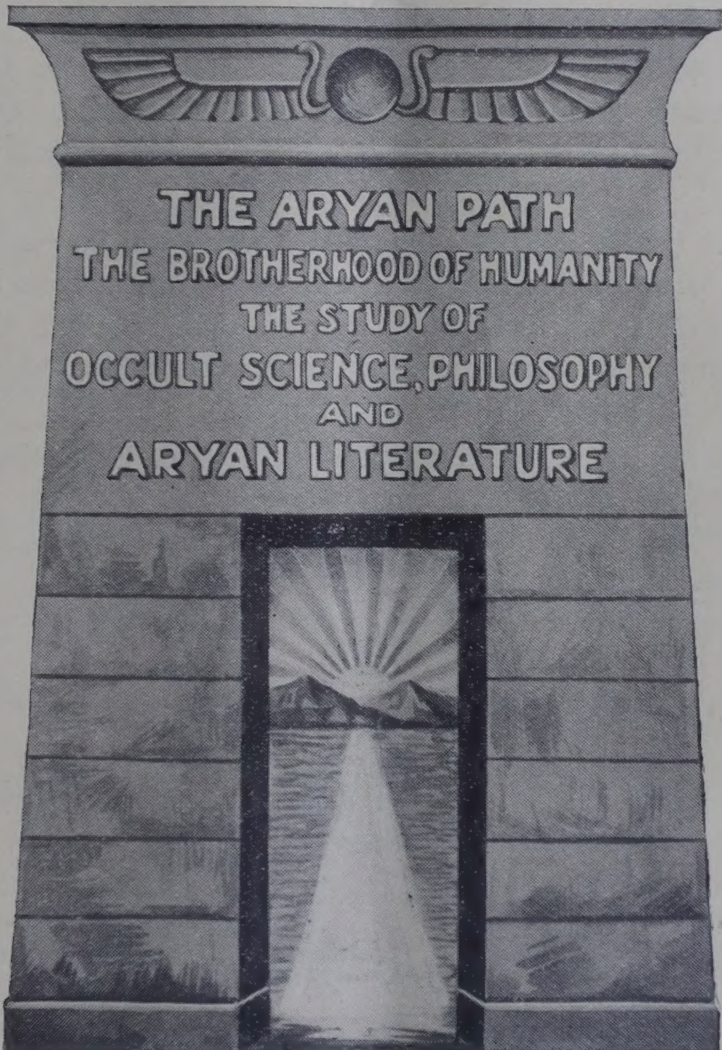




# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



THE ARYAN PATH  
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY  
THE STUDY OF  
OCCULT SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY  
AND  
ARYAN LITERATURE

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Vol. VII No. II

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September 17, 1937

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The Occult Science is *not* one, in which secrets can be communicated of a sudden, by a written or even verbal communication. It is the common mistake of people that we willingly wrap ourselves and our powers in mystery—that we wish to keep our knowledge to ourselves, and of our own will refuse—"wantonly and deliberately" to communicate it. The truth is that till the neophyte attains to the condition necessary for that degree of Illumination to which, and for which, he is entitled and fitted, most *if not all* of the Secrets are *incommunicable*. The receptivity must be equal to the desire to instruct. The illumination *must come from within*.—MASTER K. H.



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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.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



*There is no Religion Higher than Truth*

BOMBAY, 17th September 1937

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# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th September 1937.

VOL. VII. No. 11.

## THE BACK-BONE OF THEOSOPHY

Theosophy protected and nourished by H. P. Blavatsky flourished in Europe and America in spite of the joint attack delivered in 1884-85 by dogmatic religionists, spiritists and psychical researchers. In India, unfortunately it was otherwise, as one paragraph in the following article clearly shows. The teachings given by H. P. B. and her Masters were neglected in India; and because this aspect of the Mission of Theosophy was neglected by the Indian members during 1885-1891 pseudo-theosophy rose to power and popularity in the Adyar Society. Even to-day a large number of its members do not know that between the Theosophy of H.P.B. and that of their leaders there is a difference, as great as there is between day and night.

One of the missions of the United Lodge of

Theosophists and its Associates, East or West, is not to neglect the study and practice of the Esoteric Philosophy or Wisdom Religion, recorded in the writings of H.P.B. and faithfully simplified in those of W. Q. Judge.

It is natural that a spiritual movement like that of Theosophy should receive attacks. The present generation of the human race is no different from that of the nineteenth century. H.P.B. handled these minor outbursts in her own way. The following article is one such attempt and is reprinted here from *Lucifer*, V. p. 85 for October, 1889. It is appropriate at the present juncture when opponents of Theosophy in Bombay and elsewhere have thought it expedient to take notice of it. The article is entitled—

## PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHICULES

"We shall in vain interpret their words by the notions of our philosophy and the doctrines in our schools."

—LOCKE.

"Knowledge of the lowest kind is *un-unified* knowledge; Science is *partially unified* knowledge; Philosophy is *completely unified* knowledge."—HERBERT SPENCER'S *First Principles*.

New accusations are brought by captious censors against our Society in general and Theosophy, especially. We will summarize them as we proceed along, and notice the "freshest" denunciation.

We are accused of being illogical in the "Constitution and Rules" of the Theosophical Society; and contradictory in the practical application thereof. The accusations are framed in this wise:—

In the published "Constitution and Rules" great stress is laid upon the absolutely non-sectarian character of the Society. It is constantly insisted upon that it has no creed, no philosophy, no religion, no dogmas, and even no special views of its own to advocate, still less to impose on its members. And yet—

"Why, bless us! is it not as undeniable a fact that certain very definite views of a philosophic and, strictly speaking, of a religious character are held by the Founders and most prominent members of the Society?"

"Verily so," we answer. "But where is the alleged *contradiction* in this? Neither the Founders, nor the 'most prominent members,' nor yet the majority thereof, constitute *the* Society, but only a certain portion of it, which, moreover, having no creed as a body, yet allows its members to believe as and what they please." In answer to this, we are told:—

"Very true; yet these doctrines are collectively called 'Theosophy.' What is your explanation of this?"

We reply:—"To call them so is a 'collective' mistake; one of those loose applications of terms to things that ought to be more carefully defined; and the neglect of members to do so is now bearing its fruits. In fact it is an oversight as harmful as that which followed the confusion of the two terms 'buddhism' and 'bodhism,' leading the Wisdom



philosophy to be mistaken for the religion of Buddha."

But it is still urged that when these doctrines are examined it becomes very clear that all the work which the Society as a body has done in the East and the West depended upon them. This is obviously true in the case of the doctrine of the underlying unity of all religions and the existence, as claimed by Theosophists, of a common source called the Wisdom-religion of the secret teaching, from which, according to the same claims, all existing forms of religion are directly or indirectly derived. Admitting this, we are pressed to explain, how can the T.S. as a body be said to have no special views or doctrines to inculcate, no creed and no dogmas, when these are "the back-bone of the Society, its very heart and soul"?

To this we can only answer that it is still another error. That these teachings are most undeniably the "back-bone" of the Theosophical Societies in the West, but not at all in the East, where such Branch Societies number almost five to one in the West. Were these special doctrines the "heart and soul" of the whole body, then Theosophy and its T.S. would have died out in India and Ceylon since 1885—and this is surely not the case. For, not only have they been virtually abandoned at Adyar since that year, as there was no one to teach them, but while some Brahmin Theosophists were very much opposed to that teaching being made public, others—the more orthodox—positively opposed them as being inimical to their exoteric systems.

These are self-evident facts. And yet if answered that it is not so; that the T.S. as a body teaches no special religion but tolerates and virtually accepts all religions by never interfering with, or even inquiring after the religious views of its members, our cavillers and even friendly opponents, do not feel satisfied. On the contrary: ten to one they will non-plus you with the following extraordinary objection:—

"How can this be, since belief in 'Esoteric Buddhism' is a *sine qua non* for acceptance as a Fellow of your Society?"

It is vain to protest any longer; useless, to assure our opponents that belief in *Buddhism*, whether esoteric or exoteric, is no more expected by, nor obligatory in, our Society than reverence for the monkey-god Hanuman, him of the singed tail, or belief in Mahomet and his canonized mare. It is unprofitable to try and explain that since there are in the T.S. as many Brahmins, Mussulmans, Parsis, Jews and Christians as there are Buddhists, and more, all cannot be expected to become followers of Buddha, nor even of Buddhism, howsoever esoteric. Nor can they be made to realize that the Occult doctrine—a few fundamental teachings of

which are broadly outlined in Mr. Sinnett's "Esoteric Buddhism"—are not the *whole* of Theosophy, nor even the whole of the secret doctrines of the East, but a very small portion of these: Occultism itself being but one of the Sciences of Theosophy, or the WISDOM-Religion, and by no means the whole of THEOSOPHY.

