

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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THE WAY DOWNWARD

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PIOUS but false is the belief that the Soul enjoys eternal happiness if the person dies holding to the "right faith." By right faith, belief in churchianity is implied for the Christian, who dies believing; the Muslim considers himself faithful if he dies with the words on his lips: "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet"; and so on.

A wicked sinner, however, does not turn into a saint because his body dies; nor is an ignorant blunderer suddenly transformed by bodily death into an all-knowing sage.

Contrariwise, people believe that a heathen, an infidel, a *durvand* or a *mlechha* is bound to suffer in hell, either never-never-ending, or terminating through metempsychosis as the sinner expiates through abject and ghastly long, long suffering.

Nature clearly indicates, and Theosophy teaches, that life-processes have the character of perpetual motion. Eternal heaven or eternal hell for one life's wickedness or religious belief is, on the face of it, unnatural, against common sense and moral perception.

Among the numerous crimes of priestcraft, the upholding of this false belief is a major one. But is there any basis and any explanation for this crass and crude notion? There is. *Nirvana* and *Avitchi* are terms which imply knowledge about the Eternal Bliss experienced by the emancipated *Nirvanees*, and the eternal torment experienced

in *Avitchi* by the lonely entity who, having lived many lives of increasing wickedness, finds himself isolated with a peculiar type of memory which gnaws at him. Eternal *Nirvana* and eternal *Avitchi* are not eternal in the sense of never-never-ending. Eternity, however long, begins and ends. Philosophy speaks of sempiternity and eternity, and Theosophy distinguishes between Time and Duration. *Nirvana* and *Avitchi*, however long, come to an end, and the Absolute Power of Nature and Nature's Law spells continuous and never-ending progression. Beginningless and endless is the process of Perpetual Motion—the symbol of the Supreme Spirit.

What, then, do the downward path to *Avitchi* and the upward gliding to *Nirvana* signify?

Every man and every woman is not immortal; each person has to win immortality. Writes H.P.B.: "Personal virtue could claim no merit, unless it had passed through the furnace of temptation."

The technique is given in the third of the Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled*:

Man is also triune: he has his objective, physical body; his vitalizing astral body (or soul), the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third—the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity. (*Isis*, II, 588)

Progression and retrogression are the eternal ways which the human kingdom ever encounters. If a man does not attempt, or attempting does not succeed, in winning his own immortality, he recedes and often enters the declivity which leads to *Avitchi*.

How and where does this downward course begin? Both in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Dhammapada* the downward path to destruction is described. The *Gita* succinctly speaks of the fatal descent:

He who attendeth to the inclinations of the senses, in them hath a concern; from this concern is created passion, from passion anger, from anger is produced delusion, from delusion a loss of the memory, from the loss of memory loss of discrimination, and from loss of discrimination loss of all! (II, 62-63)

Musing on objects of sense creates a concern in them and leads to a longing to possess them. By attachment we want to yoke ourselves to them as intimately as possible. From this longing, passion is born—not only passion for those particular sense-objects, but passion for possessing the entire world of the senses and the organs. A person has passion, not only for money, for example, but also for fame, power, etc., born of passion for money. A person does not have only sex-lust, but other lusts akin to it—*e.g.*, obscenity of speech arises; and so on. *Kama*—passion—is the builder and sustainer of egotism—the lower "I"-making tendency. Failure to secure the object of desire produces anger; success in obtaining it produces covetousness; covetousness ultimately, through frustration, produces anger. Anger results in *Moha*—delusion. A deluded man parts company with his memory, which is closely allied to knowledge and experience. A man develops delusion, like any other quality, gradually. Every indulgence in anger deepens delusion. Delusion begets loss of judgment, through loss of *Buddhi*, and the entire life-process is one long line of destruction—"loss of all."

So, by not controlling the senses and letting the desires and passions have their way, we lose the power to control and the guidance of the controller.

Chapter Twenty-two of the *Dhammapada* offers the same truth in a different way: An evil deed is better left undone. Guard yourself within and without. Speech which reports the untrue and refrains from expressing the true drags a man downward. Better for a man to swallow an iron ball than to live unrestrainedly, eating the food of other-dependence.

Of special value is the instruction to the practitioner: the psychological demerit of false asceticism, of an act carelessly done, of a vow badly kept, of disobedience to accepted discipline, is directly pointed out. A lax practitioner scatters more and more the dust of his passions. False shame, false fear and evil-seeing are contrasted with right shame, with what should be feared, with right handling when real evil is perceived.

The Pythagorean downward track has four steps—Belly, Sloth,

Luxury and Rage.

Whatever way we look, we find that the senses and organs arouse desires, for the satisfying of which *Kama* presses the mind into its service and exploits it; loss of mental integrity causes further retrogression, and delusion ensues, destroying the Soul, the Thinker.

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LIGHT AND DARKNESS

DEEPAVALI, the Festival of Lights, will be celebrated this month. We should understand its meaning and its message in order to participate in the festivities in an intelligent and enlightened manner.

What is light? Science gives but a speculative answer, for it has not yet found out the real nature of light, nor its source. Ancient philosophers and poets spoke of different kinds of light, and some of them coupled light with darkness. As Krishna says in the Eighth Chapter of the *Gita*, "These two, light and darkness, are the world's eternal ways." Darkness is associated with death, but death or change is a universal phenomenon and takes place perpetually. *Pralayas* of many types bring about the death of universes and solar systems. Death and birth pertain not only to the body and to what is physical and visible, but also to mind and soul.

The Festival of Lights represents many things; it symbolizes numerous spiritual events and has various meanings and messages; but let us confine ourselves to that which will prove the most useful and practical in the daily struggle of our existence.

Light and darkness are a great pair: "Darkness is Father-Mother: Light their son," says an old Eastern proverb. "Darkness is the eternal matrix in which the sources of light appear and disappear" (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 41). It is the background in which light and lights manifest. Hence, light is inherent and hidden in darkness, and darkness in light. What we call darkness is light—the most mysterious and highest kind of light. Krishna is sometimes spoken of as Shyam, the Dark One, for in his innermost nature he is that Dark Light that no mortal mind can comprehend. "What is light to us is darkness to certain insects, and the eye of the clairvoyant sees illumination where the normal eye perceives only blackness" (*S.D.*, I, 41).

In this very phenomenon we come across one of the clues to the understanding of this festival. Every day, 365 days in the year, we have light, then why do people illuminate their homes, buildings, public places, etc., with extra lights during this festival? It is to

remind themselves that there are other lights which human beings do not use ordinarily, lights invisible to the eye of matter. When our minds and souls, purified of earthly dross, rise on the wings of *Viveka* and *Vairagya*, discrimination and dispassion, then only we see heavenly lights; and the Festival of Lights reminds us of this rare spiritual phenomenon.

In Nature, there are three kinds of light: (1) There is the known objective light, that of the sun. On every object on earth the light of the sun falls, to sustain and to nourish. But what is the source of that light? What is the sun? Whence does the sun itself derive its light? Modern science does not give a sure answer, but Ancient Science does. (2) In the *Ishopanishad*, the sun is said to be a veil of golden light which hides the real Power or *Shakti*. It is that Power which is the cause of light, the mother of visible light. (3) The father is the superior Protean Power, Dark Light, Krishna.

