kind of pain is removed by one's effort, another takes its place. Surely, any amount of effort does not assure one of continued happiness. But everyone is trying constantly to seek some kind of happiness or other. By struggle and endeavour, one may obtain some kind of peace temporarily, even as by taking medicine one is relieved of illness for the time being. But is not prevention better than cure? It is the Gnosis alone which can assure one of permanent peace and happiness.

Gnosis, as the *Glossary* defines it, is the Spiritual, Sacred Knowledge, the *Gupta Vidya* of the Hindus, which can only be obtained by Initiation into Spiritual Mysteries. It lays down that all is Life, and essentially One.

It is a heartening feature of modern times that scientists like David Bohm have introduced the notion of the "implicate order" in which any element contains, enfolded within itself, the totality of the universe, essentially One. It is a new model of reality, bordering on the *Gupta Vidya*, falsifying the sensory view and mental belief that the world is fragmented, that things are discrete. Such a belief has led to "the great dire heresy of separateness." Both orthodox science and theology have mistaken the content of our thought for a description of the world as it is. It is in this sense that *The Voice of the Silence* states at the very outset: "The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer."

In explaining this new model of the implicate order, scientists point to the key feature of the functioning of the hologram; that is, in each region of space the order of a whole illuminated structure is "enfolded and carried" in the movement of light. Unlike this stress on unity, most systems of thought outside the *Gupta Vidya* are dualistic: an outside deity on the one hand and the universe on the other. With God as the author and source of good, an antagonist Devil has to be assumed as the source of evil. By recognizing that all is One Life, some of the scientists have taken the role of poets. Inevitably the poet feels his kinship with Nature. Nature responds when heart and mind join together.

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom.

Of course, such kinship has its obligation and duties, too,

inspired by one motive—to serve and help all life without thought of self. Can the scientists of today solemnly affirm that they are selfless, and working selflessly for the promotion of Universal Brotherhood? Brash and secure in their laboratories, are they not indifferent to the nuclear holocaust threatening the world, which may prove true the prophecy of Nostradamus that the end of this century will coincide with the end of the world? Not till the heart or the spiritual centre of one's being, particularly of the scientists, politicians, diplomats and statesmen of the day, gains rapport with the great throbbing heart of Nature, can there be the dawn of Soul-Wisdom, which alone can save the world. As the *Book of the Golden Precepts* affirms:

Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal. For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in SELF.

It is the inspiration of this sense of Unity that is the power of Truth, which is stronger than any circumstances or obstacles that may face the aspirant. Albert Schweitzer makes this sage observation which may well encourage the aspirant to Truth:

If men can be found who revolt against the spirit of thoughtlessness and who are personalities sound enough and profound enough to let the ideals of ethical progress radiate from them as a force, there will start an activity of the spirit which will be strong enough to evoke a new mental and spiritual disposition in mankind. Because I have confidence in the power of Truth and of the Spirit, I believe in the future of mankind.

To the extent faith in the power of Truth is strengthened, the fear of Nostradamus' prediction of the end of the world is lessened. While orthodox religion and conventional science may not offer any scope for the aspirant in his search for Truth, there is a great body of Science, Religion and Philosophy offered by Madame Blavatsky in her voluminous and monumental writings. Emphasizing one's own self-devised and self-induced efforts, unhampered by any crutches of outside authority, she points out that Truth is not an objective entity to be sought after, but a subjective experience. Truth is no such thing as becoming or not-becoming; for it "is the Voice of Nature and of Time . . . nought is without it." That it is an experience and not an expression will be evident from the analogy of sugar. Chemists may call it a carbohydrate extracted chiefly from cane and beet. But as an experience, it is

only sweetness. While the sugar-cane is sweet within and without, there is no sugar-cane in the sweetness nor any chemicals. This experiential fact is stressed by H. P. Blavatsky when she observes:

Outside a certain highly spiritual and elevated state of mind, during which man is at one with the UNIVERSAL Mind—he can get nought on earth but relative truth or truths, from whatsoever philosophy or religion.

Obviously what we know is only relative truth, or what in Sanskrit is called *Vyavaharika Satya*. But once we transcend this earthly sphere of passions and desires, we are on the threshold of knowledge, where, as *Light on the Path* indicates, the confusion may lessen, but difficulties may increase, for the aspirant “cannot be half-hearted, nor can he return, when he has passed the threshold.” Like Arjuna, although the abyss is behind him, he has still to make the grade. The steps are outlined in the eighteen chapters of the *Gita*. Leaving terrestrial interests, the aspirant must look to the inmost, the one, where alone “all shadows are unknown, and where the light of Truth shines with unfading glory.”

It is this kind of Truth that the aspirant is asked to seek when he has reached a highly spiritual and elevated state of mind, when he is no more caught in relative truths but is one with *Paramarthika Satya*. There is no more subject and object in that state, for he has lost his name and form:

I take my refuge in Thy name and Thee!
I take my refuge in Thy Law of Good!
I take my refuge in Thy Order! OM!
The Dew is on the lotus!—Rise, Great Sun!
And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave.
Om Mani Padme Hum, the Sunrise comes!
The Dewdrop slips into the shining Sea!