So firmly rooted seem these ideas, however, in the mind of the average Britisher, that it is like telling him that there are Russians who are neither Nihilists nor Panславists, and that every Frenchman does not make his daily meal of frogs; he will simply refuse to believe you. Prejudice against Theosophy seems to have become part of the national feeling. For almost three years the writer of the present—helped in this by a host of Theosophists—has tried in vain to sweep away from the public brain some of the most fantastic cobwebs with which it is garnished; and now she is on the eve of giving up the attempt in despair! While half of the English people will persist in confusing Theosophy with "esoteric *bud-ism*," the remainder will keep on pronouncing the world-honoured title of Buddha as they do—*butter*.

It is they also who have started the proposition now generally adopted by the flippant press that "Theosophy is not a philosophy, but a religion," and "a new sect."

Theosophy is certainly not a philosophy, simply because it includes every philosophy as every science and religion. But before we prove it once more, it may be pertinent to ask how many of our critics are thoroughly posted about, say, even the true definition of the term coined by Pythagoras, that they should so flippantly deny it to a system of which they seem to know still less than they do about philosophy? Have they acquainted themselves with its best and latest definitions, or even with the views upon it, now regarded as antiquated, of Sir W. Hamilton? The answer would seem to be in the negative, since they fail to see that every such definition shows Theosophy to be the very synthesis of Philosophy in its widest abstract sense, as in its special qualifications. Let us try to give once more a clear and concise definition of Theosophy, and show it to be the very root and essence of all sciences and systems.

Theosophy is "divine" or "god-wisdom." Therefore, it must be the life-blood of that system (philosophy) which is defined as "the science of things divine and human and the causes in which they are contained" (Sir W. Hamilton), Theosophy alone possessing the keys to those "causes." Bearing in mind simply its most elementary division, we find that philosophy is the love of, and search after wisdom, "the knowledge of phenomena as explained by, and resolved into, causes and reasons,



powers and laws." (*Encyclopedia*.) When applied to god or gods, it became in every country *theology*; when to material nature, it was called *physics* and *natural history*; concerned with man, it appeared as *anthropology* and *psychology*; and when raised to the higher regions it becomes known as *metaphysics*. Such is philosophy—"the science of effects by their causes—the very spirit of the doctrine of *Karma*, the most important teaching under various names of every religious philosophy, and a theosophical tenet that belongs to no one religion but explains them all. Philosophy is also called "the science of things possible, inasmuch as they are possible." This applies directly to theosophical doctrines, inasmuch as they reject *miracle*; but it can hardly apply to theology or any dogmatic religion, every one of which *enforces belief in things impossible*; nor to the modern philosophical systems of the materialists who reject even the "possible," whenever the latter contradicts their assertions.

Theosophy claims to explain and to reconcile religion with science. We find G.H. Lewes (*History of Philosophy*, vol. I., Prolegomena, p. xviii.) stating that "Philosophy, detaching its widest conceptions from both (Theology and Science), furnishes a doctrine which contains an *explanation of the world and human destiny*." "The office of Philosophy is the systematisation of the conceptions furnished by Science... Science furnishes the knowledge, and Philosophy the doctrine" (*loc. cit.*). The latter can become complete only on condition of having that "knowledge" and that "doctrine" passed through the sieve of Divine Wisdom, or Theosophy.

Ueberweg (*History of Philosophy*) defines Philosophy as "the Science of Principles", which, as all our members know, is the claim of Theosophy in its branch-sciences of Alchemy, Astrology, and the occult sciences generally.

Hegel regards it as "the contemplation of the self-development of the ABSOLUTE," or in other words as "the representation of the Idea" (*Darstellung der Idee*).

The whole of the Secret Doctrine—of which the work bearing that name is but an atom—is such a contemplation and record, as far as finite language and limited thought can record the processes of the infinite.

Thus it becomes evident that Theosophy cannot be a "religion," still less "a sect," but it is indeed the quintessence of the highest *philosophy* in all and every one of its aspects. Having shown that it falls under, and answers fully, every description of philosophy, we may add to the above a few more of Sir W. Hamilton's definitions, and prove our state-

ment by showing the pursuit of the same in Theosophical literature. This is a task easy enough, indeed. For, does not "Theosophy" include "the science of things evidently deduced from first principles," as well as "the sciences of truths sensible and abstract"? Does it not preach "the applications of reason to its legitimate objects," and make it one of its "legitimate objects"—to inquire into "the science of the original form of the Ego, or mental self," as also to teach the secret of "the absolute indifference of the ideal and real"? All of which proves that according to every definition—old or new—of philosophy, he who studies Theosophy, studies *the highest transcendental philosophy*.

We need not go out of our way to notice at any length such foolish statements about Theosophy and Theosophists as are found almost daily in the public press. Such definitions and epithets as "new fangled religion" and "ism," "the system *invented* by the high priestess of Theosophy," and other remarks as silly, may be left to their own fate. They have been and in most cases will be left unnoticed.

Our age is regarded as being pre-eminently critical: an age which analyses closely, and whose public refuses to accept anything offered for its consideration before it has fully scrutinized the subject. Such is the boast of our century; but such is not quite the opinion of the impartial observer. At all events it is an opinion highly exaggerated since this boasted analytical scrutiny is applied only to that which interferes in no way with national, social, or personal prejudices. On the other hand everything that is malevolent, destructive to reputation, wicked and slanderous, is received with open embrace, accepted joyfully, and made the subject of everlasting public gossip, without any scrutiny or the slightest hesitation, but verily on a blind faith of the most elastic kind. We challenge contradiction on this point. Neither unpopular characters nor their work are judged in our day on their intrinsic value, but merely on their author's personality and the prejudiced opinion thereon of the masses. In many journals no literary work of a Theosophist can ever hope to be reviewed on its own merits, apart from the gossip about its author. Such papers, oblivious of the rule first laid down by Aristotle, who says that criticism is "a standard of judging well," refuse point blank to accept any Theosophical book apart from its writer. As a first result, the former is judged by the distorted reflection of the latter created by slander repeated in the daily papers. The personality of the writer hangs like a dark shadow between the opinion of the modern journalist and unvarnished truth; and as a final result there are few editors in all Europe and America who know anything of our Society's tenets.



How can then Theosophy or even the T.S. be correctly judged? It is nothing new to say that the true critic ought to know something at least of the subject he undertakes to analyze. Nor is it very risky to add that not one of our press Thersites knows in the remotest way what he is talking about—this, from the large fish to the smallest fry;\* but whenever the word “Theosophy” is printed and catches the reader’s eye, there it will be generally found preceded and followed by abusive epithets and invective against the personalities of certain Theosophists. The modern editor of the Grunby pandering kind, is like Byron’s hero, “*He knew not what to say, and so he swore*”—at that which passeth his comprehension. All such swearing is invariably based upon old gossip, and stale denunciations of those who stand in the moon-struck minds as the “inventors” of Theosophy. Had South Sea islanders a daily press of their own, they would be as sure to accuse the missionaries of having invented Christianity in order to bring to grief their native fetishism.

How long, O radiant gods of truth, how long shall this terrible mental cecity of the nineteenth century *Philosophists* last? How much longer are they to be told that Theosophy is no national property, no religion, but only the universal code of science and the most transcendental ethics that was ever known; that it lies at the root of every moral philosophy and religion; and that neither Theosophy *per se*, nor yet its humble unworthy vehicle, the Theosophical Society, has anything whatever to do with any personality or personalities! To identify it with these is to show oneself sadly defective in logic and even common sense. To reject the teaching and its philosophy under the pretext that its leaders, or rather one of its Founders, lies under various accusations (so far unproven) is silly, illogical and absurd. It is, in truth, as ridiculous as it would have been in the days of the Alexandrian school of Neo-Platonism, which was in its essence *Theosophy*, to reject its teachings, because it came to Plato from Socrates, and because the sage of Athens, besides his pug-nose and bald head, was accused of “blasphemy and of corrupting the youth.”

Aye, kind and generous critics, who call yourselves Christians, and boast of the civilisation and progress of your age; you have only to be scratched skin deep to find in you the same cruel and prejudiced “barbarian” as of old. Were an opportunity

\* From Jupiter Tonans of the *Saturday Review* down to the scurrilous editor of the *Mirror*. The first may be as claimed one of the greatest authorities living on *fencing*, and the other as great at “muscular” thought reading, yet both are equally ignorant of Theosophy and as blind to its real object and purposes as two owls are to day-light.

offered you to sit in public and legal judgment on a Theosophist, who of you would rise in your nineteenth century of Christianity higher than one of the Athenian *dikastery* with its 500 jurors who condemned Socrates to death? Which of you would scorn to become a Meletus or an Anytus, and have Theosophy and all its adherents condemned on the evidence of false witness to a like ignominious death? The hatred manifested in your daily attacks upon the Theosophists is a warrant to us for this. Did Haywood have you in his mind’s eye when he wrote of Society’s censure:—

“O! that the too censorious world would learn  
This wholesome rule, and with each other bear;  
But man, as if a foe to his own species,  
Takes pleasure to report his neighbour’s faults,  
Judging with rigour every small offence,  
And prides himself in scandal...”