We see the reality of this teaching day after day as a symbol prevailing in Nature. Night represents Krishna, dark and mysterious; but in the Second Chapter of the *Gita* it is said: "What is night to those who are unenlightened is as day" to the gaze of the self-governed Sage, because the Sage can see that mysterious Darkness which is Real Light, the father of all known lights. Joining day and night are twilight and dawn, the *Sandhya* periods. Not superstitiously, not in ignorance, but knowing the truth and possessing the knowledge did our ancient Sires appoint *Sandhya* worship, twice every day, which is nowadays misunderstood or ignored. This *Sandhya* observance, when *Gayatri*, the Mother of all *Shaktis* or powers, is worshipped and invoked, is the calling forth of the knowledge and the blessing of that Light which is superior to ordinary sunlight, as a powerful electric lamp is superior to ordinary candle light. "Esoteric philosophy maintains that during the *Sandhyas*, the 'Central Sun' emits *creative light*—passively so to say" (*S.D.*, II, 239). And then the day is born out of the dawn, and sunlight directly touches all. So we have the three lights—the Dark Light of Night, the pearl-like beautiful radiance of dawn-*sandhya*, and the ordinary light coming from the sun.

Turning from Nature to man, we can see the expression of the

triple lights: sense-light is like sunlight; soul-light is like *sandhya*-light; spirit-light, like the mysterious Light of Darkness or Night.

(a) Sense-light is like the lamps we use every day when our eyesight fails us after the sun goes down. Our senses perceive by the borrowed light of the sun. The five senses and the mind as the sixth make the personal man, and this personal man moves by the light of the senses. When senses and mind cease to function, the personal man is dead. Now, the man of senses, or the personal man, is most active during the day. Day, or waking consciousness, is the time-period for the personal man. Living by borrowed light, he gets caught up in the shadows cast by objects, whose shining is by borrowed light. Sunlight is used by those who have no light of their own, *i.e.*, not by self-luminous men and objects, but by dense men and opaque objects. Therefore we have the phenomenon of shadows. Imagine for a moment that we were all self-luminous beings, *i.e.*, our bodies were made of self-luminous cells and molecules; we would then cast no shadows. Our sense-light is like sunlight; it causes shadows. We mistake these shadows for realities. Just as a dog barks at the moving shadows of the wind-swinging tree, so do we bark and howl at the shadows cast by passions and desires. Those who wholly depend upon their sense-light, often get confused by the shadows cast by their own likes and dislikes, their loves and hates. And yet, just as without sunlight the earth's evolution cannot proceed, so also human growth is not possible without sense-light. Living by the borrowed light of the sun, our senses reflecting that sunlight, we in our personal capacity are slowly, very slowly, becoming luminous beings.

What is the best way of utilizing this sense-light? Just as the careful scientist takes every precaution to be accurate in his observations and experiments, so must we take great pains to ascertain that what we observe are the actual objects and not their shadows. A botanist does not fix his observation on the shadow of a tree, but on the tree itself. Now, in the world of personalities, these shadows represent the false values of things. The real value of anything is assigned by Nature itself, but human beings assign to things their own values. A mother thinks her own son to be someone

special, but it may be, often is, a mere shadowy reflection of her own love. What value does great Nature assign to the man? That is his real value, and so with everything. Our sense-light is personal-light, and our desires and yearnings, our wishes and longings play a part in that sense-light.

We need not despair. What is the source of this sense-light? Just as sunlight or daylight comes from *Shakti* and *Sandhya*, so does sense-light come from soul-light. In this personality, in each of us who is an incarnated being, there is the soul, hidden by our deeds and feelings and thoughts. The one immortal soul takes up many personalities as it passes from life to life. And so we must go in search of soul-light, the real mother of our very being.

(b) Soul-light is not mind-light, the light of ordinary knowledge. The personal mind is rightly spoken of as the sixth sense. Soul is not what we commonly know as mind. Soul is the higher impersonal mind; hence soul-light is the light of the higher impersonal man—the real *Manushya*. When that soul-light illumines any field of thought, no shadows are cast. *Daiviprakriti*, the Light of the Logos, the Light of Krishna, is that deepest Wisdom which is spiritual wealth. The real man or soul is Sarasvati and Lakshmi combined, and many other goddesses as well. The Festival of Light is the festival of Lakshmi, the Goddess of Prosperity, but she never, never brings wealth without wisdom as a blessing. Material wealth without spiritual wisdom becomes a curse, making man suffer. In all of us, soul-light is manifest only at "twilight" periods. When, after the rest of sleep, we have forgotten our worries and woes, that soul-light can be used by us; and when an honest day's toil is over, when with a contented heart, albeit with a tired head, and without the pangs of a guilty conscience, we repair to our homes, that soul-light again is our guide and friend. But Theosophy teaches that if regularly, day by day, we make use of soul-light even for short periods, at the end of the "year," *i.e.*, of our incarnation, in the closing period of our lives, we shall find ourselves celebrating, not symbolically but really, the Festival of Lights or *Deepavali*. Our soul will cast illumination on everything, and shine like the lit-up palace of a king.

(c) Spirit-Light, the mystery Light of our own Spirit, is indescribable. After describing his *Vibhutis*, his many lights, Krishna says, "But what, O Arjuna, hast thou to do with so much knowledge as this?" Our real Spirit-Light is the highest and deepest Mystery, and it is said that by the aid of this Spirit-Light we see numberless universes like fish in an ocean; we behold countless *Brahmandas*, Cosmoses, like we behold a star-studded sky. When that Light shines in us, we are not *like* God, we *are* God. We are like the Dark Mystery of Night, the source of all light-beings, but unknown to any. Such Spirit-Lights are the real Gurus, the Mahatmas, ever hidden, yet ever enlightening.

Let us turn now to the practical aspects of the teaching. What can we do with sense-light and soul-light, leaving alone in reverence the mystery of Spirit-Light?

Sense-light, like sunlight, needs a reflector. A piece of charcoal does not reflect sunlight; a crystal reflects it; but a diamond is a perfect reflector. Our personalities can never become self-luminous in themselves; but they can and must become perfect reflectors of the light of the soul. Many of us are like pieces of charcoal; we have to become like diamonds. The necessary qualifications are purity and knowledge. The dross, the dregs, the dirt, must be removed, and with knowledge and devotion we must polish our personalities, till, purified and refined, they become perfect reflectors of our soul-light. We need to purify ourselves of evil thoughts, vices, wrong speech, blunders and crimes. Why do people make mistakes, and commit blunders and even crimes and sins? Because they have thought and felt and spoken mistakenly, blunderingly, sinfully. We will not be able to desist from mistakes and crimes if we do not guard our mind and our tongue. As one thinks, so does he speak; and every word spoken in jest, or thoughtlessly, or uselessly, precipitates blunders. People often ask, when their slips and errors are pointed out to them, "How *did* I make that mistake?" Let them analyse their acts, words and thoughts, and they will soon learn.