While the *Paramarthika Satya* or the Absolute Truth is the non-dual Brahmic state of bliss, most of us are living in the relative state of *Vyavaharika Satya*, pertaining to everyday existence in the material world. But there is also another, the third kind of Truth referred to in the Hindu scriptures as *Pratibhashika Satya*, relating to the usual mistake of assuming the tin foil shining in the sunlight for silver. *The Voice of the Silence* has an apt illustration of this third kind of truth:

If thy Soul smiles while bathing in the Sunlight of thy Life; if thy Soul sings within her chrysalis of flesh and matter; if thy Soul

weeps inside her castle of illusion. . . know, O Disciple, thy Soul is of the earth. . . .

When waxing stronger, thy Soul glides forth from her secure retreat; and breaking loose from the protecting shrine, extends her silver thread and rushes onward; when beholding her image on the waves of Space she whispers, "This is I"—declare, O Disciple, that thy Soul is caught in the webs of delusion.

The Dakshinamurti Hymn of Sankara also describes this third state of *Pratibhashika Satya* with the help of several analogies, such as dreams, the image in a mirror and the mirage seen in a desert—all apparently real, yet false. The same idea is seen in *The Voice of the Silence* too:

For—when to himself his form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams; when he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the ONE—the inner sound which kills the outer.

Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of Asat, the false, to come unto the realm of Sat, the true.

These verses indicate that we are living most of the time in the phenomenal, illusory and delusive universe. However, there is no denying the basic truth, difficult though it may be for us mortals, that there is the One, the Ever-existing, the Absolute. It is also called the Brahman, which alone is the changeless eternal as against the world we live in, which is ever in a flux, changing every moment in a continuing tide of ebb and flow. Not only everything in the objective universe changes, but our minds too are ever in a dynamic movement, flitting from one thought to another, flighty, subtle and clever. The *Dhammapada* states that the wise man makes straight his crooked thinking, even as a fletcher makes straight his arrow. The mind is the source of duality and as long as it lasts there will be the creation of forms and the desire to fill those forms. It is like the moon ever waxing and waning, reflecting the light from the sun. Brahman, like the sun, is self-effulgent, and therefore not known to those who seek It. What is not known or discernible signifies that it is not discerned as something apart from It, even as one does not bring another lamp to see a lamp. "Thou art Thyself the object of thy search." Atman is Brahman.

And now thy Self is lost in SELF, Thyself unto THYSELF, merged in THAT SELF from which thou first didst radiate.

SOUL PERCEPTION

WHETHER there is or is not a soul in man is for modern science a matter of speculation about which there is no real knowledge in the scientific thought of the age. Belief is not knowledge. Neither is denial. It is too often assumed that, after all, however interesting the question may or may not be, it is of little consequence as compared with the practical problems of everyday life. The "practical" outcome is the development of nuclear weapons with general annihilation looming on the horizon of the "scientific" mind.

If there is a soul in man there must be also faculties of the soul. If there are faculties of the soul they must be exercised to be of any use. But no one is going to exercise that which is denied. Therefore it is essential to investigate the subject open-mindedly and to get rid of overpowering bias before such questions can be honestly and truly answered. In this case both question and answer require to be propounded within the sanctuary of the soul. This must be so if the soul is the real in man, as Theosophy affirms.

What are the faculties of the soul? One of them is the power to look directly upon ideas. How the modern so-called "scientific" method smothers this faculty instead of cultivating it is evidenced by the endless "scientific" arguments over mere words when true ideas are presented. Meaningless blind "chance" or the equivalent is substituted. This failure is shown also by the inability of "scientific" thinkers to grasp metaphysical ideas clearly, reasonably and comprehensively. Hence metaphysics is still relegated largely to the realm of speculation, while speculation itself permeates modern science. The layman finds the latter fact hard to see or to believe because of the scientific achievements in mathematical physics and in technology.

Spirit is the power to perceive and the soul is the acquired experience. Were the reality of these principles realized even in some degree as facts in Nature, the absurdity of denying them would become evident. Substituting "hereditary mechanism" and "diversified environment" as supposed "essentials" does not lead to enlightenment. The cause of these effects remains as much a mystery as ever. Metaphysical causes are denied by modern scientists. This is typical not only of materialistic soul blindness, but also of truth inverted.

An instance of what failure in soul perception means is the great problem of peace or war facing the whole of modern civiliza-

tion. "War is bad, but we must not let the enemy overrun us." "Nuclear weapons are terrible, but we must not allow ourselves to be destroyed; hence their development is necessary." Such are the arguments that flow from failure to understand either the nature of the soul or the moral power latent in man.

In the West, soul culture has been obscured by objectives of sensuous enjoyment and a denial of the soul itself. In the East, soul culture has been obscured by the sophistry of the psychic nature of man. Materialism and psychism have thus eclipsed soul perception and realization. They have usurped the place of soul-based culture. Therefore the need is great to resuscitate a point of view founded on knowledge of the science of the soul.

It can be interesting and useful to mankind to pursue the investigation of Nature through the densities of matter to its finer forms and forces. But does this inspire, as it should, greater reverence for Nature and the sacredness of its inner workings? If not, why not? The fault is not with true science, but with failure to arrive at its eternal verities and their moral significance. False theories have taken the place of the true.

If it is possible to have spiritual ideas in business, and Theosophy affirms that it is, then industry need not mean militarization. The fact that the two go together in modern civilization is because of lack of soul perception and of moral education. Greed for profits need not be inseparable from production. There were adept kings in bygone ages who were the custodians of enormous wealth, but who owned none of it. Their detachment was complete because their soul perception was real and profound. The wealth of the people was administered wisely, for the people. Another kind of wealth undreamed of by materialism resides in that Self-realization which enables living souls to become co-workers with occult Nature. Hence soul-based culture is essential to the general practice of brotherhood. Without it no civilization can long endure.

