

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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OUR WORK IN THE WORLD

Our declared work is, in reality, more important and more efficacious than work in the everyday plane which bears more evident and immediate fruit, for the direct effect of an appreciation of theosophy is to make those charitable who were not so before. Theosophy creates the charity which afterwards, and of its own accord, makes itself manifest in works.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

An ever recurring question that students of Theosophy find themselves confronted with is why they do not take an active part in work on such urgent problems as disarmament and world peace, unemployment and poverty, etc. Theosophists have their own work in the world, and to impress on others the importance of this work they themselves need to 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... inasmuch as it alone can furnish the beacon-light needed to guide humanity on its true path.”

A would-be doctor does not start practising without the requisite medical training. The same applies to the one desirous of benefiting mankind. *Knowledge* is necessary. The doctor needs to study and to know much in his line that it is not necessary for the ordinary man to know, yet the latter's ignorance of his physical body and its functionings is nothing compared to his ignorance of his inner, invisible nature. Without knowledge, men have made of themselves the blind leaders of the blind, and their “service” fails to achieve the desired end.

There are soul-sicknesses as well as bodily ailments, yet how many recognize that the collective ills of today are merely symptoms of such soul-sicknesses, generated in the psychic nature of individuals? It is the sum-total of the soul-sickness of individuals that creates the soul-

sickness of the world. It is the collectivity of individual selfishness and ignorance that is responsible for bad economic conditions, that finds an outlet in the war-spirit of nations, that breeds caste and creed and class hatred. As these conditions and maladies in the world without are self-generated by the individual, they can only be remedied in the same way — individually. No forced reforms, legislation or change of outer conditions alone will prove effective in the long run. It may even aggravate the symptoms. The breakdowns of disarmament conferences, the failure to find a satisfactory agreement between hostile nations, the failure of the Prohibition laws, the difficulties involved in the implementation of social reforms — all show that the *root* of the problems has not been probed.

If students of Theosophy do not take an active part in the political, economic and social spheres, it is because they prefer other methods of work, because they recognize the more fundamental need of going to the source of all troubles — selfishness and ignorance. That work may seem vague and impracticable to the casual observer, since it cannot be assessed in terms of statistics. Yet Theosophy is productive of far greater effects than the same amount of energy expended on the physical plane. H. P. Blavatsky wrote in 1888:

Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. We are the friends of all those who fight against drunkenness, against cruelty to animals, against injustice to women, against corruption in society or in government, although we do not meddle in politics. We are the friends of those who exercise practical charity, who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight of misery that is crushing down the poor.

This statement in the first of the Five Messages from H.P.B. to the American Theosophists is sometimes quoted by ardent individuals who desire to befriend those good movements which have as their aim the service of humanity. They even regard social workers as Theosophists, for they are “engaged in the true service of Humanity.” Such overlook what H.P.B. says in the same message, in the very next sentence:

But in our quality of Theosophists, we cannot engage in any one of these great works in particular. As individuals we may do so, but as Theosophists we have a larger, more important, and much more difficult work to do. . . . The function of Theosophists is to open men’s hearts and understandings to charity, justice, and generosity, attributes which belong specifically to the human king-

dom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being. Theosophy teaches the animal-man to be a human-man; and when people have learned to think and feel as truly human beings should feel and think, they will act humanely, and works of charity, justice, and generosity will be done spontaneously by all.

Therefore, true service of the race is to be rendered, but in a way and by a method very different from the ways and methods which obtain in the mundane world, where the emphasis is on *doing* good rather than on *being* good, with all the resulting chaos in the performance of good works. It is the *practical realization* of Reincarnation and Karma as facts, of the solidarity of all mankind as immortal beings, that alone can cure the soul-sickness of the age. Theosophists work for this, knowing that the universe is one of fundamental justice, which rights every wrong in the process of time, and that man can make of himself a conscious agent for speeding up that process.

Theosophy teaches the spirit of "non-separateness," the evanescence and illusion of human creeds and dogma, hence, inculcates *universal love and charity for all mankind "without distinction of race, colour, caste or creed"*; is it not therefore the fittest to alleviate the sufferings of mankind? . . .

Theosophists cannot pose as a body of philanthropists, though secretly they may adventure on the path of good works. They profess to be a body of learners merely, pledged to help each other and all the rest of humanity, so far as in them lies, to a better understanding of the mystery of life, and to a better knowledge of the peace which lies beyond it.

But as it is an inexorable law, that the ground must be tilled if the harvest is to be reaped, so Theosophists are obliged to work in the world unceasingly, and very often in doing this to make serious mistakes, as do all workers who are not embodied Redeemers. Their efforts may not come under the title of good works, and they may be condemned as a school of idle talkers, yet they are an outcome and fruition of this particular moment of time, when the ideas which they hold are greeted by the crowd with interest; and therefore their work is good, as the lotus-flower is good when it opens in the mid-day sun. (H.P.B. in "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work," *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 31*, pp. 6, 11).

THE RECORD AND THE RECORDER

The first essential point that a beginner in Theosophy needs to grasp is that the Ancient Wisdom, a portion of which has been revealed to us today and which goes by the name of Theosophy, is a definite system of thought or of knowledge, to which additions cannot be made and from which nothing can be subtracted. That knowledge has been arrived at by a definite method, and both the knowledge and the method are invariable. Why that particular definite method was employed rests on the fact that all other methods were tried out and were found wanting; that method which has proved itself is the Theosophical method.

The Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled* (II. 587-89) contain a hint as to the nature of this method. The first three items deal with the system of knowledge — with the assertion of the reign of law in everything and with the triune aspect of Nature and of Man. Then we are told that there is a right method of using knowledge and a wrong one, one leading to Adeptship and the other to mediumship. The Adept, by using his spiritual vision, can know all that has been known or can be known. Adepts belong to a race of Seers. Seeing is a spiritual act, and even the organs of physical sight, our eyes, are sometimes spoken of as the windows of the soul. What does an Adept or a true Seer see? *That which exists*. And that which exists is always and invariably the same; it is the same from immemorial time and never varies or changes one hair's breadth. Therefore, this method of "seeing" brings to the Adept the vision of the Truth which is precise, which is definite, and which has its own code of laws, as has any physical science.

Theosophy is an evolved and not an evolving or progressive system of thought. Nor is it a revelation. In *The Key to Theosophy* this statement is made: "Theosophy, in its abstract meaning, is Divine Wisdom, or the aggregate of the knowledge and wisdom that underlie the Universe." How, then, can anything be added to it? *Our* insight into the knowledge might increase, but the knowledge itself cannot increase. It cannot undergo any change. The Theosophy of 1875, or even of five thousand or five million years ago, cannot progress and become something different today. To take an analogy: there are seven notes in the musical scale, and no musician can invent an eighth note, though he may make endless permutations and combinations of those seven. So also there are seven prismatic colours, and no painter can bring into existence an eighth colour, though he can create an endless variety of shades by combining those seven. And, likewise, everything in the universe, includ-

ing man, is composed of seven principles; those seven can yield many permutations and combinations, but there cannot be an eighth principle.

The Knowers of wisdom are the true Scientists who have based their system on universal principles; they know the source of all sciences, all philosophies, all religions, all arts, all branches of knowledge, and all permutations and combinations of these. Therefore, their code of knowledge, their system of thought, their aggregate of the wisdom that underlies the Universe is complete, in which nothing whatsoever is left out.

If it is true that that system of thought which is the source and synthesis of all knowledge is complete, it is also true that that knowledge which does not derive from that source cannot be precise or complete. Ignorance is of two kinds: ignorance which is absence of true knowledge and ignorance which is knowledge of the false. One may be very learned, but learned about things that are not true. While on the one hand there are in the world men of great learning but little knowledge, on the other hand there are Those Who Know. The first Item of *The Secret Doctrine*, known to students as "The Ancient Source," explains the method by which "the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages" was arrived at. What is said there might appear rather dogmatic when first read, but once the fact that all life is evolving is admitted, one is led to the conclusion that "there must be beings in the universe whose intelligence is as much beyond ours as ours exceeds that of the black beetle," and who know all that needs to be known. These Knowers of Wisdom whom we call Masters assert that in Their Philosophy there is no problem that remains unsolved. Problems may remain unsolved for those who do not know where to look, but the solutions to all problems are within the reach of those who seek for them in Masters' Philosophy.

Evolution implies the gradual solution of problems. To each student of the Ancient Wisdom certain truths are apparent, have become matters of inner conviction. If the new knowledge he gains conforms with and completes that which he has proved for himself already, then he is on the right track. That is what is meant by each student coming into the possession of the method whereby he can check and verify for himself.

Where does he begin? At the place where he finds himself now. Everyone has spiritual powers, mental powers, sense powers. The senses of some are keener than those of others; the minds of some are sharper and more profound than the minds of others, and so with soul powers. Each must begin to find out, with the help of the powers which are already his, whether the knowledge which he possesses is true knowledge,

is part of the aggregate of the wisdom that underlies the Universe. So the student encounters knowledge that is true, ignorance which is the absence of knowledge, and ignorance which is the presence of false knowledge. A student of Theosophy can and has to be excused for not possessing knowledge which is true in its entirety; but there is no excuse for him to hold knowledge which is false. The erasing from the mind of false knowledge is the starting point of inquiry into the system of knowledge which is the aggregate of wisdom, precise and complete in itself, and which is called Theosophy today.

It is necessary to get a clear perception that Truth is a definite thing. For the ordinary mind it is difficult to conceive that all that it is possible for the human soul to know is, so to speak, codified, systematized, brought together. This might seem a startling proposition, but there is not a philosopher worthy of the name in the West, not to speak of the East, who has not proceeded on that basis. This conception of knowledge which is absolute, from which nothing can be taken away without distorting the whole, to which nothing can be added, is found in Pythagoras and in Plato; nay, more, in the modern philosophers, in the very concepts of time, space and motion which Kant and those who followed him presented. What Kant states in a speculative way, Theosophy puts forth as a fact: that there is a code of knowledge, tabulated and complete, which can be used as a criterion to judge any other code or system.

As all forms of life are synthesized in the One Life, so all forms of knowledge, religions, sciences and philosophies are synthesized in the one root from which they proceeded. In *The Key to Theosophy* (pp. 2-3), H.P.B. says: "The chief aim of the Founders of the Eclectic Theosophical School was one of the three objects of its modern successor, the Theosophical Society, namely, to reconcile all religions, sects and nations *under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities*" (italics ours). So this system is one of eternal verities, verities on which are based the ethics which enable one to establish an intelligent relationship between oneself and Nature as a whole.