So let us begin with thoughts, and we will be able to eradicate vices; think *before* we speak, and we will be able to do away with

not only harsh words, but also evil deeds; think with the help of our imagination before we actually perform our deeds, and we will eradicate blunders and crimes. This fourfold purity is made available to each one of us in the *Sandhya-puja*, the evening worship—or self-examination. Our morning worship must consist of four parts: (1) Actions which remind us and teach us of sacrifice, for sacrifice is the purifier of actions. (2) Repetition of *mantras*, verses, holy words, which are purifiers of speech. (3) Praise of virtues, embodied by the heroes of the spiritual world, to build in our hearts, by the power of imagination, the glorious figures of the Virtuous Immortals; nothing purifies us from our vices and weaknesses as this. (4) Lastly, our minds must dwell on abstract, impersonal, grand, metaphysical ideas, for such break the fetters of personality, liberalize our minds, give them a glorious, unselfish and impersonal colouring.

No *puja*, no worship, no prayer, is worth that name unless these four purifiers exist in the ritual. Such a ritual, performed at dawn and twilight, half an hour in the morning, half an hour in the evening, will bring in our brains, in our eyes, at our fingertips, on our tongue and lips, soul-light. Our organs hide and will not permit soul-light to pour out through them; deliberate effort at this fourfold purity, twice a day, will make that soul-light stream forth at every gate of the body.

Without purification we cannot touch our soul, but with purity alone we cannot succeed. *Sandhya-puja*, purity-ritual, must be supplemented by study of the Science of the Soul. Goodness and virtue are grand and beautiful, but unless we have knowledge and wisdom, we shall fall prey to exploitation. Have we not noticed how even in ordinary life mere virtue, because it is not wedded to wisdom, suffers and is taken advantage of? If we are harmless as doves, but possess not the wisdom of the serpent, we shall soon be good meat for some cunning cat or devouring dog! So let us seek Wisdom—not knowledge of matter, but of spirit, not knowledge about things of the world and the body, but of soul and immortality.

That will soon bring us to Spirit-Light—the mysterious light of the Masters, *Jivan-Muktas*, real Mahatmas. Through Theosophy,

the Science of the Soul, we come to know the Master-Theosophists, Perfected Souls. Theosophy is like *Daiviprakriti*, and Masters are like Krishna; Theosophy is like *Gayatri*, and Masters the hidden power in the *Gayatri*. They are the Great Teachers, the Healers of body, mind and soul. Their Knowledge heals us of every ailment, every disease. Theosophy has its teaching about healing and health, but we must recognize the true Doctors of Divinity, the Radiant Beings, Wise Worshippers of Sarasvati, Prosperous *Pujaris* of Lakshmi, whose *Ashrams* are always full of Lights, not just once a year, but for all days. May those Perpetual Lights help us and give us the power to be guided, not by sense-light, but by soul-light!

It is barely possible that the minds of the present generation are not quite ripe for the reception of Occult truths. Such will be the retrospect furnished to the advanced thinkers of the Sixth Root Race of the history of the acceptance of Esoteric Philosophy—fully and unconditionally. Meanwhile the generations of our Fifth Race will continue to be led away by prejudice and preconceptions. Occult Sciences will have the finger of scorn pointed at them from every street corner, and everyone will seek to ridicule and crush them in the name, and for the greater glory, of Materialism and its so-called Science....The Theosophists and occultists stand arraigned by public opinion, which still holds high the banner of the inductive Sciences. The latter have, then, to be examined; and it must be shown how far their achievements and discoveries in the realm of natural laws are opposed, not so much to our claims, as to the facts in nature. The hour has now struck to ascertain whether the walls of the modern Jericho are so impregnable that no blast of the Occult trumpet is ever likely to make them crumble.

PERSONALITY AND INDIVIDUALITY

"DEATH is certain to all things which are born, and rebirth to all mortals," says the *Gita*. More than the surety of birth, we are aware of the inevitability of death.

Sir Thomas Browne said, "I am not so much afraid of death as ashamed of it," the implication being that with death all our wishes would be quenched like a torch dipped into the water. The question arises in the minds of many: "Is there something in me that will endure, or shall I vanish one day into nothingness?" The answer to this would depend upon what we mean by "I."

We find that in a child the sense of Individuality grows very slowly. For a long time the child says, "Baby wants the ball," or, "Paul wants the ball"; and only much later it learns to say, "I want the ball." It is then that the child has become conscious of an inner self.

We also notice that our height, weight, colour of the hair and other physical characteristics may change, yet the "I-am-I" consciousness remains with us throughout. So also in case of loss of memory, we may forget our name, address, etc.; or a schizophrenic person may say, "I am Napoleon," or even "I am a railway engine." So there may be confusion at the level of name and form, but the sense of "I-ness" is still there. In *The Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. says: "We distinguish between the simple fact of self-consciousness, the simple feeling that 'I am I,' and the complex thought that 'I am Mr. Smith' or 'Mrs. Brown.'" "Mr. Smith" really means just a series of experiences strung together by the thread of memory, but these experiences do not make him feel that he is himself. They produce a temporary feeling of "egoity" in him only till they last. But we forget most of these experiences.

Theosophy distinguishes between the *Individuality* and the *Personality*. Generally, by *Individuality* is meant some trait or traits in the character of the person which makes him different from the others. In Theosophy, *Individuality* is *Buddhi* conjoined with *Manas*, which is variously described as the spiritual "I" or the *Sutratma* (thread-soul), or the "reincarnating ego" which gains

experience in various personalities, life after life. The word *Individuality* comes from the Latin *Individuus*, meaning indivisible, and suggesting continuity and permanence. *Personality* comes from *persona*, meaning a mask, such as used by actors on the stage. This mask carries the make-up of the role which the actor is going to play, so that behind the mask the real actor remains hidden and anonymous. The different roles played by the actor may be compared to our personalities. When an actor is performing the role of, say, Hamlet, he is so absorbed in it that he is not fully conscious of the fact of who he truly is. In real life, too, this ignorance is but too true, so that we are never aware of our "hidden" or true Self.

Personality includes the physical body, the astral body, desires, and the incarnated mind, all of which are subject to change. Our personality changes continually; not only our physical body but our emotional patterns, ideas, etc., all change. So Buddha taught that all component things are subject to change. *The Voice of the Silence* says:

Thy shadows live and vanish; that which in thee shall live for ever, that which in thee *knows*, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life: it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike. (p. 34)

What happens to this personality or the terrestrial "I" at death? Does it perish entirely so as to leave no trace behind? In the case of a rank materialist or selfish egoist, one who is totally unsympathetic, "one who never shed a tear for anyone but himself," his personality does vanish like a bubble. But, in an average person, all his noble aspirations and undying qualities like love of the good and the beautiful, and the tendrils of sympathy for the world around, hook on to the *Sutratma*. In *Devachan*, he ideates on and assimilates all his good and noble acts, and the Ego comes back to earth enriched, taking on a new personality to work through. It is not the same person, *i.e.*, the same personality that is born again. The whole process of death and rebirth is as described in the *Gita*, Chapter II: just as a man puts away old garments and takes on new ones, so also the Ego takes on new bodies.