LIFE travels upward in spirals. He who takes pains to search the shadows of the past below us, then, can better judge the tiny arc up which he climbs, more surely guess the dim curves of the future above him.

—ANDRE GIDE

THE LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE

To give more knowledge to a man than he is yet fitted to receive is a dangerous experiment. . . . We cannot consent to overflow the world at the risk of drowning them with a doctrine that has to be cautiously given out, and bit by bit like a too powerful tonic which can kill as well as cure.

—MAHATMA K.H.

THE knowledge necessary for “living the life” intelligently is made available in Theosophy. The intimate relation subsisting between all parts of Nature, visible and invisible, material, psychical and spiritual, when once understood, affords a Key to Right Living. Food for the body, for the mind and for the Soul is provided and a correct menu for the whole man is offered in Theosophy.

The keynote of the whole is Unity—a healthy body controlled by a pure and mature mind enables the Spiritual Soul to function in that body, through that mind. The fundamental aspect of the whole process is the harmony to be established between the unit on the one hand and the collectivity of units (the whole of Nature) on the other.

In the human kingdom this harmony manifests as the Universal Brotherhood of Man. Extending from this kingdom, that harmony has to be established with other kingdoms—the animal, the vegetable and the mineral on the visible plane and the kingdoms of Devata-Elementals Deva-Gods and Rishi-Sages on those which are invisible.

But there are powers of darkness and of evil like Bhuta-Ghosts, Pretas, Pisacha-Elementaries and so on, which are destructive in their nature and character. The Esoteric Philosophy is unequivocal in its instruction that the student who follows the Path shown, should shun these shades of Darkness. They have strange functions to perform, which are utilized by living and intelligent Nature and Masters of Nature, at times and in ways not understood by us. There are Lords of Light and Shades of Darkness, whose presence and function in the great economy of Nature are incomprehensible to the mind of the student of Theosophy. There are many recondite aspects of the Esoteric Philosophy connected with evil as it affects the human kingdom, but mastering that subject, like some others, forms no part of the work before the present-day student of Theosophy who aspires to tread the Inner Path of Chelaship and to become a Companion of the Great

Adepts who are Philanthropists and sacrifice their all in the service of humanity.

Once a Master wrote of the task of "hedging off wisdom from knowledge and tracing limits to that which is to be given at one time." For this cycle the Masters of Theosophy have given out a body of great truths by the aid of which we can make our lives pure, elevated and sublime, and can help our fellow-men to do likewise. To try to pry into what is not given is a dangerous game, involving loss of time and opportunity. Apposite are the words of the Master (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 22*):

The problem of true Theosophy and its great mission are, first, the working out of clear unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men; and second, the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life, as shall offer a field where they may be applied with most equitableness.

Such is the common work placed before all who are willing to act on these principles. It is a laborious task, and will require strenuous and persevering exertion; but it must lead you insensibly to progress, and leave you no room for any selfish aspirations *outside the limits traced*. [Italics ours.]

IF the kingdom of Heaven or New Jerusalem is to be a reality, then a common platform for all religions, sciences and philosophies must be found. This, Christianity *per se* cannot, in the nature of things, offer—neither, for that matter, can any other so-called religion—as it now stands; for all unduly exaggerate the personality of their Founders, Christianity more than others, as it makes Jesus very God of very God, and of his brother-*teachers in Christ* (or CHRISTOS) false prophets. We speak here of modern Church Christianity, not of the mystic religion of Christos, the LOGOS, the Western aspect of the one religious Philosophy, which can bind all men together as brothers. It is in the service of the latter that the Theosophical Society has become a humble handmaiden; seeking earnestly, but so far, vainly, her fellow servants among the bedizened flunkeys of State religions in the great *World's Fair*.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE HIGHER SCIENCE

II

[This is the concluding part of William Kingsland's article which appeared in *Theosophical Siftings*, Vol. I (1888). The first part was reprinted in our September issue.]

EACH and all can study in the school of the Higher Science with more or less success. Each one is compelled by the nature of his being so to do, but whether he shall push his way to the head of the classes, or grind slowly and painfully through the routine, depends upon his own individual efforts. There is only one object in what is taught, one curriculum, and one law of progress. We build up our *spiritual* self molecule by molecule, even as the physical body is built. It is a growth from within outwards, and never contrariwise. Imperceptibly our physical body drops the actual atoms of matter of which it is composed and assimilates new ones, developing functions and faculties in some directions, or losing them in others, according as it conforms or otherwise with the law of physical growth. There is a physical regeneration continually taking place, and there is also a spiritual regeneration, working with and through the physical. The spiritual body is nothing vague and shadowy; it is governed by laws as inflexible as those which condition the physical existence and consciousness. Occult science teaches what those laws are.

It is not our purpose here to recapitulate certain of the doctrines which have recently been given to the world through the medium of the Theosophical Society as more or less accurate representations of what Occult Science knows of the constitution of man, his origin and destiny. Those teachings should be studied in the light of our own individual experience, and in no case accepted as dogmatic or authoritative. There is a great mass of Theosophical literature from which we must extract the essence by using the touchstone of our inner consciousness. We are more concerned now to point out to such as seek for more Light than either Religion or Science can give, what is the direction in which they must look for that Light. Those who, resting upon dogma or creed, are carried easily along in the conventional and orthodox *rut*, and find religion a comparatively easy matter, being able to enjoy this life to the full while giving just enough attention to the affairs of the next to enable them, as they imagine, to escape the penalty of their sins, and enter at death into an exalted state

of happiness for ever and ever; to such as these—and they are only too numerous—any notion of a Science of Life, of the working of natural law in the spiritual world, must be utterly foreign. They live and move in a small ideal world of their own creation, nursing the illusion of the senses, and fondly imagining that their own little world of ideas is the *raison d'être* of all the rest of creation, and that what does not correspond with their own individual ideas must be false and atheistical. It is these people who are the real A-theists.

