

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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SPIRITUAL YOGA

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When the man...centres his heart in the true Self and is exempt from attachment to all desires, he is said to have attained to Yoga. Of the sage of self-centred heart, at rest and free from attachment to desires, the simile is recorded, "as a lamp which is sheltered from the wind flickereth not." When regulated by the practice of yoga and at rest, seeing the self by the self, he is contented; when he becometh acquainted with that boundless bliss which is not connected with objects of the senses, and being where he is not moved from the reality; having gained which he considereth no other superior to it, and in which, being fixed, he is not moved even by the greatest grief; know that this disconnection from union with pain is distinguished as yoga, spiritual union or devotion, which is to be striven after by a man with faith and steadfastly.

—*Bhagavad-Gita*, VI, 18-23

ONG the many Sanskrit words that have become popular in the vocabulary of the modern inquirer into the province of the occult, the word "Yoga" takes a prominent place; but, unfortunately, it is used by many without a clear comprehension of what it implies. Like many other sublime concepts of the ancient Eastern Wisdom, the truth about the philosophy and practice of Yoga has become obscured and has come to be degraded through misunderstanding and misinterpretation. For, wherever there are credulous believers,

simple-minded inquirers, there cunning and crafty men, eager for prestige, power, or wealth, come forward and advocate practices under high-sounding names, promising quick results, and the people, understanding little about those practices, accept them, make use of them, and find out too late that the consequences, far from being beneficial, are detrimental to themselves.

There exist today publications purporting to be on Yoga philosophy, but which have nothing whatever to do with the right kind of Yoga, the Science of the Spiritual Life, for Yoga means union with the Spiritual or Higher Self. This true Yoga has nothing to do with postures, with breathing exercises, with concentration on the tip of the nose, or with any other such practices.

Those seekers after spiritual self-development who use physical means, who think that mere mortification of the body will produce soul-wisdom and spiritual emancipation, are known as Hatha Yogis. This lower form of Yoga practice has many schools, known under different names. One branch regards the body as unimportant. At the other extreme are those who make a veritable god of the body, who live for the body alone, to whom every headache or toothache is a terrible calamity, and therefore they must use will power, thought power or any other kind of power to keep the body going. They are even greater slaves to the body than those self-torturing *fakirs* who, because they believe in the power of the Soul, at least show forth an endurance and a strength of will which most of the metaphysical healers, mind healers, Christian Scientists and their like do not display.

The true Science of Yoga, the Kingly Science or Raja Yoga, regards the Spirit as the source of every power and the Soul as the rightful master of the personality it inhabits as the trainer, the cultivator, the educator, the king of all that it uses as its instruments and faculties: the senses, the mind, the feelings and emotions, the instinctual expressions, the intuitive power, the inspirational energy.

Raja Yoga, the Kingly Way of the Soul, is a definite science, a definite philosophy, that recognizes the universality and the

impersonality of the omnipresent divine Spirit, and lays down the fact of there being a ray of that Divinity in each human Soul. There is, therefore, no man so low, so degraded, that he cannot, by the power of his own Soul, unfold that Divinity in himself and know himself as an immortal King in the regions of the spiritual universe. So the first great proposition which Raja Yoga lays down is that, as there is no higher being than the Spiritual ruler within ourselves, the possessor of all powers and faculties, the method of the true Yogi is to look within himself for that inner Lord and to let him govern his life. This is the real meaning of "constant meditation," which the *Gita*, the book of Yoga *par excellence*, enjoins us to practise.

When we define true Yoga as spiritual union, we need to be clear as to who it is that unites himself with what. Or, when we say that Yoga is salvation, we need to understand what it is that is to be saved, saved from what and brought into what particular situation or position. Man, as all of us know by personal experience, is dual in nature and character—part bad and part good, part spiritual and part the reverse of spiritual. The spiritual being in us perceives all things in the manifested universe as proceeding from a single source; it makes no such distinctions as "thy Soul and my Soul," but has the vision of one limitless consciousness in which innumerable consciousnesses inhere. The material part of most of us, on the other hand, has fallen into the heresy of separateness. Everything is seen as divided when our vision is material; everything becomes unified when our vision is that of the single eye of which Jesus spoke. The single-eyed vision is the vision of the universe as a unified whole; the recognition that there is nothing that any individual can do, in thought, by feeling, through act, which does not affect the whole of this unified universe, sometimes visibly and palpably, at other times invisibly and impalpably. A spiritual man is he who has this vision. There is no man so degraded, so uncultured, so uneducated, that he cannot catch a glimpse of that vision for himself.

That is the first step: to know ourselves as immortal, divine beings and to realize that the whole universe and its balance are

affected every time we, as spiritual potencies in the universe, perform an action. Modern science has begun to learn of some of the many ways in which we affect the universe outside of us; as science progresses it will discover others. It will also discover laws of Nature which are at present unknown to it but which are known to the true Yogi who has realized himself as a spiritual potency possessing all powers. With the knowledge of those laws he can perform acts that might be acclaimed as "miraculous" by some, but which are nothing more than the operation of *natural* forces now unknown to science.

We as spiritual potencies have to subdue the lower, carnal nature; but it needs to be recognized that the latter need not always be bad and ugly. In the animal kingdom there are not only the ferocious beasts but also many useful and beautiful creatures; and so it is with our animal nature. The good and the noble in men draws our spontaneous admiration, in some cases even our reverence, but mere goodness does not make a man spiritual. The spiritual man uses the goodness in him to control and subdue the badness. There is a wrong philosophy abroad that there is no harm in compromising with the lower nature, in giving way to its weaknesses and passions now and then, until they wear themselves out. Among those who advocate this theory are so-called "yogis," "occultists," "theosophists." *True Yoga, Occultism and Theosophy*, however, advocate uttermost control of the evil in us with the help of the good and moral nature, and then the making of that good nature an adequate instrument, a positive channel for that which is spiritual.

When union with the spiritual power within us is achieved, the Yogi can proclaim, as Jesus did, "I and my Father in Heaven are one." When the Son, having subdued, controlled and conquered that which is lower and carnal, begins to know himself as a direct emanation from the spiritual Father, he realizes his oneness with that Father from whom he had felt separated. It is the inner retreat of the separated consciousness to that particular state where it knows itself as that central consciousness from which everything emanates, where such pairs of opposites as good and evil, pleasure

and pain, joy and sorrow, disease and health, have been transcended, where there is but one great universal Consciousness, as vast and deep as the ocean, into which have merged the myriads of drops, living entities which appear to be separate, but which together go to form the one mighty Ocean of Life. Those whom we call the Great Ones, the true Yogis, have had that vision, and so can we all have it.

To live according to that vision is a long practice, of years, nay, of lives. But some time we have to begin. We come back life after life to generate causes and to feel their effects, and in the process we forget that we are spiritual potencies above all causes, and that we need not be adversely influenced by any effects. The spiritual practice which subdues the evil in us by the power of the good enables us to know ourselves more and more as the spiritual Self that we are. Then the time comes when we realize that what we call birth, death, pain, pleasure, etc., are, in the true sense, non-existent; that only one thing really matters: the unfolding of the immortal and divine Soul through all these stages until it rises above the pairs of opposites to the plane of the universal Spirit; and, having realized the powers of the spiritual Consciousness, brings them down into the body. Each one of us has that potentiality of achieving union with the God within him, of becoming "God-taught," so that he in his turn may help others also to reach that stage.

How are you to see into a virtuous soul and know its loveliness? Withdraw into yourself and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful yet, labour to make all one glow of beauty. Never did eye see the sun unless it had first become sunlike, and never can the soul have vision of the First Beauty unless itself be beautiful.

—PLOTINUS

THE METAPHYSICAL AND THE PRACTICAL

IT is often asked: "Why does U.L.T. lay so much stress on study—and study not of something useful and practical, but of philosophical, abstract and metaphysical concepts? Is there any real need for a person who leads a pure, honest and unselfish life to study all the intricate problems of life, which are time and again reiterated from our platform and expounded in our literature?"