The Individuality or the Ego is the perceiver or the knower. From it comes the power to choose, to know, to act, etc. It is the storehouse of our experiences right from the Monadic stage. If this Ego is all-powerful and all-knowing, then why do we not manifest that power and knowledge in our life? It is because the Individuality has to function through the personality. The Higher Ego can express itself through its *alter ego*, or the incarnated mind, which becomes dual on incarnation and forgets its divine origin. If this mind is involved in desires and passions, it cannot reflect the light or wisdom of the higher nature. As H.P.B. states: "The Spiritual Ego can act only when the personal Ego is paralysed." Personality has to be made like a transparent vase so that the inner light can shine forth. It is a necessary experience for the Ego to work through various personalities. Sometimes we find a person having very good mental capacity but poor physical health and a selfish emotional nature. At times there is a healthy body, but a vicious nature and a dull mind. These personalities are the result of our own Karma. If in a particular life we find ourselves in possession of a good personality, we need not feel proud, as we do not know what sort of personality we will get in the next incarnation. But when the personality is imperfect, the Ego learns something in trying to work through it. When the body is too old or is suffering from a terminal illness, people talk about euthanasia, but it is a necessary experience for the Ego to learn to cope with such an illness and express itself through such an instrument, and therefore Theosophy would never advise "mercy killing."

Through the Gates of Gold says: "Not only is man more than an animal because there is the god in him, but he is more than a god because there is the animal in him." When man succeeds in subduing the animal and thus acquires purity in thought, word and deed, he becomes a god. This process of purification is a slow one and in that the incarnated mind must take the help of the Individuality. Aid can come from the higher nature provided we learn to respond to the promptings of the divine within. Every time we lend a deaf ear to the voice of our higher nature, we are crucifying the Christ in us. So also at death there is a separation between the

personality and the Individuality, and the focus of Karma shifts to the latter, which had no hand in the misdeeds of the former. The Individuality thus suffers because of the personality. This is the true meaning of vicarious atonement.

What is our sense of identity? It is because we identify ourselves with the personality that we are afraid of death. Death to us means separation from everything that we depended upon for our sense of self. As long as we think we are the personality, we are affected by the praise or blame of others. But *The Voice of the Silence* says, "Thy body is not Self, thy SELF is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not." Our identification with the personality makes us spend a lot of time and energy in improving our appearance and gathering material possessions. On the other hand, when there is identification with the Individuality, there is a sense of hope and encouragement. As we know that there is something permanent in us which garners experience, we are comforted that our efforts in this life are not lost, and that in each life we pick up the thread from where we left off. Also, fear of death vanishes when there is identification with the Individuality. In *The Eternal Verities*, we have the story of Socrates comforting a child who was afraid of a man with a knife; if that man were to run that knife through the tunic, says Socrates, it would have cut the tunic; and even if he had cut the flesh, "could he have hurt that part of you which is yourself, and does not die, and is only harmed by doing wrong?" Only in one sense there is death of the soul: when a person consciously persists in doing evil, life after life, then finally there comes a time when the Ego finds nothing worthwhile to salvage from the personality, and the link is severed. Such persons are known as "lost souls," but such cases are rare.

As for the proofs of the Hidden Self, it is pointed out that while the brain and body sleep, the recollector and perceiver is still active and watches the introspective experience of dreaming. There is something in us which experiences all possible feelings and emotions in dreams, and remembers them afterwards. In the case of people who have prophetic dreams, their physical brain and memory are in close relation with the Higher Ego. There is a sort of

conscious telegraphic communication going on incessantly between the physical brain and the inner man. If the brain is receptive, the voice of the Higher Ego reaches it and the memory of it is carried into the waking state. Also out-of-body experiences (OBE) are leading people to believe in an independent self. In near-fatal accidents, or during some surgical operations, people have found themselves outside the body, observing the proceedings while their bodies were inert.

However, even the Individuality is only relatively permanent. In a state of meditation called *Samadhi*, "the ascetic loses the consciousness of every individuality, including his own. He becomes—the ALL." As *The Voice of the Silence* says:

Where is thy individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself?
It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean, the ever-present ray become the All and the eternal radiance. (p. 22)

So also for the one who reaches *Nirvana* there is no sense of individuality. For him "the universe grows I."

HE who would be an occultist must not separate either himself or anything else from the rest of creation or *non-creation*. For, the moment he distinguishes himself from even a vessel of dishonour, he will not be able to join himself to any vessel of honour. He must think of himself as an infinitesimal something, not even as an individual atom, but as a part of the world-atoms as a whole, or become an illusion, a nobody, and vanish like a breath leaving no trace behind. As illusions we are separate distinct bodies, living in masks furnished by Maya. Can we claim one single atom in our body as distinctly our own? Everything, from spirit to the tiniest particle, is part of the whole, at best a link. Break a single link and all passes into annihilation; but this is impossible.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE WAY OF PROGRESS

IN what way do we need to make self-induced and self-devised efforts, which the Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* tells us are necessary? Does not life demand *constant* efforts, and, if so, why should we have to *devise* more?

It is true that life is made up of efforts, but to what end are these directed? At some time in our life, we have a nebulous or a clear goal to move towards, and our efforts, spasmodic and half-hearted, or deliberate and vigorous, are directed towards it. But our goal often concerns only the physical man's walk in life. What about the way he walks his self-chosen path, his relationship to his efforts? Does he act as an integrated being or as an animal? Does not the Third Fundamental refer to the way of progress towards the goal of self-abnegation and self-realization in the SELF?

It is only when we understand that everything in life has its threefold as well as sevenfold aspect that we can see the need for special efforts. Take any effort—even the effort to work hard. It can be made in an even or a spasmodic way, a pleasant or an unpleasant manner. Lack of will, *i. e.*, of continuity, leads to apathy and failure. A pleasant or cheerful attitude affects for the better not only our work but also our environment. Do we knock down someone who is in our way? Does our temper rise when we seem to be thwarted? Are we considerate companions, thinking of others while proceeding on our way? Do we, sometimes at least, pause from our own endeavours to attend to another's need?

Can one be a person of integrity if he turns away from his effort or changes his goal? This word "integrity" is little understood. Think of it as the bringing together of parts to form a whole. One can only integrate *more* than one thing. Therefore, since all actions have their root in the mind, are brought to fulfilment by the will which is at present focused in desire, and work out on the physical plane, an integrated person is one in whom mind, will, desire and physical performance are blended into one. A person of integrity is one who speaks the truth; his words do not belie his actions; his actions do not belie his words; his will flows unhindered in the

acting out of his words. And the feeling-desire throughout is united to his will and his actions. In simple words, he does not say, "How glad I am to meet you!" when he really means the opposite. He does not say, "I will do this or that," or "I will not do this or that," and fail to carry out his promise. It is a healthy exercise to look back at what we have done, felt or thought during the day and see how many times we have said we would do something and then not done it. We need to induce truthfulness and integrity by watching our words and feelings and actions.

What about self-devised efforts?