Further on in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 4) H.P.B. says:

The "Wisdom-Religion" was one in antiquity; and the sameness of primitive religious philosophy is proven to us by the identical doctrines taught to the Initiates during the MYSTERIES, an institution once universally diffused. "All the old worships indicate the existence of a single Theosophy anterior to them. The

key that is to open one must open all; otherwise it cannot be the right key." (Eclect. Philo.)

As stated above, this key enables one to find out whether a particular system that arises today is right or wrong; and, if right, how far right, wholly or partly, in reference to those verities which are eternal. On pages 7-8 of the *Key* we read: "The WISDOM-RELIGION was ever one, and being the last word of possible human knowledge, was, therefore, carefully preserved. It preceded by long ages the Alexandrian Theosophists, reached the modern, and will survive every other religion and philosophy." Again, in the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (p. xxxiv) H.P.B. says:

The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world. Proofs of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teaching of all its great adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts of libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity.

In *Lucifer* for October 1889 Madame Blavatsky stated:

What I do believe in is: (1) the unbroken oral teachings revealed by living *divine* men during the infancy of mankind to the elect among men; (2) that it has reached us *unaltered*; and (3) that the MASTERS are thoroughly versed in the science based on such uninterrupted teaching.

In H.P.B.'s article, "Is Theosophy a Religion?" (reprinted in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 1* from *Lucifer* for November 1888) we read: "Tearing off with no uncertain hand the thick veil of dead-letter with which every old religious scripture was cloaked, scientific Theosophy, learned in the cunning symbolism of the ages, reveals to the scoffer at old wisdom the origin of the world's faiths and sciences." Further on in the same article she speaks of "the existence of a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious." So, again and again one comes upon the idea that there is this record. Mr. Judge speaks of it in the very first chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, where he says that the Wisdom-Religion is "complete in itself and sees no unsolvable mystery anywhere." Why? Because it is "the last word of possible human knowledge." He speaks of it as the mathematics of the soul. He mentions the one single Brotherhood of Adepts, whose members all profess and practise the one Doctrine.

Where is this single Doctrine to be found? It is in two places: First, there are the actual objective records which are always available to him

who can read the language of signs, of symbols, of glyphs. As H.P.B. points out in the First Item of *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 272):

Such is the mysterious power of Occult symbolism, that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, set down and explain, in the bewildering series of evolutionary progress, are all recorded on a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form.

From time to time, portions of the record are made public or semi-public. *The Secret Doctrine* is a public exposition of the record; all the sacred scriptures of the world are a public exposition of the selfsame record. Most of these are symbolical representations of the knowledge. Then, too, there are different methods whereby those symbols are put forward at different times. Today, the record that is made public is set down in words, because we use that method of expression. In other days and other places knowledge was conveyed differently; e.g., through pictorial representations. Ancient temples and caves had carvings or paintings, which depicted in detail the whole scheme of evolution. To give but one example, in one single picture all the steps of reaching Buddhahood are given.

Besides the objective records, there is still another place where the true doctrine is preserved:

Events which were never written outside the human memory, but which were religiously transmitted from one generation to another, and from race to race, may have been preserved by constant transmission "within the book volume of the brain," and through countless æons, with more truth and accuracy than inside any written document or record. (*S.D.*, II. 424)

This is the living record which the Masters of Wisdom carry "within the book volume of the brain," from where it can never be effaced. One cannot understand the record, whether a written work, a pictorial or dramatic representation, or a symbolic teaching, put forward by Them or Their Messengers, without the key; and the key in the final analysis is — the Masters. The Teaching and the Teacher are always one; never can they be separated.

APOLLONIUS TYANEUS AND SIMON MAGUS

[This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, pp. 188-89, for June 1881.

“The story of Apollonius of Tyana,” says Mr. Judge in the first chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, “is about a member of one of the . . . ancient orders appearing among men at a descending cycle, and only for the purpose of keeping a witness upon the scene for future generations.” And in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 341-42) H.P.B. wrote:

“Apollonius, a contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, was, like him, an enthusiastic founder of a new spiritual school. Perhaps less metaphysical and more practical than Jesus, less tender and perfect in his nature, he nevertheless inculcated the same quintessence of spirituality, and the same high moral truths. His great mistake was to confine them too closely to the higher classes of society. While to the poor and the humble Jesus preached ‘Peace on earth and good will to men,’ Apollonius was the friend of kings, and moved with the aristocracy. He was born among the latter, and himself a man of wealth, while the ‘Son of man,’ representing the people, ‘had not where to lay his head’; nevertheless, the two ‘miracle-workers’ exhibited striking similarity of purpose. Still earlier than Apollonius had appeared Simon Magus, called ‘the great Power of God.’ His ‘miracles’ are both more wonderful, more varied, and better attested than those either of the apostles or of the Galilean philosopher himself. Materialism denies the fact in both cases, but history affirms. Apollonius followed both; and how great and renowned were his miraculous works in comparison with those of the alleged founder of Christianity as the kabalists claim, we have history again, and Justin Martyr, to corroborate.

“Like Buddha and Jesus, Apollonius was the uncompromising enemy of all outward show of piety, all display of useless religious ceremonies and hypocrisy. If, like the Christian Saviour, the sage of Tyana had by preference sought the companionship of the poor and humble; and if instead of dying comfortably, at over one hundred years of age, he had been a voluntary martyr, proclaiming divine Truth from a cross, his blood might have proved as efficacious for the subsequent dissemination of spiritual doctrines as that of the Christian Messiah.

“The calumnies set afloat against Apollonius, were as numerous as they were false. So late as eighteen centuries after his death he was defamed by Bishop Douglas in his work against miracles.

In this the Right Reverend bishop crushed himself against historical facts. If we study the question with a dispassionate mind, we will soon perceive that the ethics of Gautama Buddha, Plato, Apollonius, Jesus, Ammonius Sakkas, and his disciples, were all based on the same mystic philosophy. That all worshipped one God, whether they considered Him as the 'Father' of humanity, who lives in man as man lives in Him, or as the Incomprehensible Creative Principle; all led God-like lives."

This and the following article, "Apollonius and the Mahatmas," need to be read together.—Eds.]

In the *History of the Christian Religion to the Year Two Hundred*, by Charles B. Waite, A.M., announced and reviewed in the *Banner of Light* (Boston), we find portions of the work relating to the great thaumaturgist of the second century A.D.—Apollonius of Tyana, the rival of whom had never appeared in the Roman Empire.

"The time of which this volume takes special cognizance is divided into six periods, during the second of which, A.D. 80 to A.D. 120, is included the "Age of Miracles," the history of which will prove of interest to Spiritualists as a means of comparing the manifestations of unseen intelligences in our time with similar events of the days immediately following the introduction of Christianity. Apollonius Tyaneus was the most remarkable character of that period, and witnessed the reign of a dozen Roman emperors. Before his birth, Proteus, an Egyptian god, appeared to his mother and announced that he was to be incarnated in the coming child. Following the directions given her in a dream, she went to a meadow to gather flowers. While there, a flock of swans formed a chorus around her, and, clapping their wings, sang in unison. While they were thus engaged, and the air was being fanned by a gentle zephyr, Apollonius was born."

This is a *legend* which in days of old made of every remarkable character a "son of God" miraculously born of a virgin. And what follows is *history*. "In his youth he was a marvel of mental power and personal beauty, and found his greatest happiness in conversations with the disciples of Plato, Chrysippus and Aristotle. He ate nothing that had life, lived on fruits and the products of the earth; was an enthusiastic admirer and follower of Pythagoras, and as such maintained silence for five years. Wherever he went he reformed religious worship and performed wonderful acts. At feasts he astonished the guests by causing bread, fruits, vegetables and various dainties to appear at his bidding. Statues became animated with life, and bronze figures advanced from

their pedestals, took the position and performed the labours of servants. By the exercise of the same power dematerialization occurred; gold and silver vessels, with their contents, disappeared; even the attendants vanished in an instant from sight.

“At Rome, Apollonius was accused of treason. Brought to examination, the accuser came forward, unfolded his roll on which the accusation had been written, and was astounded to find it a perfect blank.

“Meeting a funeral procession he said to the attendants, ‘Set down the bier, and I will dry up the tears you are shedding for the maid.’ He touched the young woman, uttered a few words, and the dead came to life. Being at Smyrna, a plague raged at Ephesus, and he was called thither. ‘The journey must not be delayed,’ he said, and had no sooner spoken the words than he was at Ephesus.

“When nearly one hundred years old, he was brought before the Emperor at Rome, accused of being an enchanter. He was taken to prison. While there he was asked when he would be at liberty. ‘Tomorrow, if it depends on the judge; this instant, if it depends on myself.’ Saying this, he drew his leg out of the fetters, and said, ‘You see the liberty I enjoy.’ He then replaced it in the fetters.

“At the tribunal he was asked: ‘Why do men call you a god?’

“‘Because,’ said he, ‘every man that is good is entitled to the appellation.’

“‘How could you foretell the plague at Ephesus?’

“He replied: ‘By living on a lighter diet than other men.’

“His answers to these and other questions by his accusers exhibited such strength that the Emperor was much affected, and declared him acquitted of crime; but said he should detain him in order to hold a private conversation. He replied: ‘You can detain my body, but not my soul; and, I will add, not even my body.’ Having uttered these words he vanished from the tribunal, and that same day met his friends at Puteoli, three days’ journey from Rome.

“The writings of Apollonius show him to have been a man of learning, with a consummate knowledge of human nature, imbued with noble sentiments and the principles of a profound philosophy. In an epistle to Valerius he says:

“‘There is no death of anything except in appearance; and so, also, there is no birth of anything except in appearance. That which passes over from essence into nature seems to be birth, and that which passes

over from nature into essence seems, in like manner, to be death; though nothing really is originated, and nothing ever perishes; but only now comes into sight, and now vanishes. It appears by reason of the density of matter, and disappears by reason of the tenuity of essence; but is always the same, differing only in motion and condition.'

"The highest tribute paid to Apollonius was by the Emperor Titus. The philosopher having written to him, soon after his accession, counselling moderation in his government, Titus replied:

"'In my own name and in the name of my country I give you thanks, and will be mindful of those things. I have, indeed, taken Jerusalem, but you have captured me.'