It is a common misunderstanding that goodness is all that is needed to secure progress in our attempt to lead a better life. Goodness *per se* can but afford opportunity for progress; to use that opportunity it becomes necessary to combine knowledge with goodness. How far goodness falls short is pointed out in *Light on the Path*:

...great though the gulf may be between the good man and the sinner, it is greater between the good man and the man who has attained knowledge; it is immeasurable between the good man and the one on the threshold of divinity. (p.19)

Hence the need for gaining knowledge. Without it no one can be actively good and virtuous, still less attain the final goal of life. Goodness and virtue are born of the enlightened heart and the pure mind, and knowledge of Theosophical principles is the power that brings them to birth. It is for this reason that U.L.T. lays stress on the study, exemplification in practice and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy. The greatest of occult truths are metaphysical. The three fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* are purely philosophical and these "underlie and pervade the entire system of thought" and "on their clear apprehension depends the understanding" of the whole philosophy.

Such is the tendency of our civilization that philosophy has become divorced from life and those who study it are looked upon as impractical people. In adopting his profession in life, a young man readily and as a matter of course undertakes the course of study necessary to his future vocation. Yet it is strange that people

who are desirous of leading a higher life often do not realize how necessary it is to gain right knowledge for such a serious venture. Or, having come upon Theosophy, they do not pursue its study regularly and with assiduity and so they fail in their effort. Many of our struggles and sufferings arise because we fail to recognize the practical importance of the study of philosophy for the day-to-day living in the world and divorce philosophy and metaphysics from morality and ethics, the head from the heart. A proper cooperation between the two has to be established, for they are but two aspects of one nature. We are asked to look within the heart, and having seen there the vision splendid of the unfolding divinity, return to the brain consciousness with the illumination of that vision.

In order to bridge the gulf that is often wrongly made between the head and the heart, or Wisdom and Compassion, it is well to reflect on the fact that the Stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan*, on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based, belong to the same series as the *Book of the Golden Precepts*, the chosen fragments from which we know as *The Voice of the Silence*. Conjointly used, these two treatises will help to remove the barrier between the head and the heart, to make our reason compassionate and our love intelligent.

In the early days of the Theosophical Movement, so strong was the tendency to neglect metaphysics that, pointing out the fallacy of such an attitude, a Master once said: "Why this preaching of our doctrines, all this uphill work and swimming *in adversum flumen*? Why should the West...learn...from the East...that which can never meet the requirements of the special tastes of the aesthetics?" And he refers to "the formidable difficulties encountered by us (the Adepts) in every attempt we make to explain our metaphysics to the Western mind." (Quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 169) To this H.P.B. adds:

...outside of metaphysics no occult philosophy, no esotericism is possible. It is like trying to explain the aspirations and affections, the love and hatred, the most private and sacred workings in the soul and mind of the living man, by an

anatomical description of the chest and brain of his dead body.
(*S.D.*, I, 169-70)

It is no wonder, then, that the fundamentals of Theosophy are metaphysical in character, and that the writings of H.P.B. abound in lengthy considerations of metaphysical propositions.

When Arjuna, who had resolved upon developing his better nature, wavered in his task and was faced with the conflict of duties, Krishna began by teaching him philosophy in the second chapter. Commenting on this, W.Q. Judge writes in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* (pp. 40-42):

Although philosophy seems dry to most people, and especially to minds in the Western world who are surrounded by the rush of their new and quite undeveloped civilization, yet it must be taught and understood. It has become the fashion to some extent...to scout careful study or practice and go in for the rapid methods inaugurated in America. In many places emotional goodness is declared to exceed in value the calmness that results from a broad philosophical foundation, and in others astral wonder seeking, or great strength of mind whether discriminative or not, is given the first rank. Strength without knowledge, and sympathetic tears without the ability to be calm—in fine, faith without works—will not save us. And this is one of the lessons of the second chapter.

The greatest of the Ancients inculcated by both symbols and books the absolute necessity for the acquirement of philosophical knowledge, inasmuch as strength or special faculties are useless without it....

But, so as not to be misunderstood, I must answer the question that will be asked. "Do you then condemn sympathy and love, and preach a cold philosophy only?" By no means. Sympathy and emotion are as much parts of the great whole as knowledge, but inquiring students wish to know all that lies in the path. The office of sympathy, charity, and all other forms of goodness, so far as the effect on us is concerned, is to entitle us to help. By this exercise we inevitably attract to us those souls who have the knowledge and are ready to help us to acquire it also. But while we ignore philosophy and do not try

to attain to right discrimination, we must pass through many lives, many weary treadmills of life, until at last little by little we have been forced, without our will, into the possession of the proper seeds of mental action from which the crop of right discrimination may be gathered.

The "proper seeds of mental action" which Mr. Judge prescribes can only be found through the study of the great Esoteric Philosophy. Such study, if regularly undertaken, trains the mind to free itself from the net of petty, personal and mundane thoughts and to dwell more and more on lofty, universal and impersonal ideas, thus making it porous to higher influences. As the Taoist philosopher teaches: "You cannot speak of ocean to a well-frog—the creature of a narrower sphere. You cannot speak of ice to a summer insect—the creature of a season. You cannot speak of Tao to a pedagogue : his scope is too restricted."

What is it that gives to the mind breadth of vision and liberality of view, that makes it tolerant and appreciative of the viewpoints of others and at the same time endues it with the faculty of discriminating between virtue and vice, the false and the true? Herein the study of Theosophical propositions plays an all-important part. Without mental effort on the part of the student, Theosophy cannot be made intelligible, nor can progress be achieved. "To the mentally lazy or obtuse, Theosophy must remain a riddle," says H.P.B. in her Preface to *The Key to Theosophy*.

The Theosophical student, through his individual study at home or through corporate effort at Lodge meetings, is not only gathering data and information but also activating on a larger scale the faculty of intuition. Through study we acquire more knowledge and at the same time develop the power to know more, to reason and to discern.

The means of study are outlined in the following verse from the *Gita*:

Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will

communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error...(IV, 34)

The ingredients mentioned in this verse are more necessary as means of study than textbooks. Service is mentioned in the verse and it is important to note the relation subsisting between knowledge and service. It is a desirable phenomenon that large numbers of men and women are nowadays aspiring to help and serve their fellow men, yet many of them, though they have the necessary goodness of heart, have no real basis of knowledge, with the result that they soon find that they lack inspiration and energization and the work they are doing becomes mechanical and useless. It is not possible, then, to work in any field in the world, even in reference to service, unless we also study and understand and deepen our perception of the principles underlying the work we are trying to do.

That is what Theosophy has ever taught and that is why the very basis of the work of the U.L.T. is that of study, application and promulgation which, if followed, will bring into harmonious relationship every single faculty of our human consciousness and will bring us appreciably nearer the attainment of the final goal of life. The Masters have declared that They cannot be known unless we study Their philosophy, and a wonderful assurance has been given to us in these words:

Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of such knowledge and powers, and Wisdom will come to you naturally.—A Master of Wisdom
 ...he who lives the Life shall know the doctrine.—W.Q.Judge

No one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself.

—*The 42 Traditions of An-Nawawi*

VINDICATION OF THEOSOPHY

Although Theosophical ideas have entered into every development of form which awakening spirituality has assumed, yet Theosophy pure and simple has still a severe battle to fight for recognition....There are others among us who realize intuitively that the recognition of pure Theosophy—the philosophy of the rational explanation of things and not the tenets—is of the most vital importance in the Society, inasmuch as it alone can furnish the beacon-light needed to guide humanity on its true path.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

IN the days of H. P. Blavatsky many were the attacks made on Theosophy and its organization, the Theosophical Society. Not only did she have to contend with dogmatic religionists, Spiritists and psychical researchers, but also with enemies within the Society who attempted to change the Original Programme inspired by the Original Impulse and to give a different direction to the course of Theosophy. H.P.B. had to struggle against well-meaning but misguided colleagues, observing the rule of justice and mercy towards all. Time and again she pointed out that the philosophy of Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, should not be judged and condemned because of the weaknesses, limitations and follies of students of Theosophy.