We talk too much. In time, Karma will force us to watch our words. But, before Karma makes us learn the lesson through suffering, why do we not work out a plan to help us to speak with care only what is necessary and true? We can make a vow to be silent for a fixed period each day. That sounds good; but we may find ourselves, at that appointed hour, in a situation where it is necessary to talk. We learn that we should not have made such a vow at all, but should have vowed that at a certain time we would speak slowly, deliberately, *after* weighing our words; *i.e.*, becoming conscious of the fact that we are speaking.

Or take another instance. Suppose someone irritates us. We should try to find some phrase that will come to mind when we are with the person, that will help us to be conscious of the possibility of irritation before it arises. Or, if we suffer from pride, how does it show in us? It shows in our conversation, in our walk, in the set of our lips and the carriage of our head. What shall we do? A phrase comes to mind that may help us. Emerson wrote in his essay on "Compensation": "No man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him." The rebuffs we receive will in time cure us of this vice; but, instead of waiting to suffer, why not use preventive measures *now*?

Let us try to *think* out these problems for ourselves. That way we shall grow.

EVERYTHING IS HELPFUL

WHEN we develop the correct attitude to life, then we will begin to understand that everything that befalls us is indeed helping to burn away all those illusions that prevent us from seeing Reality and living in the light of our True Self. If we saturate ourselves with the sublime teachings of Theosophy, as expressed by the Masters and their Messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, and by those others who throughout remained true to them, then we shall find ourselves awakening to the Immortal dimension of our Being. Truly, we can regard these heroic souls as Friends on the thorny Path to enlightenment. The most important fact regarding the true teachers is that they make sure that we do not forget our inherent Oneness with all our fellow creatures. They emphasize that every thought and act affects others for good or for bad, and that even our speech should be measured, mild and beneficent. They tell us that we should develop the attitude that we are Divine Beings and not "weak, miserable sinners" as orthodox Christianity would have us believe. They help us to become aware that all the great religions of the world have the same esoteric message, and that we should seek for points of agreement in all religions and never for the imagined differences that cause wars and so much misery in the world. They teach us the dignity of human nature and the wonderful truth that it is possible to awaken others to that fact, especially those who are suffering through poverty, disease, oppression, wars or natural disasters. In fact, they awaken us to the greatest treasures of all that are infinitely superior to any kind of physical wealth. The true wealth lies in the development of loving-kindness and tenderness, qualities which are very scarce in modern society.

So, if any Theosophical student feels tempted to moan or give in to depression, let him think how many Beings filled with Light and Love throughout countless ages have been "on our side" and have urged us to go on through the most difficult trials, guided by our own Inner Warrior who can never fail unless we hamper his efforts by our doubts and vacillations.

Yes, truly, "Everything is helpful." Over a period of time we come to see that whatever we designate "good " or "bad" in our lives is really just another experience and another way to break down those walls that hem us in. The mind either gravitates upwards to *Buddhi*, the Spiritual Ego, or downwards to *Kama*, the seat of animal passions. The impetus is given by us and by no one else in the end. If great writers and noble souls can stir in us the "passion" to raise ourselves to compassionate action, it is up to us to fan the spark they ignite in our hearts into the blazing fire of pure love for all. We must get over the pessimistic attitude that the world is full of evil. Wickedness exists only in the lower mentality of mankind. In Nature, there is no such thing. Certain members of the human race have allied themselves to the so-called destructive forces of Nature, moved by evil purposes, when in fact if these poor misguided souls had the power to see deeper they would realize that far from being destructive these forces are in fact *regenerative*. They have only part of the picture and this is an extremely dangerous delusion to work on. Everything is helpful and everything is regenerative so long as we look at life in the right way.

This is why the dissemination of pure Theosophy as taught by H.P.B. is so essential, otherwise we may fall into the psychic twaddle that is indulged in by the imaginary separative self. There is nothing dogmatic or restricting in this statement, though to students trapped by the dead letter it may appear to be so. If we remain faithful to the original teachings, then we have the opportunity to develop a mind that is lucid and pure. We are given the instructions to make the physical man more ethereal and sensitive; the mental man more penetrating and profound; the moral man more self-denying and philosophical. True insight is not developed in a mind that is trapped by words or addicted to finding fault. Immediately one does this, barriers are set up and one does not benefit from the instruction given. To many people, particularly in the West, the attitude of being non-critical is abhorrent. They have a fear of accepting things blindly and being led along *cul-de-sacs*; therefore they will not trust. It is

definitely foolish to accept anything blindly, but it is possible to come to a state of mind in which one is aware that all learning is recollection. It was said by a Zen Master that when one comes to true knowledge, it is like meeting one's own father in the street. There is a feeling of great naturalness, almost relief, that at last we are waking up after years of comparative sleep!

If one feels uneasy, oppressed or uncomfortable with the teachings, this may be because they are not being looked at in the right way. Teachings that point to our divine status, that show us that no matter how far we have fallen there is hope, that give us ways to relate to others spontaneously and with dignity, should not make us feel ill at ease. If they do, we should look at ourselves, our own thoughts and lives, to see where the problem is. Theosophy provides food for thought for everyone on whatever level, and is ceaselessly helpful. It is an oasis in the desert of wordly thought and action. It should be free from the coercive attitude that permeates society at the moment and takes away the free will of its members. No one should be bullied or forced into ways of thought that are uncomfortable to them, and it was in recognition of this fact that the Theosophical Society was founded way back in 1875. If certain individuals connected with the Movement in general have at various periods in its history attempted to force dogmatic ideas and concepts on other members or the public in general, either consciously or unconsciously, then Karma will deal with them in the course of time. Let us hope that the effects of their actions will prove helpful in showing the error of their ways and guiding them in the right direction. We must condemn no one, remembering the words of the Master: "Mercy alone opens the gate to save the whole race of mankind."

Certainly, Theosophy in general gives hope and courage to all and provides a heaven of sanity in a confused and hectic world. If its teachings cannot make us feel more relaxed and at ease amidst the cacophony around us, cannot help us to see clearly instead of "through a glass, darkly," then of what use are all our studies and meditations? It may be difficult at times to

realize that "everything is helpful" when, individually or collectively, we are going through some traumatic time in our lives. But does not experience teach us that after a few days, a few weeks, a few months, or a few years, we look back upon the whole thing as a key event in the transformation of our consciousness? In the very worst cases, it may not be until a succeeding incarnation that the true value of the experience is appreciated. In that event, we are made to realize the importance of the twin laws of Reincarnation and Karma to support us in difficult situations. It is time that the Philosophy of optimism be promulgated instead of the almost ceaseless negative vibrations that are foisted upon a largely unsuspecting public.

True Theosophy is uncompromisingly bright and cheerful. How can it be anything else when it points to the Immortality of the Spiritual Ego, the Real Man, when it teaches us that we have it in our power to change the very environment we live in? If anyone complains that Theosophy is too intellectual or contains too many gloomy warnings, then let such individuals examine their own responses to those teachings. No one could ever accuse W. Q. Judge or Robert Crosbie of gloominess! Also, the many sublime Spiritual Teachings from around the world are thoroughly imbued with the philosophy of optimism, and just to read their words slowly wears away the hold of illusion. Witness the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the *Tao Te Ching*, the *Upanishads*, *Light on the Path* and *The Voice of the Silence*, to name but a few.