"The wonderful things done by Apollonius, thought to be miraculous, the source and producing cause of which Modern Spiritualism clearly reveals, were extensively believed in, in the second century, and hundreds of years subsequently; and by Christians as well as others. Simon Magus was another prominent miracle-worker of the second century, and no one denied his power. Even Christians were forced to admit that he performed miracles. Allusion is made to him in the Acts of the Apostles, viii: 9-10. His fame was world-wide, his followers in every nation, and in Rome a statue was erected in his honour. He had frequent contests with Peter, what we in this day would call 'miracle-matches,' in order to determine which had the greater power. It is stated in 'The Acts of Peter and Paul' that Simon made a brazen serpent to move, stone statues to laugh, and himself to rise in the air; to which is added: 'as a set-off to this, Peter healed the sick by a word, caused the blind to see, etc.' Simon, being brought before Nero, changed his form: suddenly he became a child, then an old man; at other times a young man. 'And Nero, beholding this, supposed him to be the Son of God.'

"In *Recognitions*, a Petrine work of the early ages, an account is given of a public discussion between Peter and Simon Magus, which is reproduced in this volume.

"Accounts of many other miracle-workers are given, showing most conclusively that the power by which they wrought was not confined to any one or to any number of persons, as the Christian world teaches, but that mediumistic gifts were then, as now, possessed by many. Statements quoted from the writers of the first two centuries of what took place will severely tax the credulity of the most credulous to believe, even in this era of marvels. Many of those accounts may be greatly exaggerated, but it is not reasonable to suppose that they are all sheer

fabrications, with not a moiety of truth for their foundation; far less so with the revelations made to men since the advent of Modern Spiritualism. Some idea of the thoroughness with which every subject is dealt with in this volume may be formed when we state that in the index there are two hundred and thirteen references to passages relating to 'Jesus Christ'; from which, also, it may be justly inferred that what is given must be of great value to those seeking information that will enable them to determine whether Jesus was 'Man, Myth, or God.' 'The Origin and History of Christian Doctrines,' also 'The Origin and Establishment of the Authority of the Church of Rome over other Churches,' are fully shown, and much light thrown upon many obscure and disputed questions. In a word, it is impossible for us, without far exceeding the limits prescribed for this article, to render full justice to this very instructive book; but we think enough has been said to convince our readers that it is one of more than ordinary interest, and a desirable acquisition to the literature of this progressive age."

Some writers tried to make Apollonius appear a legendary character, while pious Christians will persist in calling him an *impostor*. Were the existence of Jesus of Nazareth as well attested by history and he himself half as known to classical writers as was Apollonius, no sceptic could doubt today the very being of such a man as the Son of Mary and Joseph. Apollonius of Tyana was the friend and correspondent of a Roman Empress and several Emperors, while of Jesus no more remained on the pages of history than as if his life had been written on the desert sands. His letter to Agbarus, the prince of Edessa, the authenticity of which is vouchsafed for by Eusebius alone — the Baron Munchausen of the patristic hierarchy — is called in the *Evidences of Christianity* "an attempt at forgery" even by Paley himself, whose robust faith accepts the most incredible stories. Apollonius, then, is a historical personage; while many even of the Apostolic Fathers themselves, placed before the scrutinizing eye of historical criticism, begin to flicker and many of them fade out and disappear like the "will-o'-the-wisp" or the *ignis fatuus*.

APOLLONIUS AND THE MAHATMAS

[Apropos of the article reprinted here from Mr. Judge's *Path Magazine*, where it appeared in two parts in October and December 1886 (Vol. I, pp. 197-99 and 274-77), what H.P.B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 19) should be noted:

"The greatest teachers of divinity agree that nearly all ancient books were written symbolically and in a language intelligible only to the initiated. The biographical sketch of Apollonius of Tyana affords an example. As every Kabalist knows, it embraces the whole of the Hermetic philosophy, being a counterpart in many respects of the traditions left us of King Solomon. It reads like a fairy story, but, as in the case of the latter, sometimes facts and historical events are presented to the world under the colours of a fiction. The journey to India represents allegorically the trials of a neophyte. His long discourses with the Brahmans, their sage advice, and the dialogues with the Corinthian Menippus would, if interpreted, give the esoteric catechism. His visit to the empire of the wise men, and interview with their king Hiarchas, the oracle of Amphiaräus, explain symbolically many of the secret dogmas of Hermes. They would disclose, if understood, some of the most important secrets of nature. Eliphas Levi points out the great resemblance which exists between King Hiarchas and the fabulous Hiram, of whom Solomon procured the cedars of Lebanon and the gold of Ophir."—Eds.]

The journey to India made by the great adept, Apollonius of Tyana, has a special interest for us modern students of occultism. The story of this journey, related in the life of Apollonius by Philostratus, has been held by many to be a fable, and Mr. Tredwell, in his laudable work, omits any account of it. To an earnest Theosophist, however, the internal evidence of the narration is too strong to be resisted, although it is told at third hand probably with the adornments which an accomplished Greek author thought needful for the requisite grace of style.

Apollonius may perhaps be said to have been the Master whose mission was to set the temples in order for the departure of the glorious classic era. Born in the same century as Jesus of Nazareth, nowhere did the teachings of the two, so far as it appears, come into open contact, although the fame of the former spread far and wide in Europe, Asia and Africa during his lifetime. It is said, however, that although no creed bears his name, his work in the world was nevertheless immense and his teachings have, in many unperceived ways, influenced millions

of human beings down to the present day.

Apollonius was still a young man when he went to India, but even then he was famous for his wisdom. He had been sent, as a boy of fourteen years, to school in Tarsus by his wealthy father, but he did not like the ways of that city and he was allowed to remove to Aegae, also in Sicily, where he studied the great philosophers and was specially drawn to the teachings of Pythagoras. At the age of sixteen he fully adopted the Pythagorean life and held firmly to it ever after, letting his hair grow long, eating no flesh, and drinking no wine, wearing no clothing made of animal products. He took up his abode in the temple of Asclepius, and thousands were attracted thither by the wisdom of the wonderfully beautiful youth. Grown to manhood, he made a vow of silence and spoke not a word for five years. Then for a time he taught in Antioch. When asked how the wise man should treat questions of learning, he replied: "Like the lawgiver. For the lawgiver must make that, of whose truth he has convinced himself, into commandments for the multitude."

He now conceived the idea of a journey to India to meet the wise men known as Brahmins and Hyrkanians. He afterwards told the Egyptian Gymnosophists that his thoughts were directed to them in his youth, but his teacher pointed out to him that in India lived the men who stood nearest the source of wisdom, and from whom the Egyptians themselves derived their light.

His seven disciples in Antioch had not the courage to undertake the journey with him, and he departed with two of his family servants, "one for writing rapidly and the other finely," according to Philostratus. At Ninus he was joined by Damis the Ninivite. The young Assyrian was thenceforth his devoted disciple, accompanying him on all his many journeys throughout his long career. It is to Damis that we chiefly owe the detailed accounts of the doings of the Master thenceforward. We are thereby enabled to see Apollonius in his daily life; in his various deeds and actions, his familiar sayings recorded as he talks with his faithful companion about the common sights and occurrences around them. The picture is therefore exceptionally intimate, and the man himself is brought near to us as well as his divine teachings.

A year and eight months were spent in Babylon, where King Bardanus, who was a friend of wisdom, received Apollonius with great honours. Considerable intercourse was had with the Magi; he learnt something of them and also taught them something. Damis was forbidden to accompany him in his visits to them, but he said that Apollonius

visited them at noon and at midnight. Once Damis asked, "What are the Magi?" and was answered, "They are indeed wise, but not in everything." The King became ill, and Apollonius spoke so much and so divinely about the soul that the monarch said to those around: "Apollonius not only relieves me of concern for the Kingdom, but also for Death."

Apollonius, in departing, refused all gifts, but the King provided him with camels and all things needful for the journey. When the King asked what he would bring him from India he replied, "A joyful gift, O King! For if intercourse with the men there makes me wiser, I shall come back to thee better than I now am."

Upon this the King embraced him and said: "May'st thou but come; for this gift is great."

They crossed what they called the Caucasus mountains, separating India and Medea. May it not be that from this ancient designation we get the name of the Caucasian race, rather than from what is now known as the Caucasus? This would make the place of origin identical with that commonly ascribed to the Aryans.

Crossing the Indus they soon came to Taxila, which they called the capital of India. It is difficult to trace out their exact course, the present names of most geographical features being quite different from the designations given by Damis. It would probably require a thorough Occultist to tell just what places they did visit. King Phraotes was the ruler at Taxila, and in him Apollonius found an initiate. The latter was struck with the modest simplicity of the monarch's surroundings on entering the palace, and inferred that he must be a philosopher. The King told Apollonius the course which a youth took who proposed to dedicate himself to the pursuit of Wisdom. When he had reached his 18th year he had to cross the Hyphasis river to those men who had attracted Apollonius to India. Beforehand, however, he had to make his intention publicly known, in order that he might be restrained in case he was not pure. To be pure one had to be without blemish in respect to father and mother, and moreover with an upright ancestry for three generations. If without fault in this respect, the youth himself was then examined as to whether he had a good memory, whether he was naturally inclined to uprightness or would only have it appear so, whether given to drink or gluttony, of boastful habits, evil or foolish ways, whether obedient to father, mother and instructors, and finally if he had made no evil use of the bloom of his youth. "Since wisdom

stands in great esteem here," said the King, "and is honoured by the Indians, it is of great moment that those who seek to devote themselves unto it should be carefully examined and made to undergo thousandfold tests."

When Apollonius asked about the wise men whom Alexander the Great was said to have conquered and then held converse with, Phraotes said that they were the Oxydraks, a war-like people who claimed Wisdom though they knew nothing of consequence; the truly wise men dwelt between the Hyphasis and Ganges. Had Alexander gone thither he could not have conquered them, even with ten thousand Achilles and thirty thousand Ajaxes. "For they fight not in battle against advancing enemies, but being holy men, beloved by God, they repulse them through aerial apparitions, and lightning flashes."

When Apollonius took his departure Phraotes gave him the following significant letter to the Brahmins:

"The King Phraotes greets his teacher Iarchas and the Wise men with him. Apollonius, the wisest of men, regards you as wiser than himself, and comes to learn from you. Let him not depart without knowledge of all which you yourselves know. For thus nothing of your wisdom will be lost; since no one speaks better than he, or has a truer memory. Let him also behold the throne whereon I sat when thou, Father Iarchas, gavest me my Kingdom. His attendants also deserve praise for their attachment to such a man. Be thou happy. Be happy all of you."