There is more hope for the man whose intellect denies the existence of a personal God, than for him who, not knowing himself, whence he comes or whither he goes, will yet postulate for such a God all the attributes of arrogance, jealousy, hatred, and revenge which exist in the unregenerate and sinful human heart. If they know not their own life, how shall they know the source from whence that life is derived? God is revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures and in the person of his Son, they will probably say. Yea, truly, he is so revealed if they had but eyes to see and ears to hear. But we may read the Scriptures every day of our lives, and yet be as ignorant of their real meaning as on the day we were born; nay, even more so; for it is written that unto babes and sucklings such things are revealed; while to the Scribes and Pharisees of today, the Bible is nothing more than chapter and verse for the accumulation of doctrine and dogma—of ecclesiasticism and the superstition and rubbish of centuries. It appears to us almost a hopeless task to endeavour to illuminate the mind of the self-satisfied religionist. We may focus the light of truth with the strongest lenses we possess, and yet we shall hardly be able to penetrate the gross materiality of their spiritual conceptions, the mists of illusion with which they have surrounded themselves.

Let us turn to a more hopeful class, to those who take a wider survey of life, and seek for a solution of its problems on a broader basis than that of sectarian Religion or dogmatic Science. Recognizing to a certain extent the unity of creation, and that each individual is a part of the great whole, they feel that unless they can explain the connection and show that whole to be good, creation must be a pandemonium, a chaos, a horror, and a curse. And yet they cannot believe this. There is that in their hearts which whispers, God is Love; and seeking ever for more light, they come sooner or later to find themselves in possession of a real faith, an intuitive knowledge of the good, and the strength and will to obtain it. Faith we must have; no man ever made a

single effort to obtain that which he did not realize as having an existence. But what we require is that our faith may be changed into sight. A man who is born blind may have faith in the existence of a world of form and colour, he can have no real knowledge of it; but, learning from those who have the knowledge, he may form some ideas concerning it, and believe in its existence. In the same way with our spiritual sight; unless we believe in the existence of the spiritual world and listen to the teachings of those who have cognizance of that world, we shall never make any effort towards its realization. If we wish our faith to become sight, we must develop our spiritual faculties. We may so develop our spiritual nature that it shall become more real to us than our physical nature; the world of sense and matter shall become less tangible and real to us than is the vague idea we now attach to the term spirit.

The aim of occultism is identically the same as that which is expressed in more or less imperfect language in every exoteric religion. It is union with the Divine. This can only be accomplished in one way, and that is by working with and for the Divine purpose in creation, and since that purpose is good and not evil, is life and not death, is unity and not division, we can only progress according to the energy we exert on the side of those forces which make for righteousness. Our progress depends upon a knowledge of the laws by which we are conditioned, not in a mere faith in the existence of law. There is no means of separating a cause from an effect, and whether that cause is set in motion in ignorance or in knowledge, the effect will be the same. There is no caprice in the physical world, and there can be no caprice in that higher world which conditions the lower. Our spiritual evolution is dependent upon laws which are as inflexible as those which operate on the physical plane, and are indeed the counterpart of those laws. We are only saved by faith in so far as our faith suffices to lead us to a knowledge of and conformity with law. Mankind advances in proportion as men come to know and understand natural law. Our physical well-being is recognized as dependent upon a knowledge of and conformity with these laws. If we disobey them, nature crushes us. Sin is a transgression of the Law. Not the law of a personal God; every Religion has a different set of such laws which it regards as infallible, and to which it attaches purely human conceptions of authority and penalty. The fact of the existence of Sin in the world is as *natural* as the existence of disease. We can only free ourselves from the one or the other as we come to a knowledge of the laws which condition us, and which are the only Divine laws. Being yet

imperfect and ignorant beings, we suffer for our transgressions, and through suffering are led to a knowledge of that which produces suffering.

The knowledge of the higher includes a knowledge of the lower, and, therefore, we are not surprised to find that those who have become adepts in the higher science have a knowledge of and control over physical forces which are utterly unknown to the world at large, and which indeed it would be disastrous to make known. The entrance to this knowledge is therefore guarded with jealous care, and none of its secrets are ever imparted until the student has by the most severe tests proved his moral qualities, and placed himself without reserve and without possibility of backsliding on the side of the powers of goodness. His work must be for humanity and not for himself. So long as there remains in him one particle of selfishness, one single personal desire, it will act as a deterrent to the attainment of the highest perfection of his being. He must sacrifice everything to the attainment of that purpose. This is that part of the teachings of Christ (the only *practical* part) which modern Christianity finds all too hard, and quietly ignores, endeavouring to accomplish a compromise between the good things of this life and the Kingdom of Heaven, to get the best of both worlds. And yet if there is one thing more than another that Christ taught in the plainest of language it is that no such compromise is possible. The hardest sayings of Christ are those which touch our pocket, and yet our pocket must be empty, and there must be no desire to fill it before we can obtain our final emancipation.