Many are H.P.B.'s articles and pronouncements correcting the erroneous beliefs about and attacks against Theosophy. She took pains to explain not only what Theosophy is, but also what it is not. A spiritual movement like that of Theosophy cannot but receive attacks. The "battle for recognition" which Theosophy had to fight in the early days of the Movement still continues. It has made much headway in making its voice heard in the world; but the present generation of the human race is no different from that of the 19th century, and attacks still continue to be levelled against Theosophy and its adherents. In H.P.B.'s lifetime, in spite of the difficulties caused by opponents without and within the Theosophical Society, she steered her ship in the right direction and Theosophy and its

Society continued to fulfil their objects. It was after her death that that ship, as she had warned and prophesied, went adrift.

There is genuine Theosophy and there is spurious Theosophy. The word "Theosophy" has, through the efforts of misinformed propagandists, fallen into disrepute and many have been biased against it without giving it a fair hearing. Not a few students of Theosophy themselves, instead of recognizing "Theosophy" as a word to be proud of, often fight shy of mentioning it in conversation.

"He who studies Theosophy," H.P.B. has stated, "studies *the highest transcendental philosophy*." Firm conviction of this fact on the part of students of Theosophy will alone carry conviction to others of the profundity and potency of the tenets of Theosophy and of its message of help and hope. But if Theosophists themselves will not study and apply Theosophy and the lessons of Theosophical history, they will be poor and weak exponents. "Our cause," wrote a Master of Wisdom, "needs missionaries, devotees, agents, even martyrs, perhaps. But it cannot demand of any man to make himself either." Each student-server has to determine for himself his duties and obligations, what he shall or shall not do. To the extent of his own enthusiasm and devotion will he succeed in infusing these into others. But it would be a fatal error if in his zeal he should substitute the body for the soul. Theosophy is like the Spiritual Soul and the organization or vehicle engaged in its spread is like the body. The distinction between the two has always to be kept in mind.

The best vindication and promulgation of Theosophy is through the living of the Theosophical life by its students and well-wishers. By their actions are Theosophists judged—and so is Theosophy. H.P.B. once wrote:

It has been always held that a true Theosophist must have no personal ends to serve, no favourite hobby to propagate, no special doctrine to enforce or to defend. For, to merit the honourable title of Theosophist one must be an altruist, above all; one ever ready to help equally foe or friend, to act, rather than to speak; and urge others to action, while never losing an opportunity to work himself. But, if no true Theosophist will ever dictate to his fellow-brother or neighbour what this one

should believe or disbelieve in, nor force him to act on lines which may be distasteful to him, however proper they may appear to himself, there are other duties which he has to attend to: (*a*) to warn his brother of any danger the latter may fail to see; and (*b*) to share his knowledge—if he has acquired such—with those who have been less fortunate than himself in opportunities for acquiring it.

HUMANITY now faces a challenge that rivals any in our history: reaching a new balance with nature while continuing to expand economic opportunities for the billions of people who still lack a decent standard of living....

The biggest challenge of all, however, may be within ourselves. The dramatic economic advances of the past century have been driven in part by a culture of materialism, and accelerated growth seems to be a universally accepted goal. But as environmental activist Edward Abbey once said, "Growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell." Unending, indiscriminate material expansion will destroy the earth's biosphere just as malignancy lays waste to the human body.

In the future we will have to focus on the quality of growth, not the amount....The new era calls for what environmental writer Alan Durning describes as a "culture of permanence"—meeting the needs of the current generation without jeopardizing the prospects of the next. Above all, survival will require a renewed appreciation for nature. Our ancestors could see their dependence on the natural world daily. They viewed trees and animals as sacred and treated them with respect. Today we need a return of that reverence. As Harvard biologist Stephen Jay Gould puts it, "We cannot win this battle to save species and environments without forging an emotional bond between ourselves and nature." Unless we follow Gould's advice, we may not be able to save ourselves either.

—CHRISTOPHER FLAVIN

SLEEP IS RECREATION

POETS have sung praises of the repose and refreshment that sleep brings. Sleep is Nature's device to give men and women an opportunity to refresh themselves. Nature compels us to stop our sense and brain activity, so that we who use these organs get the necessary rest and recreation—the power to create afresh. In waking life, in work, man is creative; living his sense-life and doing his brain-work and his body-work, he spends his power to create, he exhausts his *Kriya Shakti*, his power to do deeds, and so Nature puts him to sleep and helps him to restore his creative power.

So sleep restores—it helps us to garner our creative power, to store it up, to recharge our exhausted batteries, to stoke our furnaces. Then, it gives refreshment—it freshens us up, *i.e.*, it affords us new vigour to tackle the problems of the previous day. Again, sleep is the greatest of recreations, which means that it enables us to regain our exhausted power to labour, our drained creative force.

In the word "recreation" we shall find some truths pertaining to the subject of our study. Sleep is the great recreation. What is the function of recreation? It is said that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." It is a good practice in modern educational institutions to intersperse hours of work with short intervals of play, to change the habitat of the classroom for the outdoors. Nature follows a similar way of refreshing us through sleep. Psychologists express the same truth in another way when they recommend short breaks for factory workers. Efficiency diminishes as the worker goes on toiling hour after hour without a break; and as modern industrial conditions cannot permit stoppage of work, psychologists recommend change of work: give the labourer something different to do, and then let him return to his original work. Change of occupation is regarded as one form of recreation.

The point that emerges is that recreation does not mean doing nothing; it means change of work. Two factors emerge: First, exhaustion of our brain-body is so complete that the nature of the

ensuing recreation is the exact opposite of activity, *i.e.*, rest and sleep. Second, the nature of fatigue is such that mere change of occupation freshens us up and we are able to continue with our task. Apply this to our intelligent mind-consciousness. Just as our senses, brain and body get exhausted, so does our inner intelligence which we roughly call our "soul." The soul can get so completely exhausted that it is not able to function and needs a total change—this is death. But when the soul is exhausted in such a fashion that only a change of labour becomes necessary, we call it sleep.

Look upon sleep as recreation; note its restorative character; it provides refreshment. This is achieved by Mother Nature through a change of occupation for the self-conscious intelligence or the soul. Death is a different device of Nature; however similar to sleep, it is not the same. Thus change of occupation is recreation; we do something different. Soul is occupied with a different form of life-activity, is preparing itself for the morrow to finish what is left over today.

To understand the nature of this different occupation of the soul during sleep hours, it is necessary for us to understand the constitution of man. We know that in active waking life we are wholly dependent on the senses, the brain, and the body. Our self-conscious intelligence or the soul is active with the brain, and through the brain with the senses and the whole of the body. Let us call this aspect of our being the man of senses. This man of senses is awake to the great world without. Man, the soul, the self-conscious intelligence, uses the senses which belong to him. These senses and organs which are all co-ordinated in the brain are the soul's instruments—the windows through which the soul can gaze upon and observe the stupendous panorama we call the universe.

During the day, the person is active and busy. His task is to learn about the millions of objects that constitute the universe. This task the soul performs day after day, throughout the whole life, and incarnation after incarnation, till the work is finished and all the objects in the universe yield up their meaning and mystery. In waking life, from birth to death, all of us are labourers,

toilers—we toil and we moil, getting at the value of one object and the place of another. Every day the soul uses the body, with its brain and senses and organs, and the process causes fatigue both to the senses and to the soul. This fatigue requires recreation, restoration, refreshment; and so the man and his senses undergo a change of occupation, and this change we call sleep. The soul is tied to his machine and labours during the hours of waking consciousness; the machine needs rest, as the labourer or soul himself needs rest; and both find this rest in sleep. The function of the body does not stop during the sleep hours; it is still active, but active in a different way. The soul too is functioning, but it is functioning independently of the senses. The senses are no longer turned on to the world of objects; sights, sounds, smells are not registered. The moment any sound, smell or sight is registered, sleep is over and waking life begins. During sleep, the body and the brain are alive and active, but in a different manner.

But the more important factor is not the body and the senses; it is the soul, the man himself. The soul functions not only as the man of senses, but also as the man of mind. If the body is one instrument of the soul, the mind is another. Our ideas and thoughts are not organized in a stable or stolid body as our senses are; but all the same the soul has a mind to work in and through. Man of senses is one aspect of soul activity; man of mind is another aspect of the same soul.