Even in daily life we cannot escape from helpfulness. There are supermarkets where we may go for a variety of commodities. The staff there will try to be helpful if we are unsure of something or wish to complain. Self-help groups have mushroomed over the past few years, groups that help with drug problems, alcohol problems, marital troubles, mental health problems and many others. Hospitals for man and beast abound, as do organizations that provide help for the environment, alternative therapies, counselling and rehabilitation. It seems that everyone wants to help. But most of these organizations, groups and individuals lack the essential spiritual dimension.

The functioning of modern welfare states seems sterile and along materialistic lines to those whose aspirations lie in a spiritual direction. Surely, in that sense we have been given stones when we asked for bread! When contrasted with the inspiring and uplifting teachings of Theosophy, they seem like some sad caricature of the real values of human life. Yet, most of the individuals involved in public welfare are sincere and wish to help, with a few notable exceptions, of course.

People want to help to the best of their ability, and this is where Theosophy should enter the arena. Theosophical teachings give clear guidelines as to how best to give assistance that will lead the individual, group, town, country or the whole planet to become aware of the true values that lead to an inner freedom that is not affected by external conditions and influences. Once we take our right position as Immortal Beings, nothing can touch or harm us, no matter what is done to titillate the lower aspects of our nature. It is then that we can begin to become true masters of our own destinies and really take control of our lives. We can work towards seeing behind the masks that divide us from others and come to realize that we all have originated from the same Spirit. Many sparks, but only One Flame.

Apart from the illusions that man creates through a misunderstanding of his true nature, everything is not just helpful but also friendly. Unfriendliness and viciousness, whether in man or in beast, have their roots in misguided human thought. If we cast the "eye for an eye" mentality from out of our minds and cultivate loving-kindness and tenderness for all living things, we will in time reap a great reward, even if reward is not our motive. But this "reward" will not be a personal one; it will be for the whole of humanity—a gradual transformation from its present state of general pessimism, harshness and materialism to one of optimism, peace, love and harmony. If we do not believe that such a Golden Age is possible, then why pursue our studies of pure Theosophy? As is evident from the "Conclusion" to her *Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. certainly believed in such an ideal state, and we are told constantly in many ways that we should

never lose our faith in the inherent goodness of human nature.

If we have received help from the books we have read, from the people we have met, or even from Mother Nature herself, then we should also be keen to shine our light onto others less fortunate, no matter how dim that light may be at this moment. There is always someone who knows less than we do and who, in the words of *The Voice of the Silence*, "sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation." Let such people hear the words of hope and encouragement that will cheer their lonely hearts and give them the confidence to begin to look within for the true Master, the Higher Self, who will become their unfailing guide in time. Let them be shown that the world is not such a terrible place as we are led to believe, if we can extricate ourselves from involvement in its delusions, and can begin to rebuild the crumbling edifices in the light of true Spiritual Wisdom. There will then need to be no coercion, whether physical, mental, moral, or spiritual, because everyone will act under the guidance of the Divine Master within, and erroneous ways of thought and action will gradually fade like the mist before the morning sun. Also, though people may seem different externally, they will act in perfect harmony, because they are guided by the same enlightened principles. Though such a state may seem to lie in the distant future, let us begin to work towards it this very moment, and thus hasten its arrival. Everything is indeed helping us towards this end.

PATRIOTISM consists in theosophizing our own nation, in not only getting ourselves rid of our national defects, but also in strengthening in ourselves and in our nation as a whole, all the noble qualities which belong to our nation.

—W. Q. JUDGE

SERENITY OF MIND

SERENITY of mind is one of the virtues rarely to be found in our materialistic civilization of hustle-bustle and excitement, more so in the younger generation, whose natural tendency seems to be to act impulsively because of an incorrect basis of thinking and false values of existence. Serenity implies calmness and composure in every event of life, small or great, but more particularly during stress and strain, physical, mental or moral, when equipoise and clear thinking are needed most. It is a great asset, whether in individual or public life, a shield of protection against all dangers.

The great Teachers down the ages, who are embodiments of serenity, whose minds "like a becalmed and boundless ocean" spread out in shoreless space, have ever emphasized the development of this great quality. One of the definitions of Yoga as given by Krishna to Arjuna at a crucial moment in the second discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is—equal-mindedness. Yoga in the true sense means to be yoked to or to unite with one's Higher Self, towards which every mystic and spiritual aspirant strives. Living in the world, he is naturally faced with difficulties, tests and trials, and if Manas, the self-conscious thinker, the most responsible principle in the human constitution, gets disturbed easily, how is that union to be achieved? The goal of human evolution is perfection in all departments, on all planes of life, and this cannot be attained without serenity. The first four rules of *Light on the Path* lead the student towards that end:

Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears.
Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness.
Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound. Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.

Making the eyes incapable of tears and the ears lose all sensitiveness does not mean cold indifference or hardness of

heart. This state is self-consciously attained after long and ardent practice with the one and only motive to help mankind so that the voice can speak and the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters to do Their work. Similarly, it is advised almost in the beginning of *The Voice of the Silence*:

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; if thy Soul struggles to break the silver thread that binds her to the MASTER; know, O Disciple, thy Soul is of the earth.

The Soul has to rise above all smiles and tears if it does not intend to break the relationship with the Master. This refers more to one's individual life, but the next paragraph deals with world problems, the turmoil and illusion in which the soul gets caught:

When to the World's turmoil thy budding Soul lends ear; when to the roaring voice of the Great Illusion thy Soul responds; when frightened at the sight of the hot tears of pain; when deafened by the cries of distress, thy Soul withdraws like the shy turtle within the carapace of SELFHOOD, learn, O Disciple, of her Silent "God" thy Soul is an unworthy shrine.

So serenity is necessary in all spheres of life so that the harmony between the divine and the human, the human and the personal, may be preserved and life's aim and purpose be fulfilled.

The fourth of the Seven Paramitas, "Viraga, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived," brings out the ideal of truth which can only be perceived when equanimity or serenity is attained. This divine virtue, like the fourth principle of Kama in man, holds the balance. Its midway position helps the unfoldment of the other virtues "that transform the body into the Tree of Knowledge."

The impulsive tendencies of the race as a whole are partly

caused also by the swift momentum of *Kali Yuga* when the restless activity of the quality of *Rajas* is predominant and people succumb to that force. Mr. Judge points out in his *Letters That Have Helped Me* that, though nothing can be done *against* the *Kali Yuga*, much can be done *in* it. Therefore, in spite of the great speed of our age, it is possible to unfold equanimity and walk the path of moderation. Right resolves sustained through right ideation and effort would fructify more quickly during this age than at any other time.

For centuries and millennia human minds and hearts have taken a wrong direction. They have to be trained. It is necessary to take the scales of life in one's own hands, weigh and balance everything according to principles and then act deliberately. Serenity is to be acquired when life flows smoothly, comparatively speaking, remembering that the circular motion of the Law brings one to rough and stony spots when one's progress requires it. In order to achieve this, valuable advice is given in "Musings on the True Theosophist's Path," reprinted in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36*:

Thou may'st look for silence in tumult, solitude in company,
light in darkness, forgetfulness in pressures, vigour in
despondency, courage in fear, resistance in temptation, peace
in war, and quiet in tribulation.