When they came near the hill where the wise men dwelt their guide was filled with fear, for the Indians stood more in awe of these men than of their own King, and the King who ruled the land where they lived was accustomed to consult them about everything he said or did.

When near a village not a stadium from the hill, a youth approached them, blacker than any Indian, with a gleaming moonshaped mark between his eyebrows. He bore a golden anchor, which in India took the place of the Herald's staff. He addressed Apollonius in Greek, which did not astonish him, since all the dwellers in the village [a lamasery?] spoke that tongue, but it did astonish the others to hear their master called by name; Apollonius, however, it filled with confidence as he remembered the purpose of his journey. "We have come to men truly wise," he said to Damis, "for they have a foreknowledge of things." Asking the youth what was to be done, he was told: "Those with you remain *here*; thou, however, shalt come just as thou art, for so *They* command." In this *They* Apollonius recognized Pythagorean language

and he followed with joy.

In one of his conversations with the Egyptian Gymnosophists, years afterwards, Apollonius thus characterized the wise men of India: "I saw the Indian Brahmins who dwell upon the earth and not upon the earth; in a strong fortress though unfortified; and, without possessions, possessing everything." The deep, interior significance of this is evident to a Theosophist. Damis, in the matter-of-fact way often customary with him, also gives these words a literal interpretation, saying that they had their bed upon the earth and strewed the ground with herbs selected by themselves; he himself had seen them floating in the air two ells above the earth; not for hocus-pocus — for they despised vain striving — but in order, by thus floating with the sun, to be near and pleasing unto the god. This was what was meant by "upon the earth and not upon the earth." The strong fortress, unfortified, meant the air in which they dwelt, for although they appeared to live under the open heaven, they spread a shadow over themselves, were not wet by the rain, and were in the sunshine whenever they wished. And since they obtained everything the moment they wished it, Apollonius rightly said that they possessed what they did not possess. "They wear their hair long, they bind a white mitra around their heads, their feet are bare. The form of their clothing resembles that of a sleeveless undergarment; the material is a wool produced by the earth of itself, white like the Pamphylian, but softer, and so fat that oil flows from it. Of this they make their sacred garments, and when another than these men seeks to gather this wool the earth will not release it. By the power of the ring and the staff which they bear every thing can be done, but both are kept as a secret." This personal description by Damis corresponds in certain particulars with what we are told of the Masters today. The account of the wool leads some commentators to believe that asbestos is meant.

Iarchas welcomed Apollonius in Greek and asked him for the letter from Phraotes; when Apollonius wondered at his gift of prescience he remarked that a *delta* was lacking in the letter, left out by mistake, and so it proved. After reading the letter Iarchus asked: "What dost thou think of us?"

And Apollonius replied: "As no other person in the land whence I came, as my journey hither shows."

"What makest thou think that we know more than thou dost?"

"I believe," answered Apollonius, "that your knowledge is deeper

and much more divine.”

Iarchas hereupon said: “Others are accustomed to ask the new comer whence he comes and for what purpose; the first sign of our wisdom shall be this: that the stranger is not unknown to us. So then, test this”:

Hereupon he told Apollonius his history from father and mother down, what he had done in Aegae, how Damis had come to him, what things of importance had happened on the way, etc. As Apollonius asked in surprise whence came that knowledge, Iarchas answered: “Thou also camest gifted with this wisdom, but not yet with all of it.”

“And wilt thou teach me all thy wisdom?” asked Apollonius.

“By all means, and in ungrudging abundance, for this is wiser than miserly to conceal that which is worthy of knowing. Besides, Apollonius, I see thou hast been richly gifted by Mnemosyne, and she is the one among the gods whom we most love.”

“Dost thou also behold,” asked Apollonius, “of what manner my nature is?”

“We see all peculiarities of the soul, for we know them by thousand-fold indications,” replied Iarchas.

When midday came they rose in the air and did homage to the sun. The youth who bore the anchor was then told to go and provide for the companions of Apollonius. Swifter than the swiftest of birds he went and returned, saying: “I have provided for them.” He was then commanded to bring the throne of Phraotes, and when Apollonius had seated himself thereon they continued their conversation. Iarchas told him to ask what he wished, for he had come to men who knew all things. Apollonius asked if they knew themselves, for he believed that they, like the Greeks, held knowledge of itself to be difficult. But Iarchas answered with an unexpected turning: “We know all things, because first of all we know ourselves; for no one of us can approach this wisdom without first attaining knowledge of self.”

Apollonius asked further what they held themselves to be.

“Gods,” answered Iarchas.

“And wherefore?”

“Because we are good men.”

They talked about the soul and reincarnation, and Iarchas told him that the truth was “as Pythagoras taught you, and as we taught the Egyptians.” They spoke about the previous incarnation of Apollonius

as steersman of an Egyptian ship, in which capacity he had refrained from following the inducements held out by pirates to let his vessel come into their hands.

Concerning this Iarchas said that refraining from unrighteousness did not constitute righteousness.

The King came to visit the Brahmins and a wonderful feast was prepared for him; everything came of itself; Pythian tripods, and automatic attendants of black bronze, the earth spread out herbs softer than beds to recline on, delicate viands appeared in orderly succession, etc. The accounts of these phenomena occasioned great remark during the subsequent career of Apollonius and people would persist in mixing them up with the teachings of the master just as today they inextricably confound Madame Blavatsky's famous cup and saucer with Theosophy. But we are told that Apollonius did not concern himself with phenomena; when he saw these wonderful things he did not ask how they were done, nor to be taught to do them, but he contented himself with admiring them. And we are also told that the marvellous things he did were not accomplished through ceremonial magic, but through the perfection of his wisdom.

Damis was subsequently allowed to come to the Brahmins and when he asked about the composition of the world and the four elements they replied that there were five—the fifth being ether, which was to be regarded as the primal source of the gods.

“For everything that breathes the air is mortal; that which drinks the ether is immortal and divine,” said Iarchas. He also said that the world was to be regarded as a living being of both sexes, having a more ardent love for itself than that of one person to another, being united and bound to itself. Damis learnt much from his intercourse with the Brahmins, but he wrote that at the secret discourses Apollonius was alone with Iarchas, and from there originated the four books written by the former. Iarchas, said Damis, gave Apollonius seven rings bearing the names of the seven planets, and Apollonius wore them one after the other according to the name of the day of the week.

The foregoing is an incomplete account of the remarkable journey and experience of Apollonius, as is necessitated by the limits of a brief article. Many passages of deep wisdom have had to be passed over, and many remarkable things are told, hard to understand, but which, there is reason to believe, have an occult significance. —S. B.

DEVOTION THROUGH SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

The *Gita* speaks of “devotion through spiritual knowledge,” and we repeat the words, often without understanding just what they mean. What actually is devotion, what is spiritual knowledge?

We may well ask ourselves: “Is not all knowledge spiritual, since all is Spirit? If not, what makes knowledge spiritual? Has such knowledge a special value in life?”

To study spiritual knowledge, the highest wisdom, we learn from Chapter IX of the *Gita*, we must have a specific attitude towards the study; otherwise we shall not learn or understand what is being taught. This specific attitude is one of finding no fault, the attitude of *listening*. We cannot learn if we are perpetually finding fault with what is taught. We can see why fault-finding stands in the way of our gaining spiritual knowledge if we realize that at present we do not even know enough to base our questions on, leave aside find fault with. We are truly, in fact, mere learners, *shravakas*, listeners, and as such must be prepared, as were the students in the School of Pythagoras, not to ask questions until in fact we know enough to ask. Spiritual knowledge pertains to that higher aspect of Nature and of ourselves with which we are not familiar at this time.

Spiritual knowledge is called by Krishna “the royal knowledge, the royal mystery,” and its absorption by us makes it “the most excellent purifier.” Arjuna has become ready to receive this knowledge because his attitude is not that of finding fault with what Krishna tells him. Before this, in Chapter V, Arjuna asks Krishna for a clear answer as to which of the two is better — renunciation of action or the right performance of action, for sometimes Krishna has praised the one and sometimes advocated the other. This is the usual dilemma of the spiritual aspirant. Later, in the next chapter, he puts further questions and asks Krishna to dispel his doubt “completely”; he has realized that no one but Krishna can solve his difficulty. In the following chapter he listens, but does not question, and in Chapter VIII his question is merely a technical one. He has thus reached a different attitude of mind towards Krishna as a teacher, and therefore Krishna is able to give him the knowledge that we find in Chapters IX and X. Here he learns what Krishna is. He is the ALL. But again he asks how he should learn to know Him or think of Him. As usual, he wants precise information, and he wishes to know in full all His powers and forms of manifestation. After acquainting Arjuna with the chief of His divine manifestations,

Krishna reminds him that he need not bother with all these details. "I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate." Arjuna still does not realize the truth about Krishna's real nature and asks to have a "vision" of His "inexhaustible Self," His "supreme form."

Arjuna receives what he has asked for. He sees with his own eyes, opened to spiritual vision by Krishna, just what that Divine Form is. Krishna is no longer in his usual form which Arjuna had been accustomed to seeing, but has assumed a form of inexpressible glory which has neither beginning nor end. The whole hierarchy of beings, from sages and saints down to the elementals, are there. There, too, are all his friends and relations, even his enemies; and all are being absorbed by Krishna. Arjuna is overwhelmed with awe by this majesty of Krishna and by the extent of the manifested forms within the Divine Form. All this is too much for him to bear and he begs to see Him in his usual form. He cannot understand, or take in, what he sees in the Universal Form.

Arjuna is so terrified by this last vision granted him that he begs for mercy. Having glimpsed that Krishna is the ALL, he realizes for the first time that he has treated Him as a mere human being, a mere friend, and he begs for forgiveness. Here we find illumination beginning to dawn upon him. From the condition where, in Chapter II, he had asked Krishna, who was all the time standing by his side, for a description of a wise man — where he dwelt, how he acted, etc. — he has at last seen the Reality behind the personal earthly form. The vision is too much for him. It is because he is not able to stand its full glory that he begs to see no more of it and asks that he see again the familiar human form which hides the universal glory.

It is interesting to note that Arjuna says, when he sees again the human well-loved figure of his friend and teacher, "My mind is no more disturbed and I am self-possessed."