The word mind is very loosely used, and many are the meanings put upon it. It is necessary therefore to give it some specific meaning. What are the constituents of this mind, the instrument of the soul? We know the constituents of the body; let us look at the constituents of the mind in a way that would help us to understand our subject.

Our mind is of the nature of a mirror. Its chief characteristic is the power to reflect. But what is it made up of? What kind of substance composes it? Senses and organs make up the body; what organisms make up that mirror we call mind? Just as man is made in the image of God; just as the entire universe of objects

is a reflection of Divine Ideas belonging to *Mahat*, the Great Mind of Cosmos, so also the human mind is composed of ideas or images which the man himself, the soul, has created in the past. Imagine a human soul clothed in his own mind and nothing else; imagine him without body and senses, without passions and greeds; what is he? He is the soul clothed in images or ideas. He sees with his soul-eye—*Daivi-Chakshu*—those idea-images; he contemplates on them; and that is all he can do. Now, mind is the collection of all idea-pictures or thought-images the soul has built in the long, long past. The substance of which it is built is very plastic. Physical matter, the substance of our senses, is solid—*tamasic*; but mind-stuff is plastic—*rajasic*; and the basic substance of the soul is rhythmic—*sattvic*. Mind-substance which is plastic gives to the mind its nature of a mirror. Just as the sculptor works with plastic clay while he is moulding and shaping his statue, so does the human soul work with the plastic substance of mind. The final outcome of that moulding and shaping is the solid statue, which we call our physical body.

When a person is awake in his physical body, he is the soul clothed in his thought-images, and both he and his images are clothed in the physical body of senses and organs. When the senses, the windows of the soul, bring impressions from outside, from the great universe, they touch the plastic mirror of the mind ere they pass inward to the soul. This is an important point: every time impressions of the universe touch our senses *before* the soul gets them, the mind is affected by them; and because the mind is plastic in substance and mirror-like in nature, it reflects those impressions, thus changing the original thought-images, the mind as a whole.

In waking life, the soul clothed in mind and in sense-body is active. Body is functioning actively or positively; and mind, generally speaking, is dependent on sense- or body-activities, and therefore mind is negative; there is an interplay between the senses and the mind to a considerable extent, and the soul is the least of the three factors. All day long, hour by hour, this interplay

goes on, causing fatigue and exhaustion all round, and thus necessitating a period of recreation, refreshment, restorative influence. Sleep provides this in one fashion, and death in another.

During sleep, the senses are negative instead of positive. They no more receive impressions. The mind too is not able to receive any fresh impressions, for it can do so only with the aid of the senses. The mind, *i.e.*, the thought-pictures and idea-images, becomes active and positive, and is face to face with the soul.

Perhaps the easiest way to understand this subject is to look at ourselves. In waking hours, we, the soul, are clothed in thought-images, and both are clothed in the body. Our senses bring us impressions from the outside world. These impressions stamp our mind, which is plastic in substance and reflects like a mirror. The soul is quiescent for most of us. In a few hours, our senses will go to sleep, we will receive no further impressions. What will be our state?

We, the soul, are clothed in our mind, which is active with all the pictures and thought-images gathered during the waking hours. There are two forces in these thought-images: (1) of feeling, emotion, desire and (2) of thought, reason, ideas. In most people, feeling and thought, desire and reason, idea and emotion are mixed up, and they are called good or bad, but without a scientific basis. Our mind is composed of images and pictures with the dual current of thought and feeling in them, and those must be called "good" which are pleasing to the soul, the real man; and those which are not necessary to the soul in and for his own work are "bad."

So when each of us goes to sleep, we, as souls, find ourselves enveloped by feelings and idea-images, part of which we will want to throw out and reject, and part of which we will want to retain for permanent use. Immediately the body sleeps and the senses stop functioning, the mental images are most active, and the soul's task is to choose, shift, select what is to be retained to work with. Those not required by him, he must overpower. That is the work the soul does with his mind while the body is asleep.

The moment the body is asleep, the soul clothed in mental

images is in the state of *svapna*, a condition of consciousness called dreaming. The soul sees his own mental images, and if these images are non-spiritual, then the soul's task is difficult and most of his time is wasted. But if the thought-pictures created during the past and during the day are intellectual and spiritual, they act as a double blessing. First, they are seeds which fructify and grow; the good thoughts expand, the incomplete reasoning completes itself. Secondly, they are a focal point to which are attracted suitable help and blessings. Masters, Yogis, Rishis and Mahatmas contemplate continuously and people the ocean of space with Their own beneficent current. Each human soul who is clothed in suitable thought-pictures, in spiritual idea-images, will attract to himself Their attention, help and benediction.

What is the practical deduction? We are not able to receive new impressions once the body is asleep; we gather material in waking life on which we work in our dream state; if our day's labours are merely sense-actions, we will find our sleep hours difficult—if not turbulently dangerous, then risky in a passive way. Spiritual indolence in waking life causes grave mischief to the dream state, which is unpleasant and unprofitable, or is pleasant and most profitable.

Three types of mental action can help us in making our sleeping hours fruitful: (1) pure philosophic ideas; (2) spiritual aspirations; (3) longing to serve the Lodge of Masters, the Fraternity of Adepts. Philosophic ideas purify the mind of passion and pelf; spiritual aspirations raise the mind to inward heights and enable it to leave its coldness behind; longing for the Gurus enables us to go to Their World, helps us to draw Their attention, and if we persevere we shall gain the knowledge necessary to attract Them to us, not with a selfish motive, but because we desire to enlighten the world of darkness and ignorance. If we dream pure ideas, if we aspire for spiritual light, if we long for the Great Gurus during waking hours, we shall realize our fondest hopes, and see our dreams fulfilled while the senses sleep and the hour of recreation for the soul has come.

THE MAGNETIC POTENCY OF SPEECH

"THERE is, perhaps, no practice more common than the deceit of words," it is said. The physician who ascribes his patient's suffering to a "virus" that "is going around" is loading into a single term the shadow of his own incapacity. This method provides standing to pronouncements in all sciences, in politics, and in religion. Our knowledge is limited by the narrowness of our framework of space and time, habit and circumstance, and our human vision.

"The deceit of words" owes its effectiveness, of course, to the hearer's shallowness or mental laziness which assumes that to name a thing is to define it, nay, more, to understand it. Mr. Judge wrote: "When the true ideas are grasped, the names will follow." When the name precedes the idea, can it be a true idea and, even if so, what assurance is there that it will be truly grasped? Most men are content with the name, however meaningless it be to them. Pretension succeeds because knowledge is absent and the urge to acquire it is weak or altogether lacking.

H.P.B. quotes in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 93-4) the views of P. Christian on "the magnetic potency of the human speech":

The Word (Verbum) or the speech of every man is, quite unconsciously to himself, a BLESSING or a CURSE....names (and words) are either BENEFICENT or MALEFICENT; they are, in a certain sense, either venomous or health-giving, according...to the LETTERS which compose them, and the NUMBERS correlative to these letters.

"This," H.P.B. writes, "is strictly true as an esoteric teaching accepted by all the Eastern Schools of Occultism." The fact that these factors are said to be esoteric does not relieve us of all responsibility for the right use of speech. We have to see to it that the factors within our present control, namely, sincerity and accuracy (both lacking in the "deceit of words") as also tone and intent, are what they ought to be.

Sri Krishna names, among the "austerities of speech," "gentle

speech which causes no anxiety, which is truthful and friendly"; "diligence in the reading of the Scriptures," presumably aloud, being also praised. (*Bhagavad-Gita*, XVII, 15)

The *Mahabharata* has numerous injunctions bearing on the right use of speech and the proper attitude of the hearer to that which is said. The following were published in *The Theosophist* for October 1887:

One should never use wicked, cutting speech that wounds. He who uses sharp, cruel, wounding speech, tormenting men as with thorns, is unprosperous, carrying destruction in his mouth.

One should always be patient under the evil speech of the wicked.

Stricken by the arrows of speech a man grieves day and night, they strike the vital parts of the adversary; a wise man never hurls them at a foe.

Nothing in the three worlds is a more effectual mode of worship than forgiveness, friendliness, liberality and sweet speech among all.