We have stated previously that the methods which Occult Science employs are essentially different from those of Physical Science; that Occult Science subordinates the physical and seeks to develop the spiritual, but this cannot be done, as many have supposed, by allowing the physical body to fall into dilapidation and disuse; by mortifying the physical member in order that the spiritual ones may develop. That which we have to mortify is the physical *desires*, but the physical organs and functions must be perfect and healthy, because the higher principles are dependent on the lower ones for their development, in our present stage of evolution; and there are certain organs in the human body which are directly concerned in this process. If the bodily functions are weak or diseased they react upon the higher ones. The spiritual faculties must be developed by the subordination of the physical faculties. The will must be absolute master over the physical body; every merely animal passion must be subdued and led into

its proper channel.

This is a work of the greatest difficulty, yet it is the first step towards an increase of spiritual life. It can seldom be accomplished in one lifetime. He who has ever tried to conquer one desire, one besetting sin, knows the magnitude of the task. No effort, however small, is ever lost; and though we may appear to make little or no progress, because the goal is still far off and our sight not strong enough to estimate distances, yet we must know that every time we succeed in subordinating one fond desire we have made a forward step on the path.

We see, then, that as students of the Higher Science we are required to do something more than merely acquire book learning, or the manipulation of the occult forces of nature.

It cannot be too often reiterated that the knowledge we are to acquire is the knowledge of self, and the power we are to exercise is the mastery over self. The macrocosm is contained within the microcosm. If we cannot command ourselves, our lower nature and desires, we are utterly unfit to control those forces which we should be able to use as powerful aids to our own selfish ends, or to oppress or destroy our fellow-creatures. When, however, by working for the Divine purpose in humanity instead of for our individual ends, we league ourselves with those powers which make for good; when we have purified our wills, our minds, and our bodies, then we shall acquire those faculties which now lie dormant within us, unable to act because of the grossness of our physical organization and conceptions. We shall then come to a real perceptive knowledge of the truth, we shall see not as in a glass darkly, but face to face.

Writing in a Christian country and for the most part for those who are familiar with the teachings of Christ, we have endeavoured to show how the Christian ideal must be realized to the full by those who desire the highest spiritual attainments. But it is not in the Bible alone that these truths lie buried. The fundamental truth of every religion is the same, but we have to clear away the human conceptions which have accumulated round the central truth, before we can get at the real esoteric meaning which underlies the letter and the form. The ancient Wisdom-Religion, Secret Doctrine, or Theosophy, is the source of each and every exoteric religion, and we cannot do better than study at the fountain-head. The Initiates taught the mysteries in allegory and fable, which the outside world accepted as literal and true, but the real meaning was only disclosed to the student, to those who had the courage to enter the portals, which were guarded

with jealous care, and with terrors which it required a bold spirit to face. It is still so. The kingdom of heaven must be taken by force. It is vain and idle to try and reconcile the external forms of religion, to dispute about the text and the literal meaning. When we have penetrated ever so little beneath the surface, we shall find a startling resemblance between one religion and another.

The great founders of religion were Initiates, who, having a knowledge of cyclic laws by which the race as a whole progresses, proclaimed at certain periods of the world's history that truth which has always existed and always been known. They proclaimed it in the manner best calculated to be received by those who had advanced sufficiently far to apprehend it. In order that the universal truth may be perceived by the finite mind, it must be manifested in some *form*, but the ultimate truth is as formless as the ultimate cause.

The great central truth of the unity of Nature, and the interdependence and correlation of all forces, physical, mental, and spiritual, together with the existence of the Divine Spark in man which will enable him ultimately to merge his individuality in the Divine Nature, and become the conscious creative power of the Universe, is that which was taught alike by Buddha and by Christ. We cannot perceive it so long as our attention is directed to the external form, and our energies wasted in the endeavour to reconcile those theories or dogmas with which the Church has overlaid the original teachings. The Church has lost the key to the "Mysteries," but that key is still to be found, and with it we may unlock one by one every secret in the Universe. Much may be learnt if we will but have the courage to throw overboard our preconceived notions; and without any very great effort we may come to understand much that will remain an insoluble riddle unless we have the key which Occult Science supplies.

A study of Theosophical literature, and more especially of certain teachings which have recently been given to the world through the medium of the Theosophical Society, will, in many cases, throw a flood of light into minds which have long been groping in the dark, and will show the possibility of advancing along certain lines which may be in harmony with religious instincts, but which conventional religion has failed to demonstrate. But in order that we may advance, we must make a real effort to develop our spiritual nature, to assist Nature in the evolution which she is endeavouring to accomplish. It is something to understand the theory, and to clear up our intellectual difficulties.

This is the first step, but those who would use the key to unlock the higher mysteries of their life must not stop short at intellectual acquirements. The possibilities which lie before us are as boundless as the Universe itself. We cannot realize those possibilities with our mere physical or intellectual faculties. The higher Wisdom is foolishness to the world. It must first be intuitively perceived. The man must have faith in his Divine Nature, otherwise he will never rise above those things which belong to the world of matter and form, and which are therefore temporal and perishable. Is not even this the teaching of Christ? And yet how little it is practically applied, because Theology takes the place of Religion, and a belief in certain doctrines and dogmas is made the essential part of spiritual regeneration. This must inevitably be so as long as the spiritual man has not awakened to consciousness, and the spiritual world is regarded as a thing vague, shadowy, mysterious, and supernatural. The term supernatural is a fit one to hide our ignorance, but it is utterly false in its first meaning. We may fitly use the term super-sensuous, but the further we progress the more we discover that Nature is one in every part, the expression in an endless variety of forms of the one central invisible cause. Even physical science is now able to explain on perfectly *natural* grounds many things which were formerly regarded as manifestations of a supernatural agency.