But all this has posed a further question for him. He asks in Chapter XII: "... which take the better way, those who worship the indivisible and unmanifested [which has so terrified him], or those who serve thee as thou now art?" He still wants advice, exact advice, as to what he is to do. In Chapter XIV he asks: "What are the characteristic marks by which the man may be known who hath surpassed the three qualities? What is his course of life, and what are the means by which he overcometh the qualities?" Later, in Chapter XVII, he asks a techni-

cal question, and in Chapter XVIII he comes back to his early question, namely, what the difference is between abstaining from action and giving up the results of action. He is at last asking a personal question as to what he himself is to do here in life, and, after receiving the full answer, he says: "My delusion is destroyed, I am collected once more; I am free from doubt, firm, and will act according to thy bidding."

It is now that true devotion can arise in him, for it is the utter giving of oneself to that which one is devoted to, not emotionally, but in action. Here we can see the root of true devotion in action. It is only when we have *seen*, that is, understood, the Vision of the Divine Form as including all forms that we can begin to see that Krishna is present in the wrongdoer and in the "things which deceive" as much as in the good and the wise. The full value of the study of books such as *The Secret Doctrine* and the *Gita* lies in our appreciation of the presence of the Divine in all forms. As *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 33-34) tells us:

"...*The nuclei are the light of eternity...*" "It is that LIGHT which condenses into the forms of the 'Lords of Being.'... From these downwards — formed from the ever-consolidating waves of that light, which becomes on the objective plane gross matter — proceed the numerous hierarchies of the Creative Forces, some formless, others having their own distinctive form, others, again, the lowest (Elementals), having no form of their own, but assuming every form according to the surrounding conditions."

It is by dwelling upon this that true devotion will awaken in us, and in no other way, for we can only know the Great as we know the small; we can sense the metaphysical when we see the physical as the covering of that metaphysical. All the world makes one body, one intelligence, one Spirit, all linked together, all reflecting some aspect of the Reality, all learning to uncover that Reality within themselves and, through love and devotion, to sacrifice themselves for the ALL under whatever guise — the animal for its young, the human parents for their children, the children for their parents, the husband for the wife, the wife for the husband, the friend for the friend, oneself for the country, for the race, for the whole of humanity, for the whole assemblage of manifested beings. Becoming one with the Real in the lowest forms will lead to becoming one with the highest of Beings; as one turns downwards to help the lower one rises upward to become one with the highest. None can be left out. Therefore, utter devotion to Krishna as embodying the Highest shows itself in our day-to-day existence when all actions

are done in His Name, are dedicated to Him; when all feelings are rooted in love and compassion, always keeping in mind that the Krishna within others has to be treated with respect; and when all thoughts are for the sake of Krishna, for the fulfilment of Him in and through all that is.

Krishna Himself is the "supreme Master of devotion." He is present in all grades of matter and beings, working for their welfare, piercing slowly through the darkness of the lowest forms to shine in full glory through the highest. And yet He "remains separate." It is necessary to understand that He dwells "in the heart of every creature." The heart of the Universe is one. There is none but He in reality.

It is pride and selfishness which are responsible for the sin of separateness and which hinder true devotion or at-one-ment; it is fear which refuses to open the heart to the ALL. Therefore, to cultivate devotion pride and selfishness and fear must be banished from the heart.

Devotion is not just a feeling; it is action *for* the object of devotion, not for oneself. Mere professions of love for humanity, or love for the Great Teachers, or for H.P.B. and W.Q.J. will not bloom into sacrifice for them. Practical action *for* them will, for we cannot act for ourselves *and* for others at the same time. Hence the two, ourselves and they, *must* become one.

Purusha is eternal, perpetual, unconditioned, absolute happiness, eternally having the same form and being knowledge itself — impelled by whose speech the vital airs move. This unmanifest spiritual consciousness begins to manifest like the dawn in the pure heart, and, shining like the mid-day sun in the cave of wisdom, illuminates the whole universe.

—Vivekachudamani

“THE ETERNAL VERITIES”

Mr. Judge says of Theosophy on the opening page of *The Ocean of Theosophy* that, though it is unfathomable in its deepest parts, yet, being “shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child.” This statement could apply equally to *The Eternal Verities*, which is generally thought of as a book meant only for children, or for Theosophy School use. In many respects this is correct, but if an adult took the time to study it, or even to read it through, he would find that though it is indeed “shallow enough at its shores,” it also can be “unfathomable in its deepest parts.”

The dedication, which makes it clear that it is meant for all, young and old, reads:

To the beloved Teacher and Friendly Philosopher, Robert Crosbie, who taught what H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge had taught before him — pure and simple. . . . What is in this book is what was learned from him. It is dedicated to him, and to all — or young or old — who seek the Truth, that they may help as he did.

It would be worth our while to consider some of the ideas presented, and see how closely they follow those H.P.B. presented in the Three Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine.

Just as Mr. Judge drew attention, in the first chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, to the existence of a system of philosophy at once both scientific and religious, and to those great elder Brothers who were the Custodians of that Wisdom, so also *The Eternal Verities* draws attention first to the meaning of the word Theosophy:

Theosophy is the wisdom of those who once were like ourselves . . . who followed the Path that other Wise Ones had pointed out to them. . . . It includes the science of mathematics, of astronomy, of music, of architecture, of engineering. It is the soul of great literature and art. It is the true source of education. On it alone will the true government be founded. . . .

And of the Great Ones we are told:

The Knowers of this real Knowledge are living Men, whose only concern is that all men may likewise come to have wisdom. They are called Masters of Wisdom.

At the outset, therefore, the basis is laid for all that follows in the book, at once setting the mind of the reader straight on what Theosophy is and where it has come from.

The book takes us next to a consideration of the Three Fundamentals, or, as they are called, the Three Truths. H.P.B. introduces the Fundamentals in *The Secret Doctrine* by saying that "it is absolutely necessary that the reader should be made acquainted with the few fundamental conceptions which underlie and pervade the entire system of thought . . . and on their clear comprehension depends the understanding of all that follows"; and following that pattern *The Eternal Verities* sets out by saying: "However great may seem to us now the mystery of many things, a real understanding of The Three Truths will bring us an understanding of them, and of all things else."

Four chapters are devoted to the First Truth, following the Theosophical method of proceeding from universals to particulars. We are given the idea of THAT, which is "the cause and origin of the universe and of ourselves. . . . It is the Real — the One Reality. . . . It is Life — Spirit — Consciousness." To understand it better we are given the concept of space, which is greater than any being, and, no matter how far we may stretch our minds, there is still other space beyond and beyond. We can only say "It is"; it cannot be seen or touched or heard.

From this universal One Reality we are led by means of a Memory Verse to consider that "Life is not born nor dies. All is Life. Life is invisible, yet is in all things visible"; and, further, that "countless myriads of 'lives' surround us all the time." They all belong to the same One Life, though some have one part to play and some another. It is these same lives that make up our body, and which at death separate and destroy the body. The "lives" are still Life, and cannot get "out" of Life. Therefore death is simply a separation which never touches the Real "I" in us, for that "I" is not our body.

This Real "I" in us comes from the One Life; we are as much a part of it as are the sunbeams that come from the Sun. Just as there could be no sunbeams without the Sun, so there could be no living beings without the One Life. This is the real basis of brotherhood — the fact that the same Life is in us as in all beings, whether they be men, animals, plants or stones. All are alive; all are expressions of different degrees of consciousness. It is only human beings who are Self-conscious Knowers, Perceivers, Thinkers. This "I" never changes through all the changes of our body and of our thoughts and feelings, for it is the One who dwells in the body, the One who thinks, the One who feels. It is always there, no matter how often we forget it; it cannot be seen, for it is the Seer; it has no appearance, for it is "the

Real of us."

It is our task to become conscious of this Real "I," for the only way one can know anything is by being conscious of it. It is the Consciousness which is the Seer, the Knower and also the Chooser. This last is important, because our journey to Self-Knowledge depends on the choices we make, and by choosing rightly or wrongly we either shorten or lengthen our journey.

The above are only a few ideas on the First Truth culled from *The Eternal Verities*, but enough has been said to show how much food for thought there is, and how important it is for children and adults alike to understand this First Fundamental which forms the basis of all their thoughts and consequent actions and choices.

The book next leads us to the consideration that though there is One Truth, yet it has three faces, or views, and we could not have the other two Truths without the First. The minute we speak or think of the First Truth in action, we are considering the Second Truth.

The Changelessness of the First Truth is eternal, ceaseless Motion Itself. What we see is motions, not the Source of all motions. In the Changeless is the Power to change, the Power to act, the Power to think, the Power to build, the Power to destroy, and all Powers whatsoever. It is when these Powers come into use, when beings begin to act, when manifold motions start in the universe that we can speak of the Second Truth — for this is the Truth which has to do with action. . . .

We are, therefore, brought from a consideration of the unmanifested universe, which cannot be seen, to the manifested one, which can be described, compared and seen.

With this as a basis, *The Eternal Verities* goes on to consider "the three fingers on the hand of law": Karma, Cycles, and Reincarnation. As we are choosers, and therefore responsible for our thoughts, which are "the seeds of Karma," we can choose to obey or disobey the Law; but whatever we choose, the Law alters not its course and goes on unceasingly. A very practical thought is given in the following quotation to illustrate this point:

Are we going to complain, then, of our disappointments? Shall we talk about someone else's "good luck" or our own "bad luck," when we know that everything comes about according to Law, or Karma; when we perceive that nothing ever just "happens" to us, but has really grown out of the seeds of causes that we our-

selves planted?

It is cycles that mark the time aspect of Karma. "Cycles are the clock of Karma," says the Memory Verse. The importance for us of understanding the law of cycles cannot be too much stressed, because cycles work in our day-to-day life, in our very existence as human beings; all that we are and that we do is governed by them. Our bodies have their spring, summer, autumn and winter; our heart beats in cycles; our blood has its path or cycle through our body. There are thought cycles and feeling cycles, and our habits which, if persisted in, ultimately form our characters, are the result of cycles.

Cycles, if heeded, can be a help to us, for with their regular return comes the return of impressions, and it is at this time that we can break a bad habit. When we find ourselves in an angry or lazy mood, then is the time to start another and better cycle.

Cycles also determine, according to our Karma, when it is time for us to reincarnate (*re* — again; *in* — into; *carne* — flesh). The very word conveys at once that if we are in bodies now, we have been in other bodies before. It is our Karma that has brought us into the kind of body we have; our characters and disposition, our happiness and sorrows, our affinities and antipathies, the family, race and nation we are born into, can all be explained on the basis of Reincarnation.