Therefore always utter gentle words and never harsh ones. Reverencing what is worthy of reverence, give but never beg. (*Adiparva*, 1xxxvii)

One should neither exult in good report nor be cast down by evil report. (*Adiparva*, xc)

But to return to the arcane aspects of the power of words—the *Mantrika-sakti*, "the force or power of letters, speech or music," is named in *The Secret Doctrine* as one of the "six primary forces in Nature (synthesized by the Seventh)." But H.P.B. added that modern science was altogether in the dark about it. (I, 292 and 293)

Section No. V of the "Conversations on Occultism" in *Vernal Blooms*, which deals with "Mantrams" bears upon this power. It will repay the thoughtful attention of the earnest student. We shall quote here from three replies of the Sage:

A mantram is a collection of words which, when sounded in speech, induce certain vibrations not only in the air, but also in

the finer ether, thereby producing certain effects.

...all adepts have the power to translate a strictly regular mantram into any form of language, so that a single sentence thus uttered by them will have an immense effect on the person addressed, whether it be by letter or word of mouth.

...you should study simple forms of mantram quality, for the purpose of thus reaching the hidden mind of all the people who need spiritual help. You will find now and then some expression that has resounded in the brain, at last producing such a result that he who heard it turns his mind to spiritual things.

The title chosen for a lecture at the U.L.T. may have this beneficent effect, which is indeed far removed from interference with any man's free will, which Theosophy strongly discountenances. An analogous suggestion, made by Mr. Judge in "Each Member a Centre," is that even thinking unselfishly and sincerely, in our leisure moments, "Theosophy" and "Help and hope for thee" must result in "an awakening of interest upon the slightest provocative occasion."

Of special interest on the subject of the potency of words is what Mr. Judge wrote to a correspondent:

Words are things. With me and in fact. Upon the lower plane of social intercourse they are things, but soulless and dead because that convention in which they have their birth has made abortions of them. But when we step away from that conventionality they become alive in proportion to the reality of the thought—and its purity—that is behind them. So in communication between two students they are things, and those students must be careful that the ground of intercourse is fully understood. Let us use with care those living messengers called words.

"Terms," he wrote in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, "are of the highest importance." "We ought," he said, "to be careful how we use them, for in the inner life they represent either genuine, regulated forces, or useless and abortive things that lead to nothing but confusion."

Silence has its own potency, but that is properly the subject of an article by itself. We need only remind ourselves here that, as Jesus implied in the Sermon on the Mount, it is not for our "much speaking" that we shall be heard. The Buddha tells us:

Better than a thousand-word speech of empty words is one pregnant sentence hearing which one feels peace. (*The Dhammapada*, Verse 100)

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WHY DO ANIMALS SUFFER?

KARMA as a scientific and philosophical law presents many difficulties to the student of practical Theosophy. This is due mainly to our endeavour to understand before we have gathered sufficient knowledge on which to base understanding. And this is very noticeable when the question of why animals suffer comes up.

The Law of Karma is a universal Law and can therefore be applied to every portion of the Universe, from the stars and planets in their evolutionary rise and fall in great Nature's workshop, to the infinitesimal points of sentient life of which the various forms of life are composed. Nothing, in fact, is outside the operations of Karma except Spirit, which is indivisible and therefore not a field for action and reaction. It is only when Fohat electrifies every atom into life that action, as distinct from Abstract Motion, begins, which action, of atom upon atom and form upon form—resulting in the reactions of atoms and of forms—characterizes manifestation. Positive and Negative, Spirit and Matter, produce the Son, the manifested universe, and this triad, present everywhere, makes of the universe a whirling mass of atoms, acting and reacting on each other, producing forms and destroying them in order to recreate, ever marching towards perfection, back towards the state of equilibrium.

This, therefore, is the first answer to any and every question of why anything happens to man, in the animal, vegetable or mineral kingdom, and also in the unseen kingdoms of nature, whether we are speaking of a star or a planet, a nuclear bomb or the minutest happening in life. Just as the mathematical formula that $2+2=4$ can be applied to all mathematical problems, so can this simple statement of Karma as action and reaction be applied to all problems. It is, indeed, absolutely necessary that it be the first approach to any problem, for it is fundamental.

The second answer to any problem is to be sought in the moral aspect of the great Law, that aspect which takes into account the suffering which may have to be endured by the one who receives

the reaction and, as is so seldom remembered, the happiness which a reaction of another type may bring. We must also take into account the *motive* of any action, *i.e.*, the determination behind the action, its moral basis.

This moral problem falls into two departments, the failure to separate which causes confusion.

In the kingdoms below man the moral aspect pertains to the Universal Mind which works through the forms of these kingdoms: as cohesion in the mineral kingdom, in which there are relatively limited action and interaction and therefore growth; as cohesion and sensation in the vegetable kingdom, in which there is more disturbance due to sensation and the response to it, involving action and reaction; as cohesion, sensation and instinct in the animal kingdom, where there are still movements, more response to sensation and more definite actions and reactions, and where we find the dawning of the power to choose—always within certain limits. (That the power of choice is, in fact, present in every atom within the limits of law is suggested by H.P.B. in "Kosmic Mind" (*U.L.T Pamphlet No.20*), but in the animal it begins to appear as pertaining to the corporate body. At the man stage this is so far perfected that the indwelling consciousness begins to control the choices of the individual parts).

The choice exercised by the animal is not yet self-conscious, self-decided choice; it is not choice with knowledge, not something planned and carried out. But, as every form becomes the vehicle of an ensouling life or consciousness suitable to that form, there is in animals an element of free-will to act in this way or that, always within the limits of their stage of growth and unfoldment. We see the dog or the horse beginning to choose, but, as self-conscious choice is a characteristic of mind, we do not find the full power expressed until the human kingdom is reached. In the animal kingdom the power to choose comes nearly to the point through the development of instinct and gradually increasing awareness.

The whole problem of animal suffering is wrapped up in the understanding of just what the indwelling consciousness of the

animal is; how closely the brain-awareness is linked with the nervous system throughout the body; how much power there is to remember, to recall impressions received by the nerve-ends in various parts of the body.

There is no doubt at all that an animal suffers pain, and also feels anger and fear; but it does not suffer from anxiety or the qualms of conscience, since both these refer to mental states, and have to do with memory and anticipation. There is no doubt that an animal will cry out with pain and shiver with fear, or that these feelings are real to it. Indeed, woe will come by Karmic reaction to anyone who inflicts pain on even the smallest animal, whether for pleasure or from apparent necessity or through lack of thought. But we cannot rightly impute to animals the same *kind* of suffering along these lines as to a human being, for the animal brain is inferior to the human brain and not so fully linked up with the nervous system. Their state is somewhat analogous to that of a person under gas, who may scream and move about; some sleepers awake screaming from a nightmare; also, a bad toothache will be forgotten if a greater shock comes or a great pleasure. Does the pain cease because the brain is taken up with stronger impressions? It cannot, since when the imposed impression is removed, the pain is again felt. All know that to dwell with the mind on a pain makes it worse, and, alternatively, we have the power to forget it. The animal soon forgets the pain, just as a child who cries after a fall which has hurt his body forgets the pain and the fright if his attention be directed elsewhere. But recall his attention to the fall and the hurt and he will again cry.

Animal suffering and child suffering more nearly approximate to one another than do the sufferings of a grown man and of an animal. The wonderful power of forgetting is one of Nature's blessings, and this the animals have to a very great extent. An incident can be recalled to the animal through sight or sound. The sight of a stick may recall a beating; the sight of a coat and a hat may recall the possibility of being taken for a walk.

In what, then, does pain inhere? It inheres in the life atoms which compose the injured part; a message is sent to the brain and

a feeling of pain results. A highly sensitive nervous system will suffer, therefore, much more than a dull, coarse system; and the human system, being the most sensitive, will suffer the most. In the animal kingdom the high-strung horse will suffer pain more keenly than the worm.

Where man contacts the animal a new problem arises, for he uses ways and means against Nature which inflict pain and suffering on animals. So we have the cruelty to horse and cow in ordinary life, the traps in the woods, the horrors of the vivisection laboratories and the slaughterhouses. It is when we see or read of such things that we ask: Why should a particular animal suffer, since there is no continuing entity in it which after death would incarnate in another body or which had lived a previous life and therein set those causes going which would have brought about the present suffering?