But why should the spiritual world remain a mystery and a blank? The answer is very simple, and is contained in the idea which most people have—that at death they will enter that world. Men recognize, to a certain extent, that it is the physical which throws a veil over their spiritual sight, but having no real knowledge of their spiritual nature, and of the relation which exists between the spiritual and the physical, they draw a sharp line of demarcation between the two. Not knowing that the spiritual world is already within them, and is the basis of the physical, they relegate the operation of spiritual laws to a supernatural sphere. If a man find not God or the kingdom of Heaven within him, where else shall he find it?

It is only real *knowledge* gained by practical *experience* which can clear away the mists of superstition and dogma which cloud our intellectual vision, and it is only by the exercise of our spiritual faculties and the subordination of our physical ones that we can gain a real perception on the spiritual plane.

Nature is an open book for us to read, and the page is only blank because we have not the necessary powers of sight to distinguish

the characters. We are for the most part colour-blind, and cannot even tell black from white, good from evil. Yet there have been men in all ages who have seen with open eyes the world of spirit, and understood the operation of spiritual laws. But how to communicate their knowledge to those who had not sight, that was the problem. It could only be done by symbolism and allegory, with the certainty that the symbol would be mistaken for the real, and the allegory for the truth. Eighteen hundred years of "Christianity" have shown us what can be done in this way.

Those who have apprehended the central truth will recognize it, whatever may be the allegorical form in which it is expressed, and will never mistake the form for the substance. Therefore it is that there is no religion (as that word is commonly understood) possible for him who has recognized the Truth, because there is no religion higher than Truth, and when that is worshipped in the inmost sanctuary of the heart there is no longer need for the external form of worship. This also Christ taught to the woman of Samaria.

We say again that Occult Science possesses a knowledge of the constitution of man—a knowledge of the laws of the universe, spiritual and physical, which are not ever dreamt of by Theology or Science; that this is not merely an intellectual knowledge, but a direct perception, and that that perception may be obtained by all who have sufficient faith and sufficient courage to lay claim to their Divine birthright, and who will not sell this for a mess of pottage. It is not easy to accomplish, but Nature is infinitely patient, and what cannot be accomplished in one lifetime may be done in the next.

This is but a sketch of the region which lies open to the bold explorer. It is the region through which each and all must pass sooner or later to obtain that which is the end and aim of his existence. It is the region towards which the race, as a whole, is progressing through cycle after cycle of experience and evolution. It lies before us, yet also behind, and all around. It is only before and behind to our limited ideas of time and space. That which has been, is, and will be.

Many will deny the existence of this Higher Science, but others will find in it the possibility of that which their intuition teaches them, but which hitherto they have been unable to formulate.

HUMILITY AND ASSERTIONS

No true theosophist, from the most ignorant up to the most learned, ought to claim infallibility for anything he may say or write upon occult matters. The chief point is to admit that, in many a way, in the classification of either cosmic or human principles, in addition to mistakes in the order of evolution, and especially on metaphysical questions, those of us who pretend to teach others more ignorant than ourselves—are all liable to err. Thus mistakes have been made in *Isis Unveiled*, in *Esoteric Buddhism*, in *Man*, in *Magic: White and Black*, etc., etc.; and more than one mistake is likely to be found in the present work. This cannot be helped. For a large or even a small work on such abstruse subjects to be entirely exempt from error and blunder, it would have to be written from its first to its last page by a great adept, if not by an Avatar. Then only should we say, "This is verily a work without sin or blemish in it!" But, so long as the artist is imperfect, how can his work be perfect? "Endless is the search for truth!" Let us love it and aspire to it for its own sake, and not for the glory or benefit a minute portion of its revelation may confer on us. For who of us can presume to have the *whole* truth at his fingers' ends, even upon one minor teaching of Occultism?

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 640

IN such a strain has H.P.B. warned us not to be too positive about the assertions that we make. We all are finite beings and nothing is more harmful and more derogatory to the Cause that we have at heart than the notion that we can hardly err in our thinking and in our actions. The claim to infallibility can arise only in disorganized or diseased brains, whereas humility and a just appreciation of our thoughts and deeds lead us on to real progress. Infallibility implies perfection, and perfection means embodying the Light of Nirvana. The words quoted above ought to be indelibly impressed on the tablets of our memory and engraved in gold on the inner walls of our heart, whence the voice of Divine Conscience whispers its sweet utterances of the Eternal Verities. The true and faithful always consult their Inner God and check its Voice as an Echo of the Divine Conscience which is Supreme Wisdom.

The hope that our heart may be soaked through and through with Wisdom makes it imperative to apply the sound advice that H.P.B. has given us. Then, even in an emergency we shall be able to act according to the promptings of our conscience and

derive the consolation and the comfort that we are under the guidance of our Inner Ruler and that nothing untoward from Its standpoint can come to us.

To err is human. But Impersonal Wisdom, however misunderstood, has the hallmark of infallibility. In the above quotation, we have a fine expression of H.P.B.'s humility—about herself and about her monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*. But it is well to recall what Mahatma K.H. wrote of her and of it. The first extract which follows is from a letter to A. P. Sinnett (1882); the others from a letter to Col. H. S. Olcott (1888):

In the superficial details of her homely, hard-working, commonplace daily life and affairs, you discern but unpracticality, womanly impulses, often absurdity and folly; we, on the contrary, light daily upon traits of her inner nature the most delicate and refined, and which would cost an uninitiated psychologist years of constant and keen observation, and many an hour of close analysis and efforts to draw out of the depth of that most subtle of mysteries—human mind—and one of her most complicated machines—H.P.B.'s mind—and thus learn to know her true *inner Self*.