Many optimistic writers would fain make of this mercantile century of ours an age of philosophy and call it its *renaissance*. We fail to find outside of our Society any attempt at philosophical revival, unless the word “philosophy” is made to lose its original meaning. For wherever we turn we find a cold sneer at true philosophy. A sceptic can never aspire to that title. He who is capable of imagining the universe with its handmaiden Nature fortuitous, and hatched like the black hen of the fable, out of a self-created egg hanging in space, has neither the power of thinking nor the spiritual faculty of perceiving abstract truths, which power and faculty are the first requisites of a philosophical mind. We see the entire realm of modern Science honeycombed with such materialists, who yet claim to be regarded as philosophers. They either believe in naught as do the Secularists, or doubt according to the manner of the Agnostics. Remembering the two wise aphorisms by Bacon, the modern-day materialist is thus condemned out of the mouth of the Founder of his own inductive method, as contrasted with the deductive philosophy of Plato, accepted in Theosophy. For does not Bacon tell us that “Philosophy *when superficially studied* excites doubt; when thoroughly explored it dispels it; and again, “a little philosophy *inclineth man’s mind to atheism*; but depth of philosophy bringeth man’s mind about to religion”?

The logical deduction of the above is, undeniably, that none of our present Darwinians and materialists and their admirers, our critics, could have studied philosophy otherwise than very “superficially.” Hence while Theosophists have a legitimate right to the title of *philosophers*—true “lovers of Wisdom”—their critics and slanderers are at best PHILOSOPHICULES—the progeny of modern PHILOSOPHISM.



# SUCCESS BECOMES FAILURE

## BUT

### THEOSOPHY MARCHES ON

Hadjii Erinn was one of the pen-names of W. Q. Judge who wrote the following article in his *Path*, Vol. II, p. 247 for November 1887. In it a reference is made to the Theosophical Society as having "passed its probationary period". This was chiefly due to the Teachings given out by the Masters through H.P.B. and which inspired and energized a sufficient number of its members to become student-servers. In the process a number failed to move with the Movement of H.P.B. and such did not use the further Teachings of Masters ; to this a pointed reference is made in "The Backbone of Theosophy" printed elsewhere in this issue.

This article was published in 1887 ; during the next seven-year-period (1887 to 1894) as predicted by H.P.B. a test came to the Society after her death in 1891 ; in this test many front-rank members and officers failed which resulted in the split in the then Theosophical Society. W. Q. Judge and his friends and followers remained true to the Message and the Messenger ; his hand of fellowship was rejected by the Adyar leaders with dire consequences. This historical background should be kept in view by the reader. Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists will do well to study this article and make personal applications—each to himself please ! Let him answer to himself if he is, within himself, "a centre of emotional disturbance" ; and again if he stands to the one United Lodge of Theosophists as "a fibre in his body stands to the whole man." Let each judge himself in the light of this article which was published under the caption—

### THE PATH OF ACTION

THE Mohammedan teacher directs his disciples to tread carefully the razor's edge between the good and the bad ; only a hair line divides the false from the true. In this the Asiatic took an excellent illustration, for the "hair line" is the small stroke *alif*, which, placed in a word, may alter the sense from the true to the false.

In chapter four of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, entitled, "Jnana-Yoga," or the book of the Religion of Knowledge, the blessed Krishna instructs Arjuna upon the nature of action, saying : "Renunciation of and devotion through works, are both means of final emancipation ; but of these two, devotion through works is more highly esteemed (by Him) than the renunciation of them ;" and, "the nature of action, of forbidden action, and of inaction must

be well learned. The Path of Action is obscure and difficult to discern."

In ordinary humdrum life these words of Krishna are true enough, but their force is strangely felt in the mind of the devoted student of Theosophy, and especially if he happens to be a member of the Theosophical Society.

That body of investigators has now passed its probationary period, so that, as a whole, it is an accepted chela of the Blessed Masters who gave the impulse that brought it into being. Every member of it, therefore, stands to the whole Society as every fibre in the body of any single chela does to the whole man. Thus now, more than ever before, does each member of the Society feel disturbing influences ; and the Path of Action becomes more and more likely to be obscured.

Always existing or coming into existence in our ranks, have been centres of emotional disturbance. Those who expect that these perturbations ought now to cease and grow less likely to recur, will find themselves mistaken. The increase of interest that is being taken in the Society's work, and the larger number of earnest students who are with us than at any previous period, constitute elements of agitation. Each new member is another nature added, and every one acts after his own nature. Thus the chances for being discomposed are sure to increase ; and it is better thus, for peace with stagnation partakes of the nature of what is called in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Tamogunam*, or, of the quality of darkness. This quality of darkness, than which there is nothing worse, is the chief component of indifference, and indifference leads only to extinction.

Still another element in this equation that every earnest Theosophist has to solve, and which in itself contains the potency of manifold commotions, is a law, hard to define, yet inexorable in its action. For its clearer comprehension we may say that it is shown in nature by the rising of the sun. In the night when the moon's rays flooded the scene, every object was covered with a romantic light, and when that luminary went down, it left everything in a partial obscurity wherein many doubtful characters could conceal their identity or even masquerade for that which they were not. But on the sun's arising all objects stand out in their true colours ; the rugged bark of the oak has lost the softening cover of partial day ; the rank weeds can no longer be imagined as the malwa flowers. The powerful hand of the God of day has unveiled the character of all.

It must not be supposed that a record has been kept by any officials, from which are to be taken and published the characters of our members. There is no need of that ; circumstances taking place in natural order, or apparently from eccentric motion,



will cause us all, whether we will or not, to stand forth for what we are.

Every one of us will have to stop and learn in the cave outside of the Hall of Learning before we can enter there. Very true that cave, with all its dark shadows and agitating influences, is an illusion, but it is one that very few will fail to create, for hard indeed to be overcome are the illusions of matter. In that shall we discover the nature of action and inaction; there we will come to admit that although the quality of action partakes of the nature of badness, yet it is nearer to the quality of truth than is that which we have called darkness, quietude, indifference. Out of the turmoil and the strife of an apparently untamed life may arise one who is a warrior for Truth. A thousand errors of judgment made by an earnest student, who, with a pure and high motive strives to push on the Cause, are better than the outward goodness of those who are judges of their fellows. All these errors made in a good cause, while sowing good seed, will be atoned by the motive.

We must not then be judges of any man. We cannot assume to say who shall or shall not be allowed to enter and to work in the Theosophical Society. The Masters who founded it, wish us to offer its influence and its light to all, regardless of what we may ourselves think; we are to sow the seed, and when it falls on stony ground no blame attaches to the sower.

Nor is our Society for good and respectable people only. Now, as much as when Jesus of Nazareth spoke, is it true that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repenteth, than over ninety-nine just men who need no repentance.

Remembering then that the Path of Action is obscure and difficult to be discerned, let us beware of the illusions of matter.

HADJII ERINN

## MY PATH

[The following contribution is from an earnest aspirant to Higher Life who unfortunately seems not to have had opportunities to study the genuine Teachings of Theosophy. More than one phrase as used—such as “stages of initiation”, “trust in God”, “Masters’ Plan”, etc.—indicate the influence of pseudo-theosophical books and lack of contact with and understanding of Theosophy as recorded in the writings of H.P.B. and her real pupils. Similarly, the processes of Karmic precipitations are not as this contribution seems to make out. We print this article for its contents show how even an elementary application of the Law of Karma blesses

with its strength the consciousness of an invalid. The article also exemplifies the truth of these words of Robert Crosbie :

We should push nothing, while responding to everything. We would not use force if we could, because each mind has to be free to choose; otherwise there would be no true progress. And I think this is a good attitude to be taken in the matter of questions concerning theosophical claims and exponents. These various stripes must have their place in the great economy of consciousness—they must have, or people would not be attracted by them, would not seize and hold on to them. When the particular “stripe” does not bring the devotee the expected result in knowledge, then a further search is indicated to the mind so caught. Every person really waked up by such claims or exponents will touch us sooner or later, if we hold to the straight line. On this, Mr. Judge once wrote: “By our not looking at their errors too closely, the Master will be able to clear it all off and make it work well.”—Eds.]