Reincarnation is called the doctrine of hope, for understanding it, we make for ourselves better characters; and when we drop our bodies we do not leave behind us bad dispositions and characters to be picked up again in other incarnations.

The argument against reincarnation that is often raised is that people do not remember having lived before. How could they? It is not strange that we do not remember when we pause to consider that the brain we are trying to remember with came new with our present body, and is filled with the memories of this life. As a matter of fact, we do not remember even half the experiences of the present life; we do not remember the day we were born, or our infancy, but we do not doubt our having lived when we were infants.

There is, however, a way of remembering which is dependent, not on the brain, but on feeling. True remembering is the *feeling* which some sight or occurrence arouses. Also, how often we find even very young children having aptitudes or talents for certain things, which cannot be explained except on the basis of reincarnation!

Through all the cycles, from body to body, it is the same individual-

ity, the same Ego, the same "I" that has stored up all the knowledge of the past. That "I" has various coverings, or instruments which it uses. One of these is called Prana, the breath of life. Then there is a finer body within the physical, called the astral or the *pattern* body, which causes a person to keep the same general appearance. We have the lower mind, which is conjoined with our desires, our *Kama* nature; but there is also the higher Mind or Manas, the sentient reincarnating principle. When conjoined with Buddhi, Intuition, it becomes the spiritual Soul.

The real Ego or reincarnating principle waits between lives in what is called *Devachan*; but it needs must come back to earth where there is so much to learn that one life is hardly sufficient for the purpose, and where there are Karmic debts to be settled. This cycle of compulsory rebirth must go on until the goal of perfection is reached.

The Eternal Verities then brings us to the Third Truth. It needs to be recalled that the Three Truths are dependent on one another, for all three come from the One Truth. We cannot fully understand any one Truth unless we understand the other two. Knowing them fully, and proving them to ourselves as we live and think and act, we shall know all that needs to be known.

The Third Truth, springing as it does from the First Truth, points to the identity of all beings with the One Life, One Spirit, One Consciousness, and therefore with each other. The three classes of beings — men, those less than men, and those who have risen beyond the human stage — as also worlds and systems of worlds, all come from the Self of All. This coming forth of worlds with beings in it is all for one purpose — to learn. From the lowest to the highest, all have something to learn; all have their place on the Ladder of Being, and the lower serve the higher as the higher serve the lower — for the sake of the Self of All.

We are next introduced to the word Monad, which comes from the Greek word *monas*, meaning One, or Unity. Monad is one of many names that means the One Life, itself changeless, as it dwells in various ever changing forms. It is the soul in everything, from an atom to a man. Every Monad is a centre of life or of force, a self-moving unit.

At the dawn of manifestation, when the universe wakes up, all the mineral, vegetable, animal and human Monads gradually emerge from the inactivity of sleep, and find their places in the new universe. Of the four kingdoms of Nature, the mineral kingdom is the least evolved, and the monadic essence passes through it very slowly. The monadic

essence next works its way into the vegetable kingdom, and then into the animal and human kingdoms, developing with each stage greater awareness and more specialized modes of intelligence. When the man stage is reached, the monadic essence separates into individual units.

The human form combines in itself the mineral, vegetable and animal life-essence, and is altogether a superior form to that of the animals, but mere form does not make a man. The Real Man, the God in the making, was not a product of evolution from the lower kingdoms. To become a complete sevenfold being, man needed the light of mind, and this he got from the shining Lives, the Higher Intelligences who came down the Ladder of Being to enter the human form and light it with their Light — their Fire of Intelligence or of Self-consciousness. Thus man became a chooser and thinker, and since he combines in himself the Shining side and the shadow side, there goes on in him a struggle between these two.

In the process of growth and unfoldment, man uses the lower kingdoms of Nature and the elemental "lives." In all this, he needs more than Manas; he needs heart light as well. It is only when he becomes a real teacher and helper in the world, only when his greatest desire is to *help* Humanity, that the light of the Gods will be his.

The consideration of the Third Truth in *The Eternal Verities* culminates fittingly in a chapter on "The Elder Brothers." These Elder Brothers are given the name *Mahatmas*; They are also called *Masters*, for They are Masters of *all* Wisdom, having reached the top of the Ladder of Being. They come from age to age to remind men of what once they knew of the Three Truths, and to rekindle in them the light of Mind that has become dim as a result of engrossment in the world of senses and appearances. They have paid all their Karmic debts on earth, but They *choose* to take earthly bodies that They may be the better able to help and teach men on earth. As *The Eternal Verities* states:

Some day, it may be, we shall always think and feel and choose as Elder Brothers do. The Eternal Verities are what They think and do. Some day, it may be, we shall learn, and know ourselves and Them!

From all this we can see how important the ideas in *The Eternal Verities* are, and how the book can help us in developing the understanding. It serves the purpose of arousing interest in and laying a foundation for further Theosophical study.

“PATH” CORRESPONDENCE

“THE SECRET DOCTRINE”

[The correspondence reprinted here from Mr. Judge's *Path Magazine* for February, June and October 1888 throws interesting light on a controversy that had arisen in connection with the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*. It was originally planned that T. Subba Row, a Brahmin of extraordinary learning whom H.P.B. referred to as “one of the best metaphysicians and Vedantic scholars in India,” should render some assistance in the writing and revising of the *Secret Doctrine* manuscript. H.P.B., who was in Europe at the time she wrote her *magnum opus*, did send him the manuscript of Volume I for revision, but Subba Row refused to do more than read it. “Such as Subba Row — uncompromising *initiated* Brahmins,” H.P.B. wrote in a letter to a friend, “will never reveal — even that which they are permitted to.” They could not reconcile themselves to the idea that the sacred science, which had for long centuries never been revealed to any but the initiated few, should now be given out publicly to Westerners. Subba Row and others like him failed to see that a new era of Western Occultism began in 1875 with the launching of the present Theosophical Movement, and that the science of Occultism and its Custodians, the Masters, were neither Eastern nor Western, but universal. The time *was* ripe to “break the silence of centuries” and to give out in *The Secret Doctrine* all that could be revealed for our era — for the benefit of “all true Theosophists, in every country and of every race, for they called it forth, and for them it was recorded.”

—Eds.]

The following letter has been sent to Madame Blavatsky from New York. It is not intended to reflect upon the East Indians as a body in any way; but solely to show why the signers desire that the *Secret Doctrine* should not be held back because some Indian pundits are against it.—[Ed., *The Path*]

NEW YORK, January 10, 1888.

MADAME H. P. BLAVATSKY,

RESPECTED CHIEF:—We have just heard that you have been asked to withdraw from publication the *Secret Doctrine*.

This extraordinary request emanates, we are told, from members of the Theosophical Society, who say that if the book is brought out

it will be attacked or ridiculed by some East Indian pundits, and that it is not wise to antagonize these Indian gentlemen.

We most earnestly ask you not to pay heed to this desire, but to bring out the *Secret Doctrine* at the earliest possible day.

It is a work for which we, and hundreds of others all over the United States, have been waiting for some years, most of us standing firmly on the promise made by yourself that it was being prepared and would appear.

While the West has the highest regard for the East Indian philosophy, it is, at the same time, better able to grasp and understand works that are written by those acquainted with the West, with its language, with its usages and idiom, and with its history, and who are themselves Westerns. As we well know that it is from the West the chief strength of the Theosophical Society is to come, although its knowledge and inspiration may and do reach us from the East, we are additionally anxious that you, who have devoted your life to this cause and have hitherto granted us the great boon found in *Isis Unveiled*, should not now stop almost at the very point of giving us the *Secret Doctrine*, but go on with it in order that we may see your pledge fulfilled and another important stone laid in the Theosophical edifice.

Further, we hasten to assure you that it makes but small difference — if any whatever — here in the vast and populous West what any one or many pundits in India say or threaten to say about the *Secret Doctrine*, since we believe that although a great inheritance has been placed before the East Indians by their ancestors they have not seized it, nor have they in these later days given it out to their fellow men living beyond the bounds of India, and since this apathy of theirs, combined with their avowed belief that all Western people, being low-caste men, cannot receive the Sacred Knowledge, has removed these pundits from the field of influence upon Western thought.

And lastly, knowing that the great wheel of time has turned itself once more so that the Powers above see that the hour has come when to all people, East and West alike, shall be given the true knowledge, be it Vedantic or otherwise, we believe that the Masters behind the Theosophical Society and whom you serve, desire that such books as the *Secret Doctrine* should be written.

We therefore earnestly entreat you not to be moved from your original purpose and plain pledge that, before passing away from our earthly sight, you would lay before us the *Secret Doctrine*.

Receive, Madame, the assurances of our high esteem and the pledge of our continued loyalty.

Signed:

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,
J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK,
SAMUEL HICKS CLAPP,
ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
EDSON D. HAMMOND,
ABNER DOUBLEDAY,
GEORGE W. WHEAT,
JNO. W. LOVELL,
GEORGE W. SALTER,
LYDIA BELL,

MRS. J. C. GRIFFIN,
ALEX. O. DRAGICSEVICS,
E. H. SANBORN,
E. M. TOZIER,
E. DAY MACPHERSON,
JNO. F. MILLER, M.D.,
WILLIAM M. GATES,
EMILY G. FLEMING,
E. B. GRAY, JR.,
HADJII ERINN, for himself and 26
others.

[The following is the Indian Theosophists' rejoinder to the above. It was published in *The Path* for June 1888.—EDS.]

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE PATH":

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:--In the February number of THE PATH you have published a letter written by several American Theosophists to our respected Founder, Madame Blavatsky, asking her to hasten the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*, which, it is alleged, has not come out yet because some Indian Pundits are against it.

It seems to us that the letter has been based upon information which is not correct. Had Madame Blavatsky been in India, the book would long ago have seen the light. Owing, however, to her stay in Europe, it has not been found so very easy to have the great work revised, as had been originally proposed.

Parts of the work were sent to this country, when some good suggestions were made with a view to enhance the value of the book by making it more exact in its allusions to Hindu literature. These suggestions were misunderstood by some who communicated their own views on the matter to Europe, and we fear Madame Blavatsky herself has not been properly informed in what way the revision was proposed to be effected. Had she herself been here, she would, with her usual candour and good sense, have at once understood the situation and cheerfully taken up the well-meant suggestions. Occult ideas and doctrines ought to be made to stand on their own intrinsic merits, and not on the authority of any person or persons; and as there is a possibility of

making this truly marvellous work more acceptable to the public, more useful and instructive, we hope and trust that the suggestions that have been made will be carried out.