The key to the problem lies, perhaps, in this sentence in *The Secret Doctrine*: "The tendency towards segregation into individual Monads is gradual and in the higher animals comes almost to the point." (I,178) How does this happen? If the animal consciousness, which functions as an entity in an animal body, ceases to be an entity after the body's death, with the dispersal of the astral form, where will it go except back to that aspect of the Universal Mind which is operating in that kingdom? In the production of a new animal form from the pool of physical and astral atoms dissipated at death, atoms suited to the new form will be magnetically drawn towards one another. In the same way, that aspect of the Universal Mind which the form will fit, can use it.

Therefore it can be seen that the atoms, physical and astral, making up any particular animal will be those that had gone through certain similar experiences, the reactions to which they must meet; and the indwelling consciousness or entity will also receive the reactions of those experiences which, in its individual parts, it had previously undergone. Therefore, the *Desatir* says:

If a ravenous animal kill a harmless animal it must be regarded as retaliation on the slain, since ferocious animals

exist for the purpose of inflicting such punishment.

Still there is the aspect of unnecessary suffering, of which H.P.B. has written:

...it is not the *injustice* or *mistakes* of Karma which are the causes of such "undeserved misery," but other causes, independent of the past Karma of either the producer or the innocent victim of their effects, new *actions* generated by the wickedness of men and circumstances; and which arouse Karmic law to fresh activity, *i.e.*, the punishment of those who caused these new *Nidanas* (or causal connections), and the reward of him who suffered from them undeservedly. (*Lucifer*, II, 415, July 1888)

For these the entity below the human kingdom will receive due reward, just as, in another way, man does in his Devachanic interlude. Let us remember that it is not the *present* man who committed all the sins for which he suffers; his individual consciousness is the result of many lives and not of his immediate past life. Every human incarnation is analogous to the birth of an animal, but, whereas the animal consciousness is taken, so to say, from that aspect of the Universal Mind appropriate to that stage of unfoldment, man's individual consciousness is taken from the pool of his own egoic consciousness as coloured by all his previous incarnations.

So far we have dealt with the retributive aspect of the Law only, the putting straight of that which was deranged. But retribution is only half the law; the other half is compensation. Every creature receives back compensation in the form of the due effect of his act. Indeed, only by seeing that the actor acts and receives reactions; acts and learns thereby, can the Karmic Law be understood. "*Suffering, moreover, is the cause of knowledge, so that the incarnating entity gains experience, although the organism is tortured to death.*" (*Lucifer*, VI, 336, June 1890)

There is a further stage which operates in man as he evolves into the superman. He can begin, consciously and with foresight, to make retribution for his past misdeeds, ensouling such action

with his higher nature, thus making sacrifice in the true sense. In this process he suffers, but he does not dwell in thought on the suffering but on its justice-compassion aspect. As it is in part through suffering that the animal consciousness reaches nearly to the point of segregation into individual units, so does the human soul, through suffering, slowly realize itself as a unit, a unit with a mission, though an integral part of the Whole. The individual consciousness goes back to the Universal Mind as a conscious unit therein. Its actions then are in terms of the joy of the butterfly escaping from its chrysalis of the past. It, like the butterfly, is *free*.

But this is not enough.

The last stage is the taking on again of the bonds of action, not for self but for all, to work for and with the ALL, shouldering the burden of the sins of mankind; it is to become a Lord of Compassion.

As the Universal Mind works through the lower kingdoms and therefore frees their units from the complete individual retribution which pertains only to the fully mind-born beings, so at the other end of the scale the Universal Mind works through the Perfected Man, freeing him from individual compensation or retribution. He may still suffer in the form he uses, but that which is suffered consciously, and for a purpose, is not suffering but joyful sacrifice and therefore is creative.

ALL our thoughts give rise to action among the lives which compose our astro-physical instrument, and, as we never cease thinking, action continually goes on, for, as often said, "thought is the real plane of action." Even though we may not contemplate any immediate bodily act, we may by our thoughts accumulate a tendency in the lives of our instrument which will eventually result in outward action whenever favouring conditions permit, and we will fall victims to our lack of discernment and steadfastness, as well as involve others in our fate.

—Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

"Peace is much more than absence of conflict. It involves, above all, democracy and development." These were the words of UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor at the opening of a culture of peace conference in Moscow this May. (*Unesco Sources*, June 1999)

Representatives from different parts of the world attended the International Forum for "a Culture of Peace and Dialogue among Civilizations in the Third Millennium." The forum aimed to draw the attention of public opinion to the fact that a culture of peace and dialogue between different peoples and civilizations requires the acquisition of a general culture—cultural, civic and social awareness—and civil society therefore plays an important role in establishing the conditions allowing for the development of this culture of peace and dialogue.

Culture is the equivalent of the use by the Romans of the word for the humanities, *humanitas*. To humanize is to render humane, to mellow, to make gentle by overcoming cruelty, indifference, brutality. To be cultured is to be made more humane; to unfold the sensibilities common to humanity; to bring out the kind feelings, dispositions and sympathies of human beings. Culture is thus truly the cultivation—that is its derivation, from the Latin, *cultura*—of the nobler qualities; the training, the refining of the moral and intellectual nature.

And whence springs such humane culture? From the intellectual recognition that humanity is a great Brotherhood. Humanity is one and indivisible, but the mind must perceive this fact, must understand the Laws of Brotherhood, must realize the Great Self of which we are all integral parts. There is an intimate connection between true culture and peace. Both are of the Spirit. When people recognize and practise Brotherhood, they will cease to follow the law of the jungle, which is that of violence, and will exemplify instead the Law of Love. In mutual co-operation they will become true brothers and when Brotherhood is lived up to, Peace will be established. We all dream of a World Order, of

World Unity, of Concord and Understanding. These will all come when human minds recognize the reality of the One Self and begin to act for and as the Self of all creatures.

Thus the Peace of the Spirit and the Culture rooted in Brotherhood are so intimately related that the one cannot be without the other. It is Culture that transcends all differentiations and varieties of form which is the foundation for lasting Peace.

Countless cultures around the world have disappeared, along with the myths that once united them. Authors Stanley Krippner, Ann Mortifee and David Feinstein write in *The Futurist* of the need of creating a new unifying mythic vision for the future—using the word "myth" in the sense of an expression of the customs, traditions, institutions, attitudes, etc., of a people:

If we are going to avoid the fate of the Easter Islanders, we must change the myths that are leading us toward extinction and find inspiring visions of a plausible and appealing future. The old myths have collapsed, but no new ones have emerged to fill the vacuum. For transformation to occur, human beings must actively shape the future, an enterprise that goes to the heart of mythmaking. If we are each a cell in what Peter Russell calls "The Global Brain," then this is an individual as well as a collective venture.

Framing a problem in mythological terms can point toward solutions at deeper mythic levels. For centuries, the guiding myth of Western culture has been what might be called the "Grand Narrative of Progress." It is the story of movement toward a goal—achievement, improvement, and conquest. Modern science and technology have propelled this myth, extending the human life-span, harnessing natural resources and the power of the atom, carrying sounds through the atmosphere, and exploring outer space by defying gravity itself....

But as the Grand Narrative of Progress came to dominate other values and views, it cast a malignant shadow....Indeed, the Grand Narrative of Progress is a myth that stands in need

of criticism....

Philosopher Sam Keen has urged us to shift from the myth of progress to a myth of sustainable growth in order to create the compassionate political order needed to avert humanity from its self-destructive course. Keen has identified some of the radical changes in values and principles of political action needed to achieve the myth of sustainable growth. They include:

Shifting personal identity from the egocentric to the community-rooted person.

Shifting from competition to economic co-operation.

Shifting from sanctified violence and the myth of just wars to peaceful means of conflict resolution.

Shifting from population explosion to zero population growth.

Shifting from a secular view of nature as raw material to the belief that nature is sacred.

Shifting from a world divided between the poor and the rich to a more just distribution of wealth and resources....

Yet, if systems design and policy planning veer away from the Scylla of the Grand Narrative of Progress and the Charybdis of the Millennium Myths, it is still possible to foster mythologies based on sustainability and connection. The inhabitants of Island Earth can avoid the fate of the Easter Islanders as we set sail for the twenty-first century.