I was first introduced to Theosophy by a poster on a wall under a railway arch in the City of Manchester. I had missed my tram to the suburbs and had chosen to walk instead of waiting for the next, and with an eye for literature of any kind, I noted that there was to be a public meeting on the subject, “Have We Lived Before?”

I was always inclined to mental experiment, and here was a subject with attractive possibilities. Certain odd fragments of experience seemed to suggest that this was not our first time here, but the sound Evangelical tradition in which I had been brought up discouraged investigation into what went before birth or after death, subjects we were forbidden to pry into. I had a wide, though not deep, experience of all the creeds I had been able to sample, and a perfectly genuine devotion to my own Church went hand in hand with interest in the beliefs and rituals of all the Protestant bodies, Anglo-Catholicism, Roman Catholicism, Christian Science, Spiritualism, and the less spiritual activities of table-turning and automatic writing. But this was something new, and I went to the meeting.

The lecturer had a bad cold and was therefore not at his best; what he said was so choked and interrupted by coughing that I missed a good deal. What I heard, however, was extraordinarily interesting, and when the Secretary announced at the end that enquirers would be welcomed, I accepted the invitation. I went home with several pamphlets and a book from the library. By the time I went to bed I had read them all, and had decided to become a Theosophist. In fact, I felt I had been one all my life without knowing it.

It was the doctrine of Karma that specially seized my mind. Here was an obvious common-sense explanation of all the problems caused by the inequalities of life. How much better it was to know



that suffering was always the result of previous sin\* than to have to endure in a blind faith that it was somehow for our good! How the sting would be taken out of sorrow and pain and poverty and the manifold ills of life if those who sighed under the yoke knew there was a definite profit-and-loss account, and that patience would neutralize past evil!† I do not think I put things into words as clearly as that, nevertheless this was in some sense what filled my mind.

Twelve years have gone by since then, and what I learnt so rapidly and so easily has become an integral part of my life. I am still in close communion with the Church of my parents; circumstances debar me from any personal contact with Theosophists, but without any external aids I have gone on, as if by a process of natural flowering. From my first steps on the Path I began to practise the art of meditation; it came perfectly easily, and by insensible degrees I was led to submit myself voluntarily to the will of the Masters for purification‡ and instruction for the service of others. I read of the various stages of initiation and the possibility of taking a steep short cut up the mountain of attainment, so crowding into brief space the karma of several past lives and reaching the goal earlier. I asked that I might be found worthy of such honour that thereby I might be earlier free to help others without impediment.

My waking life holds no record of an answer to that solemnly made request, and perhaps I deceive myself in thinking consent was given. No violent disaster has befallen me or those I love, no spectacular ruin, nothing but a slow steady failure of bodily strength. All that medical science can do has been done, till now, still young enough to have looked for many years of fruitful work in a profession I love, I must withdraw to the life of an invalid, still able to creep from one room to another, still able to read, still able to use my right hand, but with complete failure of these powers in sight. But not death. I have an excellent constitution.

\* Not always. "While each receives his deserts appearances may deceive, and birth into poverty or heavy trial may not be punishment for bad Karma, for Egos continually incarnate into poor surroundings where they experience difficulties and trials which are for the discipline of the Ego and result in strength, fortitude, and sympathy." ("Aphorisms on Karma," No. 28, *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*, p. 8).—Eds.

† Not to be conceived too literally. "The effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects." ("Aphorisms on Karma," No. 13, *Ibid.*, p. 6).—Eds.

‡ Not even the Masters can purify us. We have to make the effort. "By self alone one is purified. Purity and impurity depend on one's own self. No man can purify another." (*The Dhammapada*, Verse 165).—Eds.

This sounds an appalling fate, but I do not find it so. During the six years that I have known the inevitable end and seen the gradual decline of my powers, I have never for one moment felt the burden of mental distress. It is true that the anxiety of financial need does not press on me; I have enough for my small necessities, though no superfluity, and perhaps if I had been in difficulties about money, my philosophy might not have been enough. I am thankful that I have not been tried so high, but it is true that pain of body and limitations of movement and society have so far not had power over my mind.

"How do you manage not to worry? I couldn't help it in your place," has been said to me again and again and always with an envy that I find infinitely pathetic. I always feel some shame at the suggestion of a compliment. How indeed could I be anything but happy when I have, as I believe, been given what I asked for? I believe I am making progress on the Path; it would take an occultist to say how far I have progressed, but I can say with Browning,

Welcome, each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,

for the more there are the nearer I feel myself to my journey's end.

I do not, however, find it advisable to say this to all, for there are many to whom such a truth seems foolish or even wicked. There is no point in argument with such, and I do not attempt it; their time for this piece of knowledge and comfort has not come. Nevertheless even the careless will accept the answer when couched in terms of the Christian faith, and when I tell them that the grace of God is sufficient for me they have nothing to say against it. It may be that if they can get to that point for themselves, they may later take the further step to the wisdom for which they are not ready yet.

So let me sum up what I have learnt from Theosophy. It has given me a fuller understanding of the meaning of life and an explanation of the mystery of pain. From this follows patience and a deeper trust in God, also some measure of increased power to touch the souls of others. It has made me intensely aware of the Unseen surrounding the Seen and has given me an unfailing source of joy which is not to be quenched by physical discomfort and restriction. My belief as a Christian would have given me much of this, but the clear vision of the purpose of suffering would not have been there; there would have been more demand on blind faith and less on knowledge. Because my eyes are open I can see this life under the aspect of Eternity, "a brief affliction which lasteth but a moment," yet in truth no affliction but a joy.



## THE CORDS OF KARMA

Students of Theosophy will be well advised to ponder over some of the statements of Mr. Ernest V. Hayes in "Karma, the Root of Freedom" (*Buddhism in England*, May-June, 1937). He deprecates the wooden idea of Karma which has come to prevail among Westerners who have an interest in the subject. The prevalent view of Karma among promulgators of Eastern thought in Europe and America, he declares, is no more uplifting and illuminating than the usual view of the peasantry of India and Burma.

This was certainly not the fault of that extraordinary woman known as H. P. Blavatsky. At the very first, one feels she shrank from introducing the ideas of reincarnation and Karma (they are inseparable, of course) to the Western world at all; so much so, that she was afterwards accused of not believing at one time in these doctrines herself—an absurd accusation, if one carefully reads the formidable volume (*Isis Unveiled*) in which she is stated to have denied the fundamental principles of both Brahmanic and Buddhist philosophy. Rather, she seems to have been a little dubious as to the inevitable crudities and materializations which the matter-of-fact, concrete mind of the West was sure to attach to these mysterious teachings.

Her gloomy doubts were certainly not unwarranted! . . . The trouble is that the West is ever at heart profoundly materialistic. . . . So, naturally, such an idea as Karma, profoundly spiritual, profoundly mysterious, eluding all the processes of the lower mind by itself; if it is accepted at all, is generally accepted wrongly, and instead of becoming a lever to aid the progress of the human soul, resolves itself into a fetter which has to be broken, if the man seeks genuine illumination.

Actually, Karma arises in consciousness. . . . This thought should be held by the student: "Karma is really Myself; it is primarily in that spiritual aspect of me known as Consciousness and as Mind; it is only in the environment which affects me because it is in me; poverty, disease, failure, vice, darkness, death and involuntary reincarnation—all that has been designated as Evil in the life of man. These exist in a spiritual sense within my own consciousness; those things of life wherein I fancy I find them are nothing but reflections of my own inner state."

Each man is his own storehouse of Karma; the Karmic precipitation is in terms of "the environment provided," i.e., of the channel which each makes, by his thought primarily.

Every act proceeds from the mind. . . . and it is only through the mind that the effects of rest and action can be received. (*U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 6*, pp. 2, 5)

Mr. Hayes has put his finger on an important aspect of the Law, one almost overlaid by the vagaries of pseudo-theosophists.

It is a law of occult dynamics that "a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane. . ." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 644)

If the case were quite so simple as Mr. Hayes pictures it, however, H.P.B. would hardly have re-

ferred to Karma as she did in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 172), as "the most difficult of all our tenets." It is not only *internal* but also *external conditions* "which affect the determination of our will upon our actions," and those external conditions have been created not by our thoughts alone but by our acts as well.

It is possible to counteract bad Karma already generated, by right causes set up in the present, and in that effort, as Mr. Hayes brings out so clearly, our thinking has the greatest potency. In this connection, a careful study is recommended of Mr. Judge's article, entitled "Karma," which is reprinted in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 6*, from which we quote the following closing thoughts:—

It is the attitude of the mind which draws the Karmic cords tightly round the soul. It imprisons the aspirations and binds them with chains of difficulty and obstruction. . . . It will be only through a change of mind that the Karmic burden will be lifted. . . . To the worldly man Karma is a stern Nemesis, to the spiritual man Karma unfolds itself in harmony with his highest aspirations.