There is no opposition here against the publication of the mysteries of occultism. A few sympathetic friends can easily arrange to have the work revised, if the false impressions produced by unfounded reports were forgotten and the work placed in the hands of those who are capable of revising it.

Yours fraternally,

N. D. KHANDALAVALA; RUSTOMJI ARDESHIR MASTER; TOOKARAM TATYA; SHAMALAL VITHAL; J. C. DORABJI; MANCHERSHA KAVASJI; K. M. SHROFF; H. RUSTOMJI; J. N. ISAAC; PHEROZSHAW RUSTOMJI MEHTA; RUSTOMJI K. MODI; PESTONJEE NOWROJI PAVRI, *G. G. M. College*; ARDESHIR SORABJI, *Engineer*; COWASJI DOSSABHOY DAVAR; N. F. BILLIMORIA; FRAMJEE B. BILLIMORIA.

BOMBAY, INDIA, *April, 1888.*

[The following further communication was received by the Editor of *The Path* and was published in the October 1888 issue of that magazine.—Eds.]

AHMEDABAD, INDIA, 12th August, 1888.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PATH:

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—In the June number of your valuable Journal there has been published a letter, signed by myself and other Indian Theosophists, to the effect that, if Madame Blavatsky consented, her forthcoming great work would be revised by competent Hindu students in India who would be able to throw a great deal of light on Indian philosophy. When that letter was written we were under the impression that a learned gentleman here, who had expressed his willingness to revise the *Secret Doctrine* under certain conditions, would really do so. Myself and another friend represented all the facts to Madame Blavatsky, who at once agreed to place her volumes into the hands of the said Indian scholar and to abide by his conditions. For reasons, however, best known to himself, the said student of Indian Esotericism refused to undertake the task of revising the book or even parts of it.

Madame Blavatsky, therefore, can no longer be blamed for not taking the assistance of Indian scholars. Perhaps it is after all for the

best that her marvellous and unique work should come out as originally written by herself.

I have thought fit to write these few lines lest our former letter might create some misunderstanding.

Yours fraternally,
N. D. KHANDALAVALA, F.T.S.

For man to discover man and take his measure, a whole series of "senses" are necessary, whose gradual acquisition covers and punctuates the whole history of the struggles of the mind:

A sense of spacial immensity, in its greatness and its smallness, disarticulating and spacing out, within a sphere of indefinite radius, the orbits of the objects which press around us;

A sense of depth; pushing back laboriously through the endless chains of events and measureless distances of time which a sort of sluggishness of mind tends continually to condense for us in a thin layer of the past;

A sense of number, discovering and grasping unflinchingly the bewildering multitude of material or living elements involved in the slightest change in the universe;

A sense of proportion, realizing as best we can the difference of physical scale which separates, both in rhythm and dimension, the atom from the nebula, the infinitesimal from the immense;

A sense of quality, or of novelty, enabling us to distinguish in nature certain absolute stages of perfection and growth, without upsetting the physical unity of the world;

A sense of movement, capable of perceiving the irresistible developments hidden in extreme slowness — extreme agitation concealed beneath a veil of immobility — the entirely new insinuating itself into the heart of the monotonous repetition of the same things;

A sense of the organic, discovering physical links and structural unity under the superficial juxtaposition of successions and collectivities.

Without these qualities to illuminate our vision, man will remain indefinitely for us — whatever is done to make us see — what he still represents to so many minds: an erratic object in a disjointed world.

—PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN: *The Phenomenon of Man*

EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

The descent of Kali Yuga obscures and wipes out our spiritual memory. Judge has something very valuable to say about this in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*. Our inner Wisdom is obscured and, worse, even wiped out and we are apt to act as if we never cared for chelaship in the long past. Disciples of the same Master, in serving Him are creating, sustaining and strengthening the great bond between themselves — a bond only one remove in grandeur from the Mighty Bond between the chela and the Guru Himself. Keep this bond of the spiritual family in your consciousness.

Companionship and secrecy are the two ingredients of chelaship. We all move together and are made to assimilate those we like and those we dislike, causing the growth of unselfishness and impersonality.

About preparatory work for Chelaship: it is like the matriculation examination; in one way, the most difficult, for it is preparatory for a change of venue; an entering into a new plane where one feels an awkward stranger. The fundamental inner principle is not grasped: outer habits and mundane ways are not to be handled first; unless the mind and the heart undergo a change, outer changes of diet or dress will not help. When people are trying to control speech they begin with their tongue and lips; the result really is a failure. Silence does not mean our becoming dumb. Mental silence is a preliminary necessity. The seeking by the lower self of the existence of the Higher, to study the nature and power of the latter, *is* the first step. Therefore *Viraga* becomes the first step.

In chela-life there is no “thus far and no farther.” Understand this metaphysically. Chelaship is a mental attitude to begin with. This attitude is that of the embodied soul which soon learns that the real embodying vehicle is not physical but astral. The idea to be impressed on the consciousness is that of the *continuity* of the discerning power in one state of that consciousness or in another. This continuity is a highly important factor; on it depends the life of and ultimate success in Chelaship.

Chelaship brings about as a *necessary* experience — despair. Is not that stage described as *Vishad-Yoga*, *i.e.*, union with despondency? It is the place of experience from which *Vairagya* can be developed. Love for his tribe and hatred for the Kauravas had to be overcome by Arjuna.

The survey of the armies has a significance. Therefore we must not be afraid of despair, but must learn to overcome it in the right way. The gospel of chelaship is the 12th chapter — those pairs are meaningful.

Lesser mysticism corresponds to lay-chelaship; higher, to real chelaship. Aspiration, higher desire, is the beginning that we make, which means we deserved it under Karma. Next, we learn the qualifications, what is wanted and expected of us, and we must labour to deserve a real response. Take your own case; your aspirations constitute a first step in Their direction and They have promised: "Take one step in our direction and we will take one in yours. "Do you suppose They have not kept to that in your case? Reflect upon this in and with your heart. It is a big subject and a highly important one. Follow up your study with "Occultism and the Occult Arts." But do not be frightened by the serious warnings. Go to Judge; constructive teachings are what he gives — telling us what to do. Do not drop this topic; pursue it patiently and confidently.

At every stage of evolution there is the principle of "Nature unaided fails." In the human kingdom, at critical times, we get help from the Lunar, and then from the Solar, Pitris. The human kingdom would not be what it is now but for the Teachings imparted and implanted in us, and if a cyclic effort were not made time and again. So also in chela-life. The chela is left alone and yet at the eleventh hour and fifty-ninth minute there is the gracious help. The Initiations into the Mysteries also show this. Unless we oppose and build a wall, consciously or unconsciously, They are ever ready to help. By correspondence, the same is true of our own inner being — the Ruler Immortal.

Do not fancy that the Guru feeds the chela with knowledge. He helps the chela to seek out knowledge, to take knowledge. If the chela goes wrong in his surmises and deductions, then the Guru by a hint or two adjusts the mind of the chela and enables him to resume his journey of the mind-heart. Tests and trials of chelaship exist. We err when we think that heat and cold are feelings in themselves; they are not. *We* feel them because we have bodies. Similarly joys and sorrows are felt and known because we have a feeling nature and a mind nature. The Master shows the way to come to that terrace where we separate ourselves from heat and cold, pleasure and pain, fame and ignominy. The first to be overcome is the last of the pairs. Heat-and-cold body-feeling is the last to go.

As to knocking at the door: to dare is one of the qualities required. Taking the kingdom of heaven by violence implies that chelaship is not for ready-made saints. Sinners are brought to repentance and ill minds are made whole. Of course humility has always to be there or one is done for. Chelaship extends through many lives. Seven years are mentioned, but that was in the old days when the Guru was physically near to run to. In this day and generation probation itself lasts for more than one life.

There were others besides Damodar and Judge who succeeded. But you are not correct in your deduction that in the early years discipleship was comparatively easier of attainment. The one and only difference is that in every century-cycle during the first 25 years Masters' effort is open and talked about, and during the remaining 75 years privacy, secrecy and silence are more thorough and become so increasingly. They were then talked about and They worked through H.P.B. and other chelas more openly. But the very nature and technique of discipleship make it impossible for it to be relaxed. No one ever escaped probation; no one can escape it; but it is possible to be a probationer and the person not know it in his waking brain consciousness; *e.g.*, a person may have become a probationary chela in one life and have made good progress; he goes to *Devachan* or even returns immediately to a new body; in the measure of his progress he *continues* his probationary life in that new body and brain. So it is well to remember that the woes and ways of chelaship are many and varied.

As to the period of probation: it is not changed; it was seven years then and it is seven years now. But then as now people do not get through and seven becomes 70 and extends to more than one life. Life itself is the tester; " 'Great Sifter' is the name of the 'Heart Doctrine,' O disciple." Occultism or the Secret Doctrine tests as events occur in our lives day by day. We do become tired by the onslaughts which life and living bring to us. To endure, to learn and thus to grow the probationer has the use of the Heart Doctrine. He is told what to do. His "sins of omission and commission" have to be met with the Teachings. People lose their enthusiasm; earnestness, dependent upon enthusiasm, suffers. Spiritual stamina needs to be replenished.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The photographing of the Planet Mars by the United States spacecraft Mariner IV is considered to be "one of the most significant experiments in the annals of astronomy" (*American Reporter*, July 21). Launched in November 1964, Mariner IV flew within 9,600 kilometres of Mars on July 14, 1965, took 21 close-up pictures of the planet and sent them 215 million kilometres back to earth at the rate of about two a day.

Dr. Robert B. Leighton, Principal Television Investigator for the mission at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at Pasadena, California, pointed out that the pictures revealed no earth-like features such as mountain chains, great valleys, ocean basins or continental masses, and no clouds. "As we had anticipated," Dr. Leighton said, "Mariner photos neither demonstrate nor preclude the possible existence of life on Mars" (*American Reporter*, August 4). Scientists believe that the several craters that the pictures reveal "could lead to new conclusions about the origin and evolution of Mars and other planets."

Mariner is also radioing to earth the information collected by the spacecraft's electronic detectors. Instruments aboard Mariner found that Mars lacks a magnetic field, which suggests that it has no metallic core, liquid or solid. Without such a field, radiation from the sun and stars bombards Mars unimpeded. Dr. William H. Pickering, director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, feels that the rain of radiation does not rule out life on Mars. "I have always felt we'll find some form of life on Mars," he said.