One of the most valuable effects of Upasika's mission is that it drives men to self-study and destroys in them blind servility for persons. Observe your own case, for example. But your revolt, good friend, against her "infallibility"—as you once thought it—has gone too far, and you have been unjust to her, for which I am sorry to say, you will have to suffer hereafter, along with others. Just now, on deck, your thoughts about her were dark and sinful, and so I find the moment a fitting one to put you on your guard. . . .

I have also noted your thoughts about the "Secret Doctrine." Be assured that what she has not *annotated* from scientific and other works, we have given or *suggested* to her. Every mistake or erroneous notion, corrected and explained by her from the works of other theosophists *was corrected by me, or under my instruction*. It is a more valuable work than its predecessor, an epitome of occult truths that will make it a source of information and instruction for the earnest student for long years to come.

WE are marching along the endless pathway of unrealized possibilities of human growth.

—FRANCIS W. PARKER

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Forty-two years have passed since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (so called because they were found hidden in caves near the Dead Sea), and 30 years have gone by since Israel appointed a commission to investigate their authenticity and have them published. Yet only 170 of the scrolls exhumed were allowed to be published, while over 400 unpublished documents remain in the hands of Israel's Department of Antiquities. Many Biblical scholars believe that these scrolls may not be published at all because some of the more powerful and conservative leaders of the Catholic and other churches are putting pressure on Israel to keep them secreted.

The scholars are of the view that some of the writings in these pre-Christian scrolls pose a challenge to many of the claims the churches make concerning the history of those years, the origin of Christianity, and its "uniqueness" and "superiority." The cover story in the July-August issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, written by its editor Hershel Shanks, states that many distinguished Biblical scholars, including the Oxford don Geza Vermes, called the failure to publish the Dead Sea Scrolls "the academic scandal *par excellence* of the twentieth century."

"From time to time," Shanks writes, "there have been rumours that the scrolls were being secreted because of the threatening material they contain — perhaps in some way undermining accepted beliefs or interpretations." Moreover, some of the scroll fragments are deteriorating so rapidly that if the outside world cannot see them soon, it may never be able to see them.

The scrolls are held by most scholars to be commentaries written by the Essenes, a Jewish sect which had its headquarters at Qumran beside the Dead Sea. The lost religion of the Essenes, now illuminated by the scrolls, can provide a "missing link" between classical Judaism and its offshoot, Christianity. The following from *Isis Unveiled* could suggest a new line of research to scroll interpreters:

The great similitude traced by some critics between the rites and observances of the earliest Christians and those of the Essenes may be accounted for without the slightest difficulty. The Essenes . . . were converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judea at one time, since the reign of Asoka, the zealous propagandist; and . . . it is evidently to the Essenes that belongs the honour of having had the Nazarene reformer, Jesus, as a pupil. (II, 132)

If there were no *Christians*, there were Chrestians long before the era of Christianity; and the Essenes belonged to the latter as well as to all other initiated brotherhoods, without even mentioning the Christnites of India. . . . “The worship of Christ was not universal at this early date,” explains Mackenzie, “by which I mean that Christolatry had not been introduced; but the worship of *Chrestos*—the Good Principle—had preceded it by many centuries, and even survived the general adoption of Christianity, as shown on monuments still in existence. . . .” (II, 323-24)

Some of the “unique” aspects of the Gospel stories and teachings can be traced to these scrolls, and the so-called “Christian ethics” are found in the Manual of Discipline of the Essenes, who are spoken of respectfully by historians. *The Theosophical Glossary* comments under “Osiris”:

The legend of Christ was found ready in almost all its details thousands of years before the Christian era, and the Church fathers had no greater difficulty than to simply apply it to a new personage.

There have been several references in this magazines to the familiar “poltergeist” phenomena, such as those described in the *August Reader's Digest* (Indian ed.). Poltergeist—literally, a noisy ghost—is the German name given to outbreaks of seemingly unaccountable disturbances, such as knocks and thumps, flying objects, toppling furniture, self-opening doors, objects seeming to pass through walls, all apparently defying basic laws of physics. Such occurrences have frightened and intrigued people for thousands of years.

For more than a century, psychical researchers, many of them trained scientists, have tried to solve the mystery of the poltergeist. Some are sceptical of there being a “psychic” explanation. Though some of the phenomena are “everyday occurrences misunderstood, or downright trickery,” it is generally conceded that there *are* phenomena with “seemingly no rational answer.” The *Reader's Digest* article relates the personal experiences of Tony Cornell, president of Cambridge University Psychical Research Society, and Tom Willis, the vicar of Holy Trinity, Bridlington, appointed an official exorcist by his bishop in 1972:

Cornell, drinking tea in a poltergeist-ridden house, found in his cup a key he had seen seconds before in the front door, many metres away. Willis, called out at 3 am to find a house in turmoil with

furniture overturned and ornaments smashed, sat down opposite the woman of the house and her son. "Suddenly a bolt of electricity made my head whiplash," he says. "I saw the boy and his mother jerk, as if the same charge had hit them with reduced velocity. My head ached for 20 minutes." . . .