## PROHIBITION

Gandhiji's advice to Congressmen in power is to enforce prohibition in a given time, viz., three years. This period is necessary not only to facilitate the task of administrators, but to educate the populace, especially in the cities. Though religious feeling is strong against drink in India, in which respect this country is different from the U. S. A., human nature is the same in the city of Salem in the Madras Presidency as in the city of that name in Massachusetts. The force of temptation to go counter to what is enforced from without has to be reckoned with. Therefore the education of the people on the subject of this prohibition should be speedily taken in hand.

Theosophy gives grave warnings against alcoholism and there is much in our philosophy which shows how the poison works not only on the visible but also on the invisible planes of being. Here we quote only an exoteric statement.

Introducing a story of Tolstoi which she herself translated from Russian, H. P. Blavatsky commented in *Lucifer*, Vol. V. p. 195, thus:—

Russia is afflicted with the demon of drink, as much as, though *not more* than, England or any other country; yet it is not so much the Karma of the nation, as that of their respective governments, whose Karmic burden is growing heavier and more terrible with every year. This curse and universal incubus, drink, is the direct and legitimate progeny of the Rulers; it is begotten by their greed for money, and FORCED by them on the unfortunate masses. Why in Karma's name, should the latter be made to suffer here, and hereafter?



# LISTENING AND SPEAKING

## A STUDY IN "LIGHT ON THE PATH"

"Listen only to the voice which is soundless"

### I : LISTENING

In numerous places and in numerous ways the importance of purification and control of speech is pointed out in our Theosophical philosophy. The real occult reason is not so clearly perceived by the aspirant to Wisdom, though that too is stressed in numerous places.

The very Name of Deity is represented by the symbol of the Word. Creative Logos is Man's highest appellation and the human mouth is designated as the Organ of the Creative Logos. That Organ, in Man the Microcosm, is derived directly from the primary vehicle which the Creative Logos uses to emanate by Sound the Macrocosmic principles. The voice in the spiritual sound is the Voice of the Most High.

Voice attains a special position in the human kingdom when it acquires words as its vehicle. Words are a special feature of speech, which mark the difference between the human kingdom and the other kingdoms. The birth of word-speech, *i.e.*, human speech, takes place simultaneously with the birth of Manas, the Thinker, who is the human soul. "*Language* is certainly coeval with reason, and could never have been developed before men became one with the informing principles in them—those who fructified and awoke to life the manasic element dormant in primitive man." (*The Secret Doctrine* II, 199). Therefore is speech called the logos of thought—through speech thought is able to manifest ; deprive man of his thinking power and the use of speech ceases.

Now, just as the existence of Manas, the Thinker, produces the phenomenon of the dual manas, higher and lower, so also we have the phenomenon of dual speech—lower and higher. Most people are centred in the lower mind and the lower speech. It is the task of Theosophy to draw their attention to the existence in them of the higher mind and the higher speech.

Our study has two aspects : we have to consider the lower speech, which is not necessarily and only obscene, untruthful or harsh ; and then the higher, which should not be mistaken for polite talk or even friendly but worldly advice. There is a wider difference between higher and lower speech than there is between, say, cruel gossip and harmless chit-chat.

There is an intimate relation between the silence of Nature and her basal sound which the Chinese call *Kung*, the Great Tone. Similarly there is a

mathematical harmony subsisting between the Ideation of Manas and the higher speech. The same phenomenon takes place on the plane of reflection : between the Desire-Mind and the lower speech there is a certain kinship.

### DANGERS OF SELF-TALK

The earliest practice for the Higher Life consists in the control of speech, without which one cannot become a Listener, an *akoustikoi*, a *Shravaka*. One cannot hear and speak at the same time. The power to listen has to be cultivated ; modern ways of life—social and political and even business—are not conducive to this development. To be quiet at a social function is considered bad form and one is expected to "make talk" ; politicians have to have that alertness to interrupt so that the opposing speaker may be worsted soon ; and so on, on every plane of modern life.

The Theosophical student is not given to obscene talk ; but often he suffers from the weakness of small talk and even of smart talk, for he does not perceive that such a habit tarnishes his consciousness, and affects the motions of the *pranic* currents. There is another danger—small talk soon deteriorates into gossip ; harmless talk about persons and personalities quickly degenerates into adverse criticism, hostile denunciation and foul slander. Mr. Judge offers some very useful and practical directions in this matter. (See *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, March 1932, p. 37.)

Those, however, who are on their guard against criticism and denunciation of others easily err in the matter of self-talk. A student likes to talk about what and how much he knows ; about himself ; the habit "of pushing yourself forward" which "arises from personality" is not easily controlled and there is a line of development which brings to birth Barons Munchausen of Occultism !

### LEARNING TO LISTEN

To become a listener—that is the first step. What is the aspirant to listen to ? To the Voice of Wisdom, and in three stages, broadly speaking, the exercise has to be completed.

(1) Learn to listen to the teachings of Theosophy as recorded in the Message. To enable all men and women to do this, public talks on the principles and fundamentals of Theosophy are arranged by the United Lodge of Theosophists. All our public propaganda, however, should be included in this compartment. While the Sunday talk, so to



speak, compels the audience to listen, the other meetings give an opportunity to the earnest student voluntarily to become a Listener. Further still and in one sense *the* most important, individual reading and study bring excellent opportunities to listen to the Voice of Wisdom.

(2) Learn to listen to the Inner Ego, the God within. Thence emerge the experiences gained in many previous lives ; also, the Wisdom burnt into human consciousness by the Fathers of the Race, when mindless man secured the Light of Manas.

(3) Learn to listen to the Great Gurus, the Elder Brothers—the modern Heirs and Representatives of the Ancient Fathers, who sustain the institution of Chelaship even in the Kali-Yuga.

The Voice which enlightens and blesses needs the friendship of listening ears.

The ears which listen have a foe in the tongue which wags.

This dual relationship has been explained at some length in *Light on the Path*. In our study we are separating the Listening and the Speaking processes, but it should be borne in mind that these are not two distinct and separate processes, but one dual process. As we learn to listen we also learn to speak, and as our spiritualized Voice spreads in Akasa, the capacity to hear the Voice of the Silence increases.

#### THE TRAINING OF THE EAR

The noises and sounds of the world exert a fascination upon many men and women ; such do not hear “the confusion of the world” but enjoy and are charmed by “the silvery buzzing of the golden fire-fly” in clubs, on race-courses, at dinner-parties and the like ; such do not come to Theosophy, because the very first requisite for the aspirant to the Higher Life is “to look within”—implying self-examination and self-condemnation. But says our book : “He that chooses evil refuses to look within himself, shuts his ears to the melody of his heart.” Leave such to their future suffering, purgation and ultimate recognition that the voice of the world is the voice of confusion and evil ; they are Theosophists of the future cycles. But in so leaving them, our brothers and sisters, let us not be proud of the place we are reaching, of the position we are trying to attain. The task we have set for ourselves is the most difficult that any human being can undertake. There are perils which might drag us down to depths lower than those which they are likely to touch.

“Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness.” This rule precedes the one about speech : “Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound.” Losing earthly sensitiveness of hearing enables the neophyte to acquire spiritual sensitiveness

of the “inner ear”. Then only can the tongue be controlled, by the aid of what is heard, and the spiritual voice arise. But the two processes are simultaneous—like thinking and speaking, though thought precedes, or ought to, words.

#### THE FIRST LISTENING

Ordinary enquirers and hasty questioners fail to grasp what is said in response to their queries ; inattentive students fail to grasp the passage they are reading ; both classes fail because they are listening to the hubbub of their own personal and lower speech. Not only outer noises disturb but internal howls and egotistic self-talk drown the voice of wisdom. “To be able to hear is to have opened the doors of the soul.” “The ears [are] the gateways or doors [of the soul]. Through them comes knowledge of the confusion of the world.” The result ? “[The changing tides of thought] enter into the gateways of his soul, and wash over that soul and make it blind and blank and void of all permanent intelligence.”

Thus the first step in the training of the ear is to learn to listen to the Teachings of Theosophy, to learn not to permit the changing tides of worldly thought to wash over our consciousness and make us void of the permanent or immortal intelligence.