The belief that natural phenomena and objects, like rocks, trees, the wind, heavenly bodies, etc., are alive and have souls, is ingrained in tribal societies. This view that all life is produced by a spiritual force separate from matter is called animism by anthropologists.

Some present-day investigators portray animism as a useful and universal human tendency. Despite Western canons of thought that rigidly divide animate and inanimate, human and non-human, natural and social, people in modern societies tend to hold animistic convictions with no less fervour than members of primitive nonliterate societies. As stated by Bruce Bower (*Science*

News, June 5):

In hunter-gatherer societies, according to this view, keen attunement to the subtleties of trees, stones, heavenly bodies, and other facets of the world becomes a kind of conversation with these entities; it amounts to socializing with them as beings in their own right....

"Habitual movements of the sun in the heavens, of trees in the wind, of animals and humans as they go about their everyday tasks take place as part of a total life process of continuous birth, through which the world itself is forever coming into being," Tim Ingold [of the University of Manchester in England] maintains. "In short, living beings do not move upon the world but move along with it."...

Consider the ease with which people see life forms in the smudgy blots of a Rorschach inkblot test and name and talk to cars, computers, and other valued possessions. Think of the many writers and poets who avidly animate the natural world and humanmade objects in literary descriptions. Even scientists find it difficult not to assume that nonhuman animals, natural phenomena, and theoretical entities operate on the basis of intentions and beliefs....

Animism in modern societies arises through a process of attaining familiarity with specific aspects of one's surroundings. In the high-tech world, however, it may be mechanical and electronic entities that are treated as at least potentially conscious. The distance from a chess-playing computer to a silicon comrade, for example, seems particularly short.

Ingold agrees that as people forge closer relations with features of their environment, animism flourishes.

There is a growing belief, endorsed by some scientists, that there is nothing inanimate in nature and in the universe. Every natural phenomenon, every object, every entity, is thrilling and throbbing with life.

There are certain common symbols recognizable in most of the world's cultures, and the dragon is one of them. Yet, in different

traditions it has acquired different connotations. Rachel Hajar writes in *The World and I* of the beliefs associated with the dragon:

Today, we tend to dismiss mythical beasts as relics from a superstitious past. Yet, in modern fiction and art worldwide, dragons survive. Myths are more than simple tales from a primitive past. They are an important means of validating that our ways of governing and organizing ourselves are part of the natural order. Linking and incorporating a variety of perceptions and themes, myths can have multilayered meanings. Myths endure because they belong to the realm of the sacred; they reflect in symbols the deepest concerns of our minds.

Dragons figure prominently in recitals of the creation, maintenance, destruction, and restoration of cosmic order. Whether negative or positive, dragons remain potent symbols of nature beyond man's control. Besides reflecting the role of cosmic order in human affairs, there is another dimension to dragon lore, and that is our struggle to master the dark, demonic forces of our nature to attain harmony with our true inner self.

Many today think of the dragon as the incarnation of evil, darkness and other negative forces, yet in antiquity it had quite a different connotation. "No peoples or nations except the Christians gave the significance to the Dragon that is given to it now," says *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 657). In Occult symbolism, the Dragon, or Serpent, represents Divine Wisdom.

We find...the "Dragons" held throughout all antiquity as the symbols of Immortality and Wisdom, of secret knowledge and of Eternity; and the hierophants of Egypt, of Babylon, and India, styling themselves generally the "Sons of the Dragon" and "Serpents." (*S.D.*, II, 379)

The "Dragon of Wisdom" is the One, the "Eka" (Sanskrit) or Saka...The "One" and the Dragon are expressions used by the ancients in connection with their respective Logoi. Jehovah—esoterically (as Elohim)—is also the Serpent or Dragon that tempted Eve, and the "Dragon" is an old glyph for "Astral

Light" (Primordial Principle), "which is the Wisdom of Chaos." Archaic philosophy, recognizing neither Good nor Evil as a fundamental or independent power, but starting from the Absolute ALL (Universal Perfection eternally), traced both through the course of natural evolution to pure Light condensing gradually into form, hence becoming Matter or Evil. It was left with the early and ignorant Christian fathers to degrade the philosophical and highly scientific idea of this emblem (the Dragon) into the absurd superstition called the "Devil."...The Pagans have always shown a philosophical discrimination in their symbols. The primitive symbol of the serpent symbolized divine Wisdom and Perfection, and had always stood for psychological Regeneration and Immortality.... Yet they all made a difference between the good and the bad Serpent (the Astral Light of the Kabalists)—between the former, the embodiment of divine Wisdom in the region of the Spiritual, and the latter, Evil, on the plane of matter. Jesus accepted the serpent as a synonym of Wisdom, and this formed part of his teaching: "Be ye wise as serpents," he says. (I, 73-74)

Materialistic people are lonely, according to Dr. H. B. Danesh, a psychiatrist. "They are alone in the journey of life, in their struggle for existence, and in their happiness and sadness. They are preoccupied with themselves, their health, their success, their position in society, their acceptance by others, their need to love and be loved." Such people seek power in their quest for security and become competitive in their attempt to feel worthy. Power and competition combined in the lives of the lonely and the insecure, become potent sources of destruction and violence, according to Dr. Danesh.

Detailing the theme in his book, *The Psychology of Spirituality*, he argues that

the materialistic approach does not help in fostering positive

human relationships. Such people drift apart, become suspicious of one another and become incapable of meaningful communication and intimacy. Alienation and mistrust are the end results.

The spiritual person, on the other hand, acts on the premise that man is made for relationships. He is conscious of the interdependence and unity of the human race. Spiritual people feel a closeness to one another as they look to the same source for meaning, inspiration and love. Relationships among them may remain loving and secure. It is easy for them to overlook the shortcomings of one another; not to be unduly disappointed or angry when expectations are not fulfilled....

In the case of the spiritually-minded, the power of love functions as a magnet that draws people together, eradicates estrangement and creates an atmosphere of mutuality, trust, encouragement and service....The root of many problems in interpersonal, marital, familial and international relationships today is the absence of fidelity....

Dr. Danesh feels that we are approaching a new era in which science and religion are reconciled and a profound change in attitudes and habits is needed. This would mean diligently searching for the truth, wherever it comes from; unconditionally loving one another; and seeing planet Earth as our collective home rather than as a battlefield of divergent ideologies, interests and backgrounds. (*The Times of India*, August 17)

PEACE is not absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice.

—SPINOZA

**INDEX
TO
"THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT"**

VOLUME 69 : NOVEMBER 1998 - OCTOBER 1999

INDEX TO "THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT"

VOLUME 69 : NOVEMBER 1998 - OCTOBER 1999

GENERAL INDEX

- Ambition, Kill Out 366
Animals Suffer? Why Do 420
Arjuna's Vision of Krishna's
Cosmic Form 279
Atom? What Is the 340
Authority, The Question of .. 95
Birth of the Soul, The 41
Bhagavad-Gita, Notes on the,
Studies in160, 204, 237
Books, The Legacy of 127
Bound!" "Ye Are Not 92
Brotherhood—The Fundamental
Law of Life 332
Buddhas, Thus Teach the 185
Building of Character, The .. 262
Changing and the Changeless,
The 113
Character, The Building of.. .. 262
Child As Teacher, The 243
Choice Is Always Ours, The .. 166
Conquest of Death, The 379
Death, The Conquest of 379
Devotion, The Science of 309
Devotion, W. Q. Judge — A
Man of 145
Dharma, The Vaishya- 109
Differences, Superfluous 23
Discipleship 325
Discipline, Mental 275
Discipline, Self-Reliance and
Self- 305
Divine Discipline, The 289
Divine in View, Keeping the .. 73
Education for Life 361
Eliminating Mental Afflictions.. 348
Environment, Our Changing .. 62
Future, Hope for the 48
God and Gods 154
God in Nature and in Man.. .. 223
God? What Is—From Belief to
Knowledge 5
Government, The Problem of .. 18
Harvest Due, The 86
"Heaven-sent Madness" 387
Hope for the Future 48
Impersonal Lines of Work .. 253
In the Light of Theosophy
(Separate Index)
Inner Transformation, The .. 189
Joyfulness on the Spiritual Path 134
Judge, W. Q.—A Man of Devo-
tion 145
Karma, Ramifications of 266
Keeping the Divine in View .. 73
Kill Out Ambition.. .. 366
Krishna's Cosmic Form, Arjuna's
Vision of 279
Language of Symbols, The .. 226
Law of Precision, The.. .. 58
Legacy of Books, The.. .. 127
Life, Education for.. .. 361
Life of Occultism, The 256