As the subject of life beyond the Earth has gained topicality today, it would be useful for interested students of Theosophy to study what the Secret Doctrine has to say. The subject is treated at length by H.P.B. in the section entitled "On Chains of Planets and Their Plurality" in Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine*. Given here are but a few suggestive extracts:

... great adepts (those initiated of course), trained seers though they are, can claim thorough acquaintance with the nature and appearance of planets and their inhabitants belonging to our solar system only. They *know* that almost all the planetary worlds are inhabited, but can have access to — even in spirit — only those of our solar system. (II. 701)

Scientific reasoning, as well as observed facts, concur with the statements of the seer and the innate voice in man's own heart

in declaring that life — intelligent, conscious life — *must* exist on other worlds than ours. But this is the limit beyond which the ordinary faculties of man cannot carry him. Many are the romances and tales, some purely fanciful, others bristling with scientific knowledge, which have attempted to imagine and describe life on other globes. But one and all, they give but some distorted copy of the drama of life around us. (II. 702)

About the Planet Mars, *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 165-66) says, quoting a Master of Wisdom:

Mars is in a state of obscuration at present. . . . Again, both (Mars and Mercury) are septenary chains . . . independent of the Earth's sidereal lords and superiors. . . . Our planet (like all those we see) is adapted to the peculiar state of its human stock, that state which enables us to see with our naked eye the sidereal bodies which are co-essential with our terrene plane and substance, just as their respective inhabitants, the Jovians, Martians and others can perceive our little world: because our planes of consciousness, differing as they do in degree but being the same in kind, are on the same layer of differentiated matter. . . .

To this, Madame Blavatsky adds:

It becomes patent why we could not perceive, even with the help of the best earthly telescopes, that which is outside our world of matter. Those alone, whom we call adepts, who know how to direct their mental vision and to transfer their consciousness — physical and psychic both — to other planes of being, are able to speak with authority on such subjects. (I. 166-67)

Another quite occult doctrine is the theory of Kant, that the matter of which the inhabitants and the animals of other planets are formed is of a *lighter and more subtle nature and of a more perfect conformation in proportion to their distance from the Sun*. The latter is too full of Vital Electricity, of the physical, life-giving principle. Therefore, the men on Mars are more ethereal than we are. . . . (I. 602)

The age of our planet Earth has been the subject of much speculation in recent times. In this respect, Dr. M. S. Rao, in his talk broadcast from AIR Bhopal-Indore (*Akashvani*, August 8), referred to “the most authentic record from the Aryans in their scriptures.” According to them, the four yugas — Krita, Treta, Dwapara and Kali — make a Maha Yuga, which has a duration of 4,320,000 years. A thousand

Maha Yugas make a "day" of Brahma, or 4,320,000,000 years. What Dr. Rao does not mention is that Brahma's "night" is of equal duration, and 360 of such days and nights make one year, and 100 such years (or 311,040,000,000,000 mortal years) constitute the entire period of Brahma's age or of evolution for our solar system.

Dr. Rao describes the different methods that geologists have used, since the early 19th century, to ascertain the age of the Earth. The present method of measuring geological time with the aid of radioactive minerals is considered to be the most reliable method discovered so far, as it gives the correct relative ages of rocks. Using this method, the most recent or Quaternary era has been found to have had a duration of a million years; the Tertiary era, of 60 million years; the Mesozoic, of 60 to 180 million; the Palæozoic, of 180 to 500 million; the Proterozoic, of 500 to 1,000 million; and the oldest or Archæozoic era, of 1,000 to 2,000 million years.

Professor Arthur Holmes is cited as having used the variations in the isotopic proportions of common lead in rocks as a basis for determining the age of the Earth, and he has concluded that it is 3,350 million years old. Dr. Rao admits that, like all scientific results, this figure is subject to revision in the light of later research.

In *The Secret Doctrine* we read:

We have no knowledge at what time precisely the evolution and formation of our little earth began. Therefore it is impossible to calculate its age, unless the time of its birth is given — which the TEACHERS refuse to do, so far. (I. 206)

Geologists cannot be expected to arrive at the real age of the earth by their present methods — for the simple reason that

the Earth, such as we know it now, had no existence before the 4th Round, hundreds of million years ago, the commencement of our geological Earth. The globe was "fiery, cool and radiant as its ethereal men and animals during the first Round," says the Commentary, uttering a contradiction or paradox in the opinion of our present Science; "luminous and more dense and heavy — during the second Round; watery during the Third!" (S.D., I. 252 fn.)

The solidification of the Earth took place, therefore, at a much later stage in its evolutionary history. The ethereal evolution of the Earth occupied long ages before the astral prototypes of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms up to man were possible, and then still

more material processes went forward until at last the forms solidified. Until all this is taken into consideration, geologists can hardly be expected to establish even reasonably correctly the age of the Earth.

The man of today is gripped by many fears, and one of these is that within a few decades the world will run out of food. The pessimists, the modern followers of Malthus, point to the population figures — it is estimated that by the year 2000 the population of the world will be between 6,000 million and 7,000 million — and venture repeatedly to prove that overpopulation is the sole cause of all social disasters. Nikolai Zhavoronkov, in his article printed in *The Times of India* of August 8, shows that the fear that the natural resources of the world will be depleted is baseless.

As the author brings out, the theories of the “doom of mankind” have been exposed by the finest thinkers. According to FAO statistics, the world’s population grew in the 1952-1961 period at an average rate of 1.8 per cent annually, while the corresponding rate of food production was 2.9 per cent. If the harvest yields all over the world are brought to the level of the yields in advanced countries, there would be enough food, even without extending the crop areas, to supply up to 10,000 million people. Further, if the fodder and food crop areas are extended to cover half of the surface of the earth, then under the modern system of photosynthesis it would be possible to obtain foodstuffs adequate for 50,000 million people. (Photosynthesis is a process of carbonic nutrition of green plants realized through the intervention of light. The plants produce from carbonic acid and water organic substances necessary for the building up of their organs and for their vital processes.) If a similar utilization of marine vegetation is also taken into consideration, then we can obtain enough food to supply more than 100,000 million people.

The author goes on to explain that when science uncovers fully the mechanism of photosynthesis and puts it under control, the efficiency of solar energy utilization will be enhanced several times. Estimates show that on the basis of one square kilometre for 10,000 people, the entire potential crop area on land, which is about 100 million square kilometres, would provide adequate food for one trillion. These figures may seem fantastic today, but the important point is that many are the ways in which food supply may be increased in the future.

Mankind’s numbers are determined not merely by the available food.

And the fear that world population will keep on multiplying *ad infinitum* is as baseless as the fear of a food crisis for the world *as a whole*. As *The Secret Doctrine* states:

... a great confusion seems to exist upon this subject. Those who are born and bred in the Christian faith, and have been trained in the idea that a new soul is created by God for every newly-born infant, are among the most perplexed. They ask whether in such case the number of incarnating Monads on earth is limited; to which they are answered in the affirmative. For, however countless, in our conceptions, the number of the incarnating monads — even if we take into account the fact that ever since the Second Race, when their respective seven groups were furnished with bodies, several births and deaths may be allowed for every second of time in the æons already passed — still, there must be a limit. It was stated that Karma-Nemesis, whose bond-maid is Nature, adjusted everything in the most harmonious manner; and that, therefore, the fresh pouring-in, or arrival of new Monads, had ceased as soon as Humanity had reached its full physical development. No fresh Monads have incarnated since the middle-point of the Atlanteans. Hence, remembering that, save in the case of young children, and of individuals whose lives were violently cut off by some accident, no Spiritual Entity can reincarnate before a period of many centuries has elapsed, such gaps alone must show that the number of Monads is necessarily finite and limited.
(II. 302-3)

Professor S. K. Ramachandra Rao, head of the Department of Psychology in the All-India Institute of Mental Health, Bangalore, outlines, under the title "Value of Indian Psychological Thoughts" (*Deccan Herald*, August 8), the results of his attempts to reconstruct the standpoints of the many philosophical and religious disciplines in India. In the course of this reconstructive essay he discovered that many of the knotty problems in contemporary psychological research were closely scrutinized by these ancient thinkers, not only in a theoretical way, but also with a view to finding the practical applications of the theoretical formulations. As the article states:

Almost every system of thought in this country has found it necessary to delve into what now are characterized as psychological problems: the problems of mind, consciousness, sensation, perception, personality, habits, learning, emotions, will, language, appreciation of beauty and acquisition of psychic power.

This is so because thought in India is directly related to the understanding of man's constitution and to the rendering of it as an efficient tool in mastering and overpowering the delimiting conditions that both surround him and are inside him.

The Upanishads, the Samkhya, the Jaina and the Buddhist schools are predominantly psychological in orientation; the Yoga, the Tantras and the Alankara are entirely so. . . .

It is time we set about raising a fundamental as well as applicative edifice for the psychological discipline as it has been nurtured in our country, so that the considerations and solutions incidental to this discipline here may provide light and help.

Modern psychology would indeed be the richer if it turned to the ancient psychology of the East for light and help. The Theosophical Movement of our era has made an impact in several directions, and, since 1875, a tremendous change has taken place in the attitude of the most distinguished Western psychologists and scientists away from crass materialism and towards what may be called the occult side of nature and of man.

It would be interesting to analyse the considerable influence exercised by Indian systems of thought upon individuals and groups in the West, especially in the United States of America. The *Deccan Herald* of July 23 reports Professor M. Yamunacharya as stating that the *Bhagavad-Gita*, a book of psychology *par excellence*, "exercises great fascination on the American mind." Copies of the *Gita* could be found in most bookshops there. After a four-month tour of American universities, Professor Yamunacharya found that many of these universities evinced keen interest in Indian thought.

Towards the close of the first volume of *Isis Unveiled*, Madame Blavatsky mentions some of the achievements of the "ancient and imposing Brahmanical civilization, and adds:

What have we to offer for comparison? Beside such majestic achievements of the past, what can we place that will seem so grandiose and sublime as to warrant our boast of superiority over an ignorant ancestry? Beside the discoverers of geometry and algebra, the constructors of human speech, the parents of philosophy, the primal expounders of religion, the adepts in psychological and physical science, how even the greatest of our biologists and theologians seem dwarfed! Name to us any modern discovery, and we venture to say, that Indian history need not long be searched before the prototype will be found of record. (I. 620)