#### THE SECOND LISTENING

Right study most naturally leads the earnest student to self-examination. Self-knowledge follows—knowledge about the foibles and frailties, the prides and prejudices of one’s own lower self, the maker of worldly noises, he who has been contributing his own quota to the din, the babel and the confusion of the world. He, on the other hand, who discerns the pranks of that lower self is the Inner Ego. Because reading or hearing brings to the attention of the student the self-evident fact of his dual nature he readily and very naturally accepts the teaching, and mistakes his second-hand knowledge for first-hand experience. All students talk of their lower devilish and their higher divine natures but only a few experience this duality, hearing the voice of the inner ego. How many experience the din and the clatter of the outer in which the inner voice is drowned ? Unless the disharmony and the bombilation of the outer disturb, nay, sicken us, we do not seek the harmony and the resonance of the within. Our text says : “Use the hearing you have acquired by pain and by the destruction of pain” and in that statement we have the proof that to accept the fact of the existence of the lower in us is not the same as experiencing its power and tenacity. The actual experience that the higher divine broods over us but that we are hedged in, nay, shot through and through by the demoniac is a kind of



minor initiation which reveals the depth of three statements in *Light on the Path* :

To hear the voice of the silence is to understand that from within comes the only true guidance.

When the ear no longer discriminates between that which is pleasant or that which is painful, it will no longer be affected by the voices of others.

In compelling the ears to listen only to the eternal silence the being we call man becomes something which is no longer man.

While these statements refer particularly to what results at the consummation of the practice of the second of the four unnumbered Rules, each practitioner perceives, however vaguely, what they imply, at what they are driving. Especially is this true of another statement—

In that inner place [of peace] there leaps into flame the light of actual knowledge. Then the ears begin to hear.

How shall an aspirant know the extent to which his ears have lost their sensitiveness? The sure test is the Wisdom which wells up within his own consciousness—convincing him past doubt that the Spirit in the body is at once the admonisher, the guide and the instructor. It is with this stage—the neophyte learning to listen to the Silent Speaker—that the first of the chosen fragments from the “Book of the Golden Precepts” deals, giving many details.

It is well to note that before the ears can listen to the Voice of the Masters they have to learn to attune themselves to the Voice of the “great Master,” “thy *inner* God.” Many in the Theosophical Movement want to run before they can walk; such wish to contact and know the Masters before trying to know their own Inner Ego, and are blissfully ignorant that without union achieved within one’s Self, no real “meeting” with the Masters is possible. Says our text :

The voice of the Masters is always in the world; but only those hear it whose ears are no longer receptive of the sounds which affect the personal life. Laughter no longer lightens the heart, anger may no longer enrage it, tender words bring it no balm. For that within, to which the ears are as an outer gateway, is an unshaken place of peace in itself which no person can disturb.

This is the ideal goal. It implies the reaching by the neophyte of the place of peace within himself. Slowly, in the beginning very gradually, the would-be chela has to seek his own Inner Ego, and by silencing the senses, the feelings and desires, the cogitations, reasons and images, come to the “blank” and the “void” and wait in patient expectancy to hear the “voice that speaks where there is none to speak.” Many days may, probably will, go by without the ears catching any note, any sound. Desperation even harassment often ensues but perseverance is bound to win. “A calm will come to the harassed spirit. And in the deep silence the mys-

terious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found.” The joy which follows and the satisfaction which is felt undo the work, if the practitioner rests on his oars; without any break the daily exercise of communion between soul and Soul must continue.

Then in the process of time “out of the silence that is peace a resonant voice shall arise. And this voice will say, It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow.” Then the hour for teaching has come. A danger from the psychic plane threatens the neophyte. He may mistake this voice from “the silence itself” to be something which it is not. Those who show the Way stress that the new listener must recognize the voice as that of his own Inner Self, and check the truth of what he hears by the recorded knowledge of the Illustrious Ones who have preceded him to the final goal of victory.

And it is said, “If thy cry reach his listening ear then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within.” To seek and find and use the Warrior marks a very important stage. The Soul is poet and painter, saint and sage, but ere he can create, the hero-aspect in him must become active. Our primary touch with the Inner Ego is in the capacity of a warrior meeting a Warrior; as fortune’s favoured soldier who has as his Guide the Divinest of Generals. Till a person recognizes himself as Nara-Man his battles cannot begin.

The Warrior chases out of our constitution the man of flesh and sin—Papa-Purusha, who has been growing from strength to strength, has been waxing strong and has been occupying the Temple of the God, using it as his own citadel. In helping us to fight he also teaches why and how we should fight. For this reason it is that the Epic Song of Life comes from the Warrior within. Therefore the neophyte is advised :—

Listen to the song of life. . . . Listen to it first in your own heart. At first you may say, It is not there; when I search I find only discord. Look deeper. If again you are disappointed, pause and look deeper again. There is a natural melody, an obscure fount in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced—but it is there. At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope and love.

The sustained effort of learning from the Warrior “not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself” and applying his teachings to fight the foe and overthrow him enable the practising aspirant to discern the beauty, the philosophy and the peace of the hitherto martial strains of the Epic of the Soul. What shall he do?

Store in your memory the melody you hear. Learn from it the lesson of harmony. . . . Only fragments of the great song come to your ears while yet you are but man. But if you listen to it, remember it faithfully, so that none which has reached you is lost [this is an important clause] and endeavour to learn from it the



meaning of the mystery which surrounds you.... You will by degrees be able to read the larger word of life.

In proportion as the enemy is subdued, and he cheerfully obeys orders from Within, the interior, the loftier, purer strains of the music of life begin to fall on the ears which have now well-nigh lost their fleshly quality. Then follows—"the pause of the soul [which] is the moment of wonder, and the next moment of satisfaction, that is the silence"; and it is written that "the utter silence which can only come by closing the ears to all transitory sounds comes as a more appalling horror than even the formless emptiness of space." This is a test of and in supernature: The inner stamina to rely on one's own Self, not to tremble with fear but to see, understand and appreciate the "silence" and "the void" which is the Voice of the Plenum. "Once having heard it [within yourself] you will more readily recognize it around you."

### THE THIRD LISTENING

For convenience of explanation and understanding we have made a division between the second and the third types of listening. Exactly as we experience fluctuations in our own consciousness—moods of soul-elation and depression, or successful concentration and annoying and dejecting dispersion of thoughts and breakage of laboriously constructed Images—so also there is an intimate, almost a mathematical, relation subsisting between our own higher nature's command and the kingship over our lower nature and our ability to hear the Voice of the Great Ones. One marked feature of *Probationary Learning* is that while the Teachers instruct, the pupils are ignorant, more or less, of Their very presence. As the practitioner learns to discriminate between the voices of his own lower good nature—the vicious tendencies being fairly under control—and of his own higher spiritual nature, he also acquires the power to discern the Voice of the Master within the Voice of his own Inner Ego. On the other hand, he has also to learn how the tempting, glamouring voices of "the Dad-Dugpa clan" penetrate through his vices and weaknesses creating Doubt and Hypocrisy and raising his centre of separative self to unsuspected heights of sheer Egotism.

The Hall of Probationary Learning and that of Real Learning or of Wisdom represent two stages of unfolding human consciousness. Each aspirant moves and fluctuates between these two—for years, for lives. Day after day in waking consciousness, night after night in subjective ideation of that consciousness (foul or fair, vague and fanciful or deliberate and image-forming, tending towards the delights of Kama or steadily absorbing the light of Buddhi) the practitioner is approaching the Moment of Choice—going upward because he has succeeded

or downward because he has failed. And even though he has failed, "the voice of the silence remains within him, and though he leave the path utterly, yet one day it will resound and rend him asunder and separate his passions from his divine possibilities."

The greatest danger enveloping the Probationary Listener comes through his psychic nature—not ordinary vices, but exaggerated virtues which unknown to himself become gross intellectual and even spiritual vices. These take shape and they are of hard-iron substance, most difficult, almost impossible, to break. Safer it is therefore not to let our weaknesses grow into vices; and not to let our vices coalesce and take shape. Attend to impersonalizing yourself—this is the Way of Virtue. Only those hear the voice of the Masters "whose ears are no longer receptive of the sounds which affect the personal life."

When this danger is overcome the knowledge of controlling the "powers of the Air", the fastening Lhamayin in endless space, is also sufficiently acquired. Love of Nature which springs from the appreciation of the grand unity of all in Nature, the result of the action of the Law of Interdependence, provides the safety for the would-be magician and adept. To learn to use all forms of life, without any injury to them, much more without their total destruction, is to learn the method which the Masters adopt. Vast Nature is the Concert Hall, the Lodge of Masters the perfect Recorder of all her notes, scales and melodies. With the aid of this accurate and perfect Record They create Mantras—sound and word aphorisms—for Their Chelas. Again, vast Nature is a Museum, of which every specimen and species is studied and the beneficent or maleficent properties thereof are tabulated and used for the instruction of Their Chelas. Again, the Archetypes in the vast Picture Gallery of Akasa are reduced to their typical forms which the Masters offer, in tables and diagrams, as clues for Their Chelas to meditate upon and decipher. In these and other ways each disciple perfects his power to listen to the Voice of his own Master and then of His Peers and of the Great Lodge.