This is one sure way of cultivating equipoise, though it is difficult to practise. Each one has to *look* for the opposing currents and set them in motion so as to overcome the forces of darkness and despondency, tumult and fear, temptation and tribulation. Theosophically speaking, it means that Manas, the Human Soul, instead of falling prey to Kama, rises triumphant towards Buddhi. Thus man acquires the Light and the Wisdom of his own Divine Parent and uses what he has gained in the service of his fellow beings.

ILLUSIONS OF TIME AND SPACE

[This article by W. Q. Judge was printed in *The Theosophical Path* (Point Loma), January 1912.]

OF all illusions that beset us, in this world of Maya, perhaps the deadliest are those to which, for lack of better, we give the names of "*Time*" and "*Space*"; and quite naturally—since they are prime factors in our every action here below; each undertaking is prefaced by the question—uttered or unexpressed—How long? how far? what duration, or extent, intervenes between us and the fulfilment of our desire? Yet that they *are* illusions, the wise of all ages bear witness: we read in the Bible that "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"; the Moham-medan legend tells us of the devotee at the well, met by an Angel, who rapt him into Paradise, where he dwelt for seventy thousand years in bliss, the while a drop of water was falling from his cruse to the ground; and Emerson expresses the same truth in the language of our time—"The Soul...abolishes Time and Space....Time and space are but inverse measures of the force of the soul. The spirit sports with time—can crowd eternity into an hour, or stretch an hour to Eternity."

And we realize this ourselves, to some extent, though perhaps unconsciously: yet often we are so engrossed either by our own thoughts—pleasurable or the reverse—or by the conversation of others—that we become entirely oblivious of the flight of time, or the distance over which we have passed, while so occupied.

Even more is this the case when we are asleep: in dreams we revisit the scenes, and live over again the days, of our childhood—commune with friends long since passed away, or visit the ends of the earth, with no feelings of surprise or incongruity; yet an hour later, on awakening to what, in our blindness, we call "the realities of life," we bind on again the chains that Veda, Bible, and Koran—Prophet, Priest, and Sage, concur in assuring us we shall, in due course, know to be as unreal as the mirage of the desert.

Pending this perfect enlightenment, it may not be wholly unprofitable to try to see if we cannot get a partial conception of this

great truth—even if it should be merely from an intellectual standpoint.

Let us consider the habitual performance of a purely mechanical, or automatic action—such as the daily journey of a commuter on the railway: every day, at the same hour, he enters the same car—probably takes the same seat—and meets the same fellow-passengers: they converse on substantially the same topics: at the same stage the conductor takes up his ticket, and the engineer—alas!—blows the same fiendish and superfluous whistle. Now it does not require a very vivid imagination on the part of our commuter to so blend the reminiscences of yesterday and the anticipation of tomorrow, with the experiences of today, that all then may seem synchronous. If it is objected that this illustration is faulty, in that it ignores the element of uncertainty inherent in all human affairs, it might fairly be replied that it only does so to the extent of adopting that working hypothesis that is universally accepted in daily affairs, and without which no one would look beyond the needs of the present moment. Yet possibly a happier illustration may be found: suppose that I wish to revisit a familiar but far distant place—as, for instance, Damascus; now, if I go there in my physical body, days and weeks must elapse before I can reach the immemorial city—sunset and moon-rise, day and night—with all the incidents of sleep and waking, pleasure and discomfort, possibly the alterations of sickness and health—all these must be gone through with, and not by one second can the appointed time be shortened; yet if I go simply in memory and imagination, I have but to will—and instantly, without an appreciable interval, I wander again past mosque and minaret, amid rose-leaf and almond-bloom that perfume the gardens of the "Eye of the East."

So, too, with the kindred illusion of Space. Thousands of leagues of sea and land must be traversed by "this prison of the senses, sorrow-fraught"; whether in the steamer battling with the Atlantic surfs, or the express shooting through the vineyards of fair France—or the carriage toiling up the cedar-clad slopes of Lebanon—every inch of the weary way must be consecutively passed over, and not by one hair's breadth can it be avoided. Yet, going without the

encumbrance of the flesh, even as I had no sensation of Time, so I have no perception of distance, between the swirl of the tide of the Hudson, and the splash of the fountains of Abana and Pharpar.

Experiences like these are so familiar, and so apparently meaningless, that some may attach little importance to them, or even be disposed to ignore them altogether. Yet probably this would not prove wise. It may well be that, in Occultism as in Physical Science, great truths lie just before us—stare us in the face, as it were; and when they are at last discovered, it is not by elaborate research, but by the application of the most familiar methods.

Again—it was because he had been faithful over a few things, that the good servant was promoted to be ruler over many things. What right have we to expect to attain to higher knowledge, or claim to be entrusted with greater powers, until we have proven ourselves worthy of such preferment by thoroughly using, and profiting by, such as we now have?

IN broadest outline we see the universe evolving life, and life evolving to continually extended awareness. We see our individuality as a phase—perhaps a "hairpin bend" in the zig-zag spiral of ascent—and we see that our task in co-operating with the purpose of life and the universe is so to act and to think that we become increasingly aware of our extra-individuality—that is, the common life which unites us with our fellow creatures, with all life and the universe....

The fundamental principle whereby the growing spirit knows all those things which should be avoided is this: Whatsoever will keep the individual arrested in his individuality and incapable of growing into the enlarged life that lies ahead, that is deadly to life.

—GERALD HEARD

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The death of languages has been repeated many times in history. Localized disasters such as great floods or warfare have played a part, but in the modern era the spread of Europeans has greatly accelerated the destruction. Local languages may be overpowered by a metropolitan language, thus increasing the pressure to neglect the ancestral tongue in favour of the new one, which is seen as the key to prospering in the dominant culture. Children may be forbidden to use their mother tongue in the classroom, as has occurred to many groups. Speakers of minority languages have been relocated and combined with speakers of other languages. Practices such as these have imperiled many languages.

In *Scientific American* (March 1998), Rodger Doyle refers to the worldwide efforts to preserve endangered and moribund languages before they become extinct:

The death of a language is not only a tragedy for those directly involved but also an irretrievable cultural loss for the world. Through language, each culture expresses a unique worldview. Thus, any effort to preserve linguistic variety implies a deep respect for the positive values of other cultures. For these reasons, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has taken an interest in the preservation of endangered languages....

Every region, including Europe itself, is prone to language disappearance....According to one estimate, about 3,000 languages—half of all those now spoken—are threatened with extinction. About half of these have been adequately studied, and several hundred more may be analyzed over the next decade.