Life, Sensing the Sweet Side of	37	Ramifications of Karma	266
Light of All Lights, The	293	Real Transformation, The	376
Living the Higher Life	217	Recreation, Sleep Is	410
Magnetic Potency of Speech,		Reliance, Self-, and Self-	
The	416	Discipline	305
"Make Thy Vices Impotent" ..	300	Resting in the Real	199
Man, a Co-Worker With Nature	193	Right Motive	169
Man, God in Nature and in.. ..	223	Science of Devotion, The	309
Manifestation? Why	123	Self-Reliance and Self-Dis-	
Means of Mind-Control	383	cipline	305
Mental Afflictions, Eliminating	348	Sensing the Sweet Side of Life	37
Mental Discipline.. .. .	275	Sleep Is Recreation	410
Mentality, The Plane of	54	Soul, The Birth of the	41
Metaphysical and the Practical,		Speech, The Magnetic Potency	
The	402	of	416
Methods of Promulgation	313	Spiritual Path, Joyfulness on the	134
Mind-Control, Means of	383	Spiritual Yoga	397
Moral Pattern, The	372	Studies in "Notes on the Bhaga-	
Motive, Right	169	vad-Gita"	160, 204, 237
Nature and in Man, God in	223	Suffer? Why Do Animals	420
Nature, Man, a Co-Worker with	193	Superfluous Differences	23
Occultism, The Life of	256	Symbols, The Language of	226
Our Changing Environment	62	Theological Skeletons	28
Paths, The Two	342	Theosophical Lines of Work ..	1
Peace, The Power Which Is	80	Theosophical Movement, The—	
Philosophy, Theosophy as	118	A Backward Glance	240
Pitfalls on the Way	351	Theosophist's Task, The	89
Plane of Mentality, The	54	"Theosophy—Help and Hope for	
Practical, The Metaphysical and		Thee"	12
the	402	Theosophy, In the Light of	
Practical," "Theosophy Must Be		(Separate Index)	
Made	231	"Theosophy Must be Made	
Precision, The Law of	58	Practical"	231
Problem of Government, The ..	18	Theosophy as Philosophy	118
Promulgation, Methods of	313	Theosophy, Understanding	148
Question of Authority, The	95	Theosophy, Vindication of	407
		Thus Teach the Buddhas	185
		Transformation, The Inner	189
		Transformation, The Real	376

Two Paths, The	342	White Lotus Day—1999	181
Vaishya-Dharma, The	109	Why Do Animals Suffer?	420
Vices Impotent," "Make Thy ..	300	Why Manifestation?	123
Vindication of Theosophy.. ..	407	Work, Impersonal Lines of ..	253
Way, Pitfalls on the	351	Work, Theosophical Lines of ..	1
What Is the Atom?	340	"Ye Are Not Bound!"	92
What Is God?—From Belief to		Yoga, Spiritual	397
Knowledge	5		

INDEX TO "IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY"

Abortion issue and embryonic development	67	Chimpanzees share key psycho- logical traits with humans ..	359
Affluence does not bring lasting satisfaction	212	Climate fluctuations over aeons baffle scientists	102
Americans, original, of different ethnic groups	355	Cloning and genetically modified organisms, an ethical issue..	320
Animal experiments, alternatives sought	360	Cloning, human, warnings sounded	176
Animism in modern societies ..	428	Colour complex, genetically a non-issue	105
Apes, demand for human rights for	359	Consciousness, human, going through collective upheaval	281
Apes, right to life—bill before New Zealand parliament ..	106	Consciousness and memory in every cell	70
Biological clocks, nature and location	69	Consumerism, stemming the tide of	286
Birds descended from dinosaurs, new evidence	35	Continents, ancient, how they arose and submerged	391
Blood transfusions, autologous, gaining popularity	143	Continents, ancient, not what they now are	356
Century, 21st, predictions, chal- lenges	172	Crime, juvenile—causes, cures	322
Change, accelerated pace of, causing social ills	245	Crimes, sex-related, a serious concern	214
Chemistry, philosophy of	247	Culture of peace	426
		Cycles, biological, controlled by tissues and cells throughout	

- the body 322
- Difficulties and adversity,
strength to face 31
- Dinosaur-bird link.. .. . 35
- Disasters, strange allure of .. 139
- Diseases, infectious, battle
against 177
- Dragon symbol 429
- Earth's stewardship and man's
responsibility 396
- Education, aims of 34, 172
- Education for life 107
- Embryonic life, new research .. 66
- Emotional intelligence concept
gaining popularity 285
- Existence, causes of 210
- Fear of the unknown 354
- Flood, prehistoric, a universal
tradition 392
- Forgiveness, genuine, requires
spiritual strength 324
- Freud's psychoanalytic theory
—ongoing debate 283
- Fungi's beneficial role 143
- Future—predictions for 21st
century 318
- Future uncertainties, facing
of, with confidence and
optimism 354
- Galaxies, never-before-seen, dis-
covered by Hubble Space
Telescope.. .. . 140
- Galaxy 13 billion light years
from Earth discovered .. 287
- Genes, new definition 353
- Genes not destiny, admit beha-
vioural geneticists 68
- Happiness not dependent on
material pursuits 212
- Health psychology gaining
ground 250
- "Hearing" vibrations through
hands, by the congenitally
deaf 35
- Heredity and DNA—new think-
ing 353
- Heredity and environment
interact in shaping human
behaviour 68
- Human rights, new challenges .. 173
- Humans, early, smarter than hi-
therto suspected 178
- Humans, modern, far older than
scientists believe 394
- Hyperculture, human cost of
speed 245
- Information explosion causing
concern 246
- Language no substitute for
reality 216
- Life-forms, evidence of, in
bizarre environments 393
- Life-forms, multicellular, bil-
lions of years old 104
- Life, presence of, in all objects
and natural phenomena.. .. 429
- Magnetar, new celestial body
discovered 105
- Materialistic attitude fosters
loneliness 431
- Mind-body interaction ..250, 288
- Mind, psychoanalysts' clashing
assumptions about 284
- Mood cycles, psychological
studies 249

- Mummification techniques of ancient Egyptians 36
- Myths, new, for new millennium 427
- "Nanobes," smallest organisms discovered 393
- Nature's economy has nothing that is useless 143
- Nature threatened by humans .. 358
- Nutrition's role in strengthening immune system 142
- Peace culture 426
- Phobias, obsessions, compulsions — causes, cures 251
- Pineal gland's function as regulatory "biological clock" .. 320
- Prodigies, child, not real geniuses 141
- Psychology, new thinking in .. 281
- Psychology of spirituality 431
- Psychology and spirituality converging in imperceptible ways 174
- Psychotherapy, limitations of .. 251
- Races, human, genetic and evolutionary perspective 105
- Religion and science, narrowing rift 30
- Religion in vogue among Indian youth 65
- Religious persecution, worldwide phenomenon 138
- Resilience—coping ability—new psychological findings .. 31
- Rhythms of behaviour and of physiological functions internally generated 321
- Rhythms or cycles govern all living beings 69
- Science and its uses, world declaration 319
- Science turning towards spirituality and God 30
- Scientific investigations in 21st century 318
- Senses, real, centred in astral body 324
- Sex problem and crime.. .. 214
- Sphinx, Egyptian, riddle of the ages 395
- Spiritual psychology 174
- Stress management the *Gita* way 213
- Stress retards healing 250
- Trust, a human need 33
- Universe, vastness of 160
- Universe, why it behaves as it does 210
- Words, limitation of 216
- World's ills, cause and cure .. 70
- World transformation through self-transformation.. .. 396
- Youth seeking their moorings in an unsettling world 65

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