But all this learning and acquiring of secret knowledge and the unfolding of superphysical faculties is not for the chela's personal progression and perfection. He who learns to listen also learns to speak. In fact it is because he can speak that the Masters allow and enable the chela to hear. One of the ways, and a highly important way, in which the Great Ones sustain Their Voice in the world of mortals is by using the speech of Their devoted disciples pledged to serve Orphan Humanity.

To the consideration of Speech then let us turn.



## SKANDHAIC ACTIVITY

Among members of the same family, and even between twins, there often exists such a diversity of intellectual and moral perception that it challenges our intellect for a rational solution. Modern thought has put forward no satisfactory explanation. The doctrine of heredity as propounded by Western thinkers is at a loss when faced with these congenital differences in traits and tendencies. A satisfactory solution cannot be found outside of the twin doctrine of Karma-Reincarnation, for these differences are the result of antecedent causes. Paul wrote : "Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." With each person, the sowing varies according to the soil, the seed, the labour and the method. The harvest reflects that sowing. Our present characteristics are the crop. Our actions of to-day are the seeds that will yield the harvest of the morrow. Karma is the unerring law that adjusts the harvest to the sowing.

It is our purpose to examine some of the agencies through which our quantum of merit or demerit is brought home to us and our characteristics receive a longer or a shorter lease of life.

There is no dead matter anywhere. Says H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 248-9) :—

ALL IS LIFE, and every atom of even mineral dust is a LIFE, though beyond our comprehension and perception, because it is outside the range of the laws known to those who reject Occultism.

Every form of matter, therefore, whether "organic" or seemingly inert, is a form of life. All processes of nature are acts of incessant borrowing and giving back between these forms. They are composed of sentient points or lives which are in constant ebb and flow from the human to the other kingdoms and back. These sentient points are receptive to magnetic impresses which they have the power of retaining for long periods. There may be almost indelible impresses, which may expend themselves only at the threshold of Pralaya. These lives give each man his characteristics ; and as the process of throwing off and taking in is not confined to post-mortem states, but is incessant, a man's characteristics may undergo as phenomenal a change as any that nature presents.

This constant interchange of lives is without any break, and it helps in changing human characteristics. The process is steady, for nature never works by fits and starts. At birth, the man brings

his characteristics—skandhas—from previous incarnations and from them as germ or basis builds up a new set of skandhas for the new life. It is indeed the thirst for life inherent in these skandhas that forces reincarnation. These become the foundations of his personality, and lay down the trend of the life that is to be lived. Traits that have been built up through lives cannot be thrown away in a day, no matter how great the present effort. For man, there is always a "circle pass not" for any given incarnation, and that is one reason why one does not achieve perfection in a single birth. The old lives resist change, and thus give the man time to think and choose deliberately. Of the skandhas some last throughout the span of a man's life. They have their youth, maturity and old age ; and as it is on them as a substratum that the personality is built, their separation leads to decrepitude and death. Other skandhas are more nebulous, and are replaceable in a comparatively short time. It is these that make possible a rapid change in the personality, for weal or woe.

The lower man is a compound divisible into five skandhaic groups. There is a sevenfold classification referred to by H.P.B., but not much is said about the two higher groups. The five consist of *Rupa*—the body with its four capacities of *Vidana*—the perception of pleasure and pain ; *Sanjana*—the cognition of things ; *Sanskara*—the action that leads to passion, aversion, etc. ; *Vidyana*—the knowledge of external things. The assemblage of these at birth forms a man's personality. Pertaining, however, to man's transitory aspect, they cannot be said to be permanent, though some portion of them may attach to the returning Ego and persist over a series of lives. Neither can it be said that the final dispersion of the groups means the annihilation of the individuality. Quite the contrary. Their final dissolution—transmutation really—would mean liberation and the attainment of Nirvana.

The mystery of the building up of the body and the personality is locked up in the skandhas. When their function is grasped and it is considered that they have their reëmbodiment in future lives, one sees why in one the body is weak and in another strong. How often we deplore our lack of virility and the congenital disorders of our organs and attributes. We ought instead to trace our skandhaic lineage to see what led up to the effects ; and then we should not shrink from Karma, but pay tribute to it. What we readily see in reference to the limitations of the body applies no less to the other groups. More subtle, because more hidden, their qualities are nevertheless even more palpable in their effects upon the personal man. The ebullitions of the



personality are hard to check, yet it is with these groups that a man has to deal, as they intimately affect his psychic and intellectual nature. Here are the roots of passion, anger, greed. Here lies the thirst for things. These are activated or they atrophy with the changing of the skandhas.

When a man dies, a process analogous to digestion takes place. Just as the nutritive essence of foods is separated for assimilation, while the refuse is brought together for elimination, so after death nature forces a separation between good and evil tendencies. The good and beneficent ones are assimilated and accompany the Devachanee. The evil ones form the Kama-rupa which begins to disintegrate, leaving the lives forming it, with their impresses, to mingle with lives of the same polarity and to hover about seeking forms most suited to the working out of the impressions. A violin string tuned to a particular pitch when vibrated will set in vibration another string tuned to the identical pitch. So with these lives. Any form not attuned to their pitch is unsuitable for them. But a form in tune with them through consubstantiality creates a kind of magnetic sympathy which exerts a pull sufficient to take them in. Some are thus absorbed by our fellow men, some by animals, others by lower kingdoms. Lives which bear impresses of anger, envy, hate and passion tend towards a lower level. In their transmigrations they stir human minds to base activities, or exhaust themselves in the kingdoms below ours.

In each kingdom the original impress produces corresponding outward manifestations, till the journey from form to form ultimately overshadows the memory of the detailed events that gave the impress and leaves only the essence of the desire or the quality. But through all these gyrations, the karmic responsibility of the person who gave the impress is heightened. The lives that bear his impress are his ambassadors who carry his curse or his blessing to countless living entities. They knit him with those who react to his impresses. In active life he may have been oblivious of giving a sentient point its polarity. But the act once committed is past recall. Either at his death or sooner, the polarised sentient point goes out to engender right or wrong tendencies in others. That his action was not deliberate can avail him little. Karmically he is linked by strong magnetic threads with his ambassadors in their movements through space, and the law demands that he shall reap the consequences in time to come. This reaping may take the shape of strengthening or weakening characteristics brought by the returning lives which await the Ego at the threshold of Devachan.

The skandhas are our progeny, and because they reflect our true qualities they are of great potential usefulness. When they hold the mirror to us, we shrink from the reflection, not realising that they are our true friends who show us an unretouched photograph of ourselves. If they show the pallor of disease, the unhealthy flush of passion, the vacant expression of the intellectual bankrupt, is it the fault of the reflection? Instead of remedying the defects, mankind has been too prone to kick against the pricks—a useless course, for “the pricks seem to enjoy it.”

A critical stage in the purgation of the skandhas is reached at death. If one is to live in the eternal, then the suffering due to existence through the five groups must be stopped. Anything that tends to heighten *tanha* or thirst for life in the skandhas reacts for the worse on the future personality. The wide implications of a solitary lapse from the discipline are not therefore incomprehensible. The living of the higher life assumes paramount importance, for thereby alone can the desires be starved out. Forming the habit of thinking correctly is a task which might daunt the stoutest heart, but victories are to the victorious. It is helpful to remember that Karma aids our efforts to purify the skandhas, by adjusting to our strength the magnitude of the immediate task.

Two verses in the *Dhammapada* show what part the skandhas play, and what our attitude should be :

202. There is no fire like that of lust ; there is no (moral) breach like that of ill-will ; there is no suffering like that of existence through the Five Groups [skandhas] ; there is no bliss like the Highest Peace.

374. As soon as he has considered the origin and the destruction of the Five Groups, he finds happiness and joy which belong to those who know the immortal.

The skandhas must therefore be transmuted, their earthly dross eliminated and a stamp of spirituality given them instead. The five bonds of egoism, doubt, false belief, lust and hatred have to be cut. The disciple must “free from hate, live happily among those who hate ;” “free from ailments and lust live happily among the ailing and the lustful.” This he can do only when he has gathered unto himself Faith, Energy, Mindfulness and Spiritual Insight. Once consubstantiality with the perishable elements is severed, no power on earth can reattach them to the soul. He whose hand is unwounded may touch poison ; it can affect him not. No sin can attach to him whose ills are dead and quit. He may reincarnate to fulfil his destiny, but never will yearnings torture him, nor sins stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and woes invade his safe eternal peace.



## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Gandhiji, in a recent letter to the Secretary of the Anti-Animal Sacrifice League at Palamcottah, called the sacrifice of animals in the name of religion "a remnant of barbarism." Worse, for according to Theosophy it is a survival of sorcery, of "the 'ceremonial magic' of old, with its terrible effects." The Theosophist opposes the needless taking of life in any form as a drastic interference with the evolutionary process. He knows also the futility of any sacrifice or propitiatory exoteric ceremony to cause the deviation of a hair's breadth in the course of Karmic Law. That is not to say that a profound philosophy did not underlie the now misunderstood institution of sacrifice. Sacrifice is necessary, but each man must perform it in the silence and the sanctified solitude of his own heart, offering up his sinful intentions, his lust and wrath and greed, as the sacrificial victims.

The shedding of blood in animal sacrifice is anathema to the Theosophical student for another reason, however.

Blood begets phantoms, and its emanations furnish certain spirits with the materials required to fashion their temporary appearances....Paracelsus writes that with the fumes of blood one is enabled to call forth any spirit we desire to see; for with its emanations it will build itself an appearance, a *visible* body—only this is sorcery. (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 567).

Porphyry presents to us some hideous facts whose verity is substantiated in the experience of every student of magic. "The soul," says he, having even after death a certain affection for its body, an affinity proportioned to the violence with which their union was broken, we see many spirits hovering in despair about their earthly remains; we even see them eagerly seeking the putrid remains of other bodies, but above all freshly-spilled blood, which seems to impart to them for the moment some of the faculties of life. (*Ibid.*, I, 344).

A footnote explains that "the ancients called 'the soul' the spirits of bad people; the soul was the *larva* and *lemure*. Good human spirits became gods."

Writing in the August number of *The Aryan Path* on "Love and Marriage in Tamil Land," Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri gives a succinct account of the poet-saint Tiruvalluvar's ideas on the sanctity of *Grihastha ashrama* (household life) and its value to society as a whole. We are reminded of Mr. William Q. Judge's words about this great sage of South India (*U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 34*, p. 5):—

To my mind no ascetics, no teachers of mankind, however eminent and full of the highest knowledge, are really such good and practical benefactors of humanity as Valluvar, of ancient times, who incarnated on earth for the express purpose, among others, of setting an example of an ideal household life to mortals who were prematurely and madly rushing against the rocks of

renunciation, and of proving the possibility of leading such a life in any age, however degenerated.

In view of the above remarks it is no wonder that the celebrated poetess Auvai in her *Nalvazhi* places the world-famous *Tirukkural* of Tiruvalluvar on a par with the Vedas themselves.

Mr. H. N. Brailsford defends a calumniated but glorious reputation in his introduction to a new English edition of Voltaire's *Candide and Other Tales*. Voltaire's art is generally conceded a high place, but Mr. Brailsford stresses "the challenge that Voltaire and his generation hurled at intolerant authority."

We are apt to forget how much we owe him. If we may read him freely, nay are expected for our own full development to read him, this liberty is the prize he won for us in a life of incessant combat. If we enjoy freedom of discussion, if books are nowhere burned alive to-day, save in Hitler's Third Reich, we are the debtors of Voltaire and the pupils he inspired.

The vindication is overdue. H. P. B. calls Voltaire "the greatest of 'infidels' of the eighteenth century" and quotes more than one great thought from his pen. Thus in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 268-9), she writes:—

Voltaire becomes, toward the end of his life, Pythagorical, and concludes by saying: "I have consumed forty years of my pilgrimage....seeking the philosopher's stone called truth....All that I have been able to obtain...is this: *Chance is a word void of sense*. The world is arranged according to mathematical laws.

Voltaire indeed wielded a trenchant pen in the age-old battle of the human mind against the forces of intolerance, but let not Mr. Brailsford's merited tribute inspire complacency at a permanent victory won. "One thing only changeth not—*human nature*," wrote H. P. B. (*U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 8) Already developments in more than one stronghold of the totalitarian state recall the Master's warning in 1880:—"Think you, the spirit and power of persecution gone from this enlightened age? Time will prove." In Voltaire's age intolerance was less furtive perhaps, but no more menacing than it is to-day. The Theosophical student, who knows that all restrictions upon human freedom hold back the progress of the race, must view with grave concern the denial in many directions to-day of fundamental human rights of free thought and expression.

Evidence not wholly introspective has been brought forward recently for the functioning of consciousness on more than one level, which marks a step towards the scientific demonstration of an



important Theosophical teaching. Writing on "The Place of Imagery in Mental Processes" (*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester*, April 1937) Mr. T. H. Pear cites Dr. Wallace Craig's "Observations on Internal Speech." Dr. Craig's tests were directed to experiencing a wordless state of consciousness. They revealed the existence of two inner voices, one of which seemed to have a supervisory role.

Dr. Craig chose sketching as an occupation conducive to his end, interrupting himself at times to examine his consciousness. He found one internal voice chattering practically continuously, about the sketching and other things that crowded into his mind. A test which he devised proved that the internal speech does not consist, as had been alleged, of actual movements of the muscles of the vocal organs, since a muscle cannot move in two directions at once. He rapidly repeated a syllable aloud, counting with the internal voice and stopping at a predetermined number, his count being checked by some one else.

More interesting to the Theosophical student is Dr. Craig's testimony, brief and casual as it is, to the existence of a second internal voice.

If I try to suppress all words by saying "m, m, m..." continuously with the internal voice, then, before long, a second internal voice comes into play, speaking in words, commenting on the whole experience... It is so quiet that it might escape observation, but it is urging on the whole psychic activity, saying: "Hold your attention now."

It is said to be difficult to report the exact words of this very quiet voice, which is not automatic, like the others, and is "much deeper in the mind and likely to be overlooked."

This ghost story comes from the village of St. Auvent, near Limoges, France. Early this year a man named Dardillac was guillotined for the murder of a motorist and his companion. A month later his widow, who had been staying with her mother, brought her two children home.

Ever since then an infernal din coming from the garret fills the house between nine o'clock and midnight every evening. The noises include stamping and loud knocks on the wall and the rattling of chains and the sound of broken glass. The garret can be reached by a stepladder only, and several villagers who have inspected it during the day have found it completely empty.... Everybody in the village claims to have heard the noise, though nobody has, apparently, ventured to visit the garret during the ghost's activities.

It is quite conceivable that an executed criminal, violently expelled from his physical body but still alive and conscious, would try to attract the attention of the living, even in ways so disturbing to his family. H. P. B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled*, I, 69, about "unrestful 'souls,' hovering about the spot

where they were murdered, or coming back for some other mysterious reasons of their own," and of one apparition in particular she wrote:—

For aught we can tell it might have been the real personal umbra of the 'spirit,' persecuted, and earth-bound, either by its own remorse and crimes or those of another person or spirit.

The circulation of the blood was known in India at least a thousand years before Sir William Harvey. Even foreshortened Orientalist chronology concedes that the *Charaka Samhita* dates from the earliest centuries of our era, and a citation from it was made in Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha's recent Convocation Address at the Ayurvedic School to prove this point:—

From that great venture (the heart) emanate the vessels carrying blood into all parts of the body—an element which nourishes the life of all animals and without which life would be extinct. It is that element which goes to nourish the foetus in utero, and which flowing into its body returns to the mother's heart.

Recalling also that the dissection of cadavers had been opposed, in the first centuries of the Middle Ages in Europe, not only by popular prejudice but also by religious and political ordinances, the Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University pointed out that the *Suśruta*, which *The Encyclopædia Britannica* says must have been in existence in some form before the ninth century of the Christian era, lays down that

Whoever wishes to practise surgery must prepare a corpse in the proper way, and see by careful dissection every part of the body in order that he may have definite and indubitable knowledge.

The Rev. Dr. C. H. Dodd, examining the authorship of the Fourth Gospel and that of the First Epistle of John (*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester*, April 1937), while admitting that the writers of both "stood in close contact with that movement of religious thought out of which Christian and semi-Christian Gnosticism came," holds that "in the Fourth Gospel the 'Gnostic' elements are thoroughly mastered and absorbed into a unified and highly individual Christian theology, and the writer is circumspect in his use of Gnostic-sounding language."

H. P. B. called the Fourth Gospel "the grandest of the Evangelists." She referred to its author as "the anonymous Gnostic who wrote *The Gospel according to John*." "No one," she wrote elsewhere, "will ever tell what was the real name of the writer." And she declared that "St. John's Gospel is purely Gnostic."

Most of the Gnostic systems have come down to us mutilated by the Church Fathers and are only the distorted shells of the original speculations.



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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 a 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 to 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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