Languages die out for much the same reasons as races and cultures die out—"when they are of no further use in the gaining of experience by the great pilgrim soul," as Mr. Judge puts it. Like men and civilizations, languages have their stages of growth—"their cyclic evolution, their childhood, purity, growth, *fall into matter*, admixture with other languages, maturity, decay and fi-

nally death" (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 199). We have, however, the assurance given us that "certain human languages now known as dead will be in use once more at their appointed cyclic hour." (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 129)

In recent times, scientists have found evidence of water on other planets and even in distant galaxies. They have now discovered that Earth's mantle too contains tons of water, at depths of 400 miles, where most geologists believed water could not possibly exist. (*Discover*, May 1998)

Tetsuo Irifune, a Japanese geophysicist, uses a device to squeeze water from stones. He has found that small grains of rock, when subjected to pressures of some 3.7 million pounds per square inch, will ooze water. Irifune estimates that over four million trillion tons of water may be in the mantle, and that its effect could be enormous. Water's presence could explain unusual earthquakes that occur 400 miles below the drifting continental plates that generate quakes on the surface.

This is related to another recent breakthrough—the evidence of life in the form of micro-organisms deep down in the Earth's crust. (See "In the Light of Theosophy," July 1998.) Water is the field, so to say, for the growth of life. "Fire and water," says H.P.B., "are the elements in which, as Occult Science teaches, the active and passive procreative powers of the universe are respectively centred." Fire gives life to all things, but water nourishes them. "Fire...stands for the concealed Spirit, Water is its progeny, or moisture, or the creative elements here on earth, the outer crust, and the evolving or creative principles within, or the innermost principles." (*Transactions*, p. 118)

One of the signs of our cycle is the world-wide clamour for the restructuring of the educational system. Delegates from 61 countries, including ministers from 25, met in Melbourne, Australia,

from March 30 to April 3 to look at how the recommendations of the International Commission of Education for the 21st Century's report, "Learning: the treasure within," could be implemented, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. The report recommends learning throughout life, focused on the whole person, and based on four pillars:

Learning to know—"combining a broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects."

Learning to do—"acquiring a skill as well as the ability to cope with different situations and work in teams."

Learning to live together—"understanding other cultures and learning to manage conflicts."

Learning to be—"the all-round development of each individual."

The Melbourne conference resolved to apply the general principles of the report "to the day-by-day working of our schools and our people; to use the agenda for education as a means of broadening achievement and not mere rhetoric." An action plan was drawn up to focus on the role of the teacher, the concept of citizenship, the application of educational research findings and issues for youth, including the renovation of links between education and the world of work.

"Questions asked by children prove that philosophizing is an innate human trait," the German philosopher Karl Jaspers once said. "We often hear from the lips of children words that have philosophical depth," he added. Yet the commonly held view is that philosophizing is only for adults and is not meant for children. Over the past 20 years, though, the "Philosophy for Children" movement has slowly but surely been gaining ground and, this year, for the first time, the World Philosophy Congress, held in Boston in August, devoted a session to it.

Earlier, in March, UNESCO brought together several professors of philosophy from 14 countries at its headquarters to discuss

the promotion of the long-term project, whose ultimate aim is to develop children's thinking capacities through philosophy, and introduce them to the notions of dialogue and critical thought as early as possible in their school careers, through programmes adapted for their age. (*Unesco Sources*, May 1998)

"What most schools teach is information," says Matthew Lipman, who is considered the father of the movement. "Philosophy is needed to help children to reason, to discuss, and to help them make solid, reasonable judgment." Katalin Haras of the Hungarian Academy of Science says: "The objective is not to acquaint the children with the works of philosophers," but to teach them how to "think together."

A large part of the teaching is based on group discussion. It is important, says the Australian professor of philosophy, Philip Cam,

to include the ability to ask appropriate questions, form plausible hypotheses, explore alternative possibilities and different points of view. On the social side, we may include the capacity to listen to others, express one's thoughts appropriately, contribute constructively to discussion, explore disagreements reasonably, and accept fair criticism of one's ideas.

While the Philosophy for Children movement is expanding rapidly in some countries, it is still strikingly absent in other areas of the world. If adults need reasoning and guidance to understand the world and their own lives, do not children as well? The future of humanity in the 21st century is in the hands of those now children. Will they bring it weal or woe?

The philosophy of Theosophy has been compared by Mr. Judge to an ocean of knowledge—"unfathomable in its deepest parts, it gives the greatest minds their fullest scope, yet, shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child." Children are old souls in young bodies, and true ideas of the universe, of nature and of ourselves, if simply expressed, are not beyond them.

Does a bigger bank account brighten up one's life? Not according to a recent survey of Europeans and Australians. The survey was paid for by an Australian research company and co-ordinated by Reading University in England. It found that though there were differences between countries, within countries the rich did not get measurably more enjoyment out of life than the poor. (*The Times of India*, July 24)

Other surveys in the past have shown that affluence can sometimes cause both physical and mental problems, such as stress. Affluence, like poverty, can constitute a cause of disease, as shown by the contemporary human condition. But economic prosperity by itself is not evil or undesirable, nor is adversity essential for a higher life. What counts is the inner attitude that wealth must be used with a righteous motive and by a correct method. The idea of the trusteeship of wealth, as against that of ownership, needs to be encouraged among the affluent.

Dennis Prager, in his book *Happiness Is a Serious Problem*, writes in a similar vein. A simple truth about happiness, he says, is that "if you're waiting for it, you've missed the point." An article based on the book, published in the *July Reader's Digest* (Indian ed.), stresses that "true happiness is largely under our own control":

I've spent years studying happiness, and one of the most significant conclusions I've drawn is this: there is little correlation between the circumstances of people's lives and how happy they are. A moment's reflection should make this obvious. We all know people who have had a relatively easy life yet are essentially unhappy. And we know people who have suffered a great deal but generally remain happy.

The first secret is gratitude. All happy people are grateful. Ungrateful people cannot be happy. We tend to think that being unhappy leads people to complain, but it's truer to say that complaining leads to people becoming unhappy.

The second secret is realizing that happiness is a by-product of something else. The most obvious sources are those pursuits

that give our lives purpose...

Finally, the belief that something permanent transcends us and that our existence has some larger meaning can help us be happier. We need a spiritual faith, or a philosophy of life.

Whatever your philosophy, it should encompass this truism: if you choose to find the positive in virtually every situation, you will be blessed, and if you choose to find the awful, you will be cursed. As with happiness itself, this is largely your decision to make.

Elaborate stone monuments west of the Nile in the Sahara are hailed as an important find. According to a study published in the British journal *Nature*, the monuments point to a rich culture predating ancient Egypt. The megaliths are similar to those at Stonehenge, but are believed to be about 1,000 years older. The sites include lines of stones that align north-south, east-west and to the summer-solstice sun as it would have been seen about 6,000 years ago.

Professor J. McKim Malville of the University of Colorado, who helped trace the astronomical alignment of the stones, says that the people who made the site were highly skilled at mapping the heavens, and may have been precursors to the ancient Egyptians.

Referring to gigantic prehistoric monuments such as those at Carnac in Brittany and Stonehenge in Great Britain, *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 754) states that they are all symbolic and universal records of the World's history and are of untold antiquity. Similar weird and often colossal monuments of unhewn stones are strewn over Asia, Europe, America and Africa (II, 752). The idea that such megaliths had an astronomical purpose is now acknowledged. They were at once rock observatories and durable symbols of astronomical cycles.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

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 great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

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

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however 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*. And 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 and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach 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.

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