Many poltergeist outbreaks centre on one person, frequently a psychologically disturbed teenager. Occasionally, though, they seem linked to a building.

Psychologists are as far as ever from a rational explanation of the laws under which these phenomena become possible; for, however strange, the occurrences are subject to law. The old name for the "noisy ghosts" is simply "elementals," and these must be thought of not as "beings" but as nature forces. In a note in *The Theosophist* for May 1882 (p. 199), H.P.B. refers to her earlier article entitled "Stone Showers" (*The Theosophist*, August 1881; reprinted in *The Theosophical Movement*, January 1939) and states:

In that connection we protested against the theory of the Spiritualists that this class of phenomena are due to the agency of disembodied human spirits, and suggested that they went to prove the existence of prankish nature-elementals. The Djinnat or Djinn of the Oriental demonology are of this class, as the reader of the *Arabian Nights* will remember. They can be made subservient to one who has learnt the secret of their subjugation by occult means. Only those who would believe that we consider them as beings of any sort—least of all *intelligent* beings—will be very much mistaken.

H.P.B.'s article "Nature's Human Magnets" (reprinted in *She Being Dead Yet Speaketh*) also throws much light on the rationale of such magnetic phenomena.

Prejudices are of two kinds: one born of ignorance and another of self-interest. While the first can easily be removed by proper education, the latter being wilfully professed cannot be so eradicated; even as it is easy to wake up a sleeping person but not one who pretends to sleep. For, such men of prejudice are afflicted by a congestion of the mind which, like a wart, prevents the easy flow of thought. This kind of prejudice is evidenced among the medical profession, whose antagonism to Ayurveda, the ancient Indian medical system, according to Dr. B. Ramamurthi, the eminent neurosurgeon, "not only harms science.

but also the public which needs the best treatment for a particular illness." In an article in *The Hindu* (August 30, 1989), he states:

The medical profession has to provide this relief, without any inbuilt prejudice against any proved therapeutic method. It would be good for medical science and for the public if prejudices are shed and Ayurveda is studied and practised from a proper perspective.

In the first Volume of *Isis Unveiled*, Madame Blavatsky furnishes sufficient proofs to show that modern science has little or no reason to boast of originality. She quotes from an author "who has passed long years in India studying their philosophy," and who in his work *Christna et le Christ* tabulates Indian achievements in the fields of philosophy, astronomical science, mathematics, physics, chemistry, grammar, poetry, music, architecture. Referring to medical science the author says:

Their knowledge was truly astonishing. In Tcharaka and Sousruta, the two princes of Hindu medicine, is laid down the system which Hippocrates appropriated later. Sousruta notably enunciates the principles of preventive medicine or hygiene, which he places much above curative medicine—too often, according to him, empirical. Are we more advanced today? It is not without interest to remark that the Arab physicians, who enjoyed a merited celebrity in the middle ages—Averroes among others—constantly spoke of the Hindu physicians, and regarded them as the initiators of the Greeks and themselves.

Regarding the science of pharmacology, it is stated:

They knew all the simples, their properties, their use, and upon this point have not yet ceased to give lessons to Europe. Quite recently we have received from them the treatment of asthma, with the datura.

And finally on the subject of surgery, the writer says:

In this they are not less remarkable. They made the operation for the stone, succeeded admirably in the operation for cataract, and the extraction of the foetus, of which all the unusual or dangerous cases are described by Tcharaka with an extraordinary scientific accuracy. (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 619)

What was written more than a century ago about the distinction attained by the ancient Indian system of Ayurveda is reaffirmed today by Dr. Ramamurthi when he says that new knowledge on the functioning of the human body, arising out of advances in basic medical sciences and molecular biology, is

throwing forth many indicators confirming the modern relevance of Ayurveda. He writes:

Ayurveda is the science of life and not merely a system of medicine. It emphasizes the rules and regulations and the code of conduct that should govern daily life and social pursuits, which will result in physical and mental well-being. Even before the WHO (World Health Organization) gave its definition of total health, Ayurveda had clearly indicated that this involves physical, mental, moral and spiritual well-being. Positive health implies an integrated pattern of these four areas of human experience.

Not content with the welfare of the human being, this ancient system also emphasized the interrelationship of all living organisms, plants, animals and men, and the interaction between them and their environment. All are part of an integrated whole.

Recent advances in molecular biology and subcellular functioning have shown that organs do not function independently of one another and that there is a general correlation and control which spreads throughout an organism and makes it function as a single unit. "These concepts," says Dr. Ramamurthi, "are close to the Ayurvedic concept of *Tridosha* [*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*], which emphasize holistic control of different functions in the body, through the various organs and systems."

Ayurveda is a complete system which also emphasizes positive aspects like healthy diet, proper exercise, good habits and a cheerful frame of mind as essentials for positive health.

Some 200 academics, politicians, scientists, human rights and peace workers met in Yamoussoukro (Cote d'Ivoire) from June 26 to July 1 for a Unesco organized congress on "Peace in the Minds of Men." Author and rector of the University for Peace in Costa Rica, Tapio Varis, set the tone of the conference when he said:

We all depend on one biosphere. . . national frontiers are becoming increasingly less relevant as parameters of a rational organization of society. But our thinking models do not yet reflect this oneness of the world.

The congress recommended that peace and human rights studies be included in all education programmes and that peace research be strongly promoted. Unesco Director General, Federico Mayor, also announced the creation of a prize for peace research. (*Unesco Sources*, September 1989).

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