

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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### OUR DESTROYER AND DIVINE UPLIFTER

We are at the bottom of a cycle and evidently in a transitory state. Plato divides the intellectual progress of the universe during every cycle into fertile and barren periods. In the sublunary regions, the spheres of the various elements remain eternally in perfect harmony with the divine nature, he says; “but their parts,” owing to a too close proximity to earth, and their commingling with the *earthly* (which is matter, and therefore the realm of evil), “are sometimes according, and sometimes contrary to (divine) nature.” When those circulations — which Eliphas Levi calls “currents of the astral light” — in the universal ether which contains in itself every element, take place in harmony with the divine spirit, our earth and everything pertaining to it enjoys a fertile period. The occult powers of plants, animals, and minerals magically sympathize with the “superior natures,” and the divine soul of man is in perfect intelligence with these “inferior” ones. But during the barren periods, the latter lose their magic sympathy, and the spiritual sight of the majority of mankind is so blinded as to lose every notion of the superior powers of its own divine spirit. We are in a barren period: the eighteenth century, during which the malignant fever of scepticism broke out so irrepressibly, has entailed unbelief as an hereditary disease upon the nineteenth. The divine intellect is veiled in man; his animal brain alone *philosophizes*.

—*Isis Unveiled*, I. 247

IT NEEDS TO BE RECOGNIZED that, whatever the apparent causes of the unrest and the moral decadence that we see around us today, the *underlying* causes are another matter. Every individual who feels the effect in any degree must have contributed to those underlying causes. Behind every disturbance of a widespread nature there lies such a slow and vast accumulation of causation that it requires rare insight to trace

the contributory elements and, having analysed, synthesize again. The student of Theosophy, too apt to rely on terms, like his scientific brother, suggests knowingly as that cause — “the lower astral light.” It is true that the astral light of the earth is surcharged with and continuously emanates a nefarious influence. But such an “astral light” dangerous to men, institutions and nations does not exist of itself. Like anything else phenomenal, it must have a cause — in a Universe of Law. And that cause is MAN himself.

The astral light is the invisible atmosphere around us, our psychological air — an imponderable tenuous medium which envelops the earth and permeates every atom of the globe. It has a photographic power and in it all the acts and thoughts, doctrines and beliefs of men are felt and impressed, to be later reflected again. This tenuous medium is beyond our control, and we are at the mercy of the images made in it and reflected upon us. These images are not easily effaced, but persist for centuries, so that we are affected for good or ill by the conduct, the doctrine and the aspirations of men and nations, not only of our own time, but also of preceding ages, and we tend to repeat what they did. As evil thoughts and deeds are more material, and therefore more firmly impacted into the astral light, while the good, being spiritual, easily fade out, we are in effect at the mercy of all the evil done. Swimming in it, as in a sea, are also the astral remains of deceased men and women, as also elemental beings of various orders, some of them powerful for evil.

In an age when abnormal selfishness and unbrotherliness prevail when there is a growing desire for personal pleasures of the strictly sensational type and licentious misuse of the holiest primeval natural functions — in such an age, as is the present, is it any wonder that the lower astral light has been characterized as “insane” and “devilish”? This devilish influence of the astral octopus is not known to the men and women of today, for modern knowledge has little to say on the subject. But what about students of Theosophy? There is enough in Theosophical literature to instruct and guide them. *The Theosophical Glossary* states:

Eliphas Levi calls it the great Serpent and the Dragon from which radiates on Humanity every evil influence. This is so; but why not add that the Astral Light gives out nothing but what it has received; that it is the great terrestrial crucible, in which the vile emanations of the earth (moral and physical) upon which the Astral Light is fed, are all converted into their

subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming epidemics — moral, psychic and physical?

There is continuous give and take between humanity on earth and this astral light soaked through with the psychic emanations of generations of men. If wars and epidemics, moral, psychic and physical, are reflected from the astral light, their actual occurrence sends out fresh emanations to discolour and disfigure that sphere. Decline and fall in morals is immediately reflected therein, and this reflection strengthens the temptation to immorality and further energizes its cause. How is one to protect oneself against the powerful influences emanating from the astral light? Knowledge of its nature and functions is a primary requisite.

Such knowledge reveals that the astral light is dual — good and evil, divine and devilish. Not only is there the lower astral light, but there is also the world of the Divine Astral Light, called the Akasa. Within its shoreless waves is enclosed “the *realization* of the potency of every quality of spirit.” But passions hard as iron make this earth impervious to its benign influence, enveloping it in black darkness. The darkness can, however, be dispelled. To the Akasic heights can ascend thoughts universal in their nature. Thoughts of altruism, strengthened by action based thereon; aspirations for human service, sustained and in part realized by service actually performed; right ideas of the essential unity of man, made vital by life lived in accordance with them — these can penetrate the lower astral region and rise to the plane of the Divine Astral Light.

It is by the pictures *we* impress on the astral light that it reacts upon us. Our evil thoughts and deeds vitiate the moral atmosphere; that is to say, we mingle impure reflections with the astral light which permeates all things, and thus establish deleterious currents. Our good thoughts and sacrificial deeds, on the other hand, plough channels through the now-enveloping fogs of the lower astral region, thereby drawing to our sphere beneficent influences from those who dwell on the Akasic heights — the good and great and powerful of all the ages, the flower and fruitage of past civilizations. The closing touch in Mr. Judge’s *Echoes from the Orient* has a message for us all:

If you fill the astral light with bad pictures, just such as the present century is adept at creating, it will be our devil and destroyer, but if by the example of even a few good men and women a new and purer sort of events are limned upon this eternal canvas, it will become our Divine Uplifter.

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## PERT QUESTIONS AND PLAIN ANSWERS

[The following letter, with H.P.B.'s footnotes and a more comprehensive reply by Damodar K. Mavalankar, is reprinted from the *Supplement to The Theosophist*, Vol. III, pp. 5-7, for May 1882.—EDS.]

HOW LITTLE the “beliefs and creeds” of the Theosophical Society — which has *no* belief or creed — are understood by the average public in India after three years of constant explanations, may be inferred by the letter that follows. Crude and childish as it is, yet, finding in it the echo of the public bigotry and blindness to facts and practical proofs, we give it room in our *Supplement*. Unless we are greatly mistaken, it was written under a direct inspiration than which there is not a more bigoted or more intolerant one the world over — we mean that of a Protestant missionary.

9th March, 1882.

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE THEOSOPHIST”

MADAME—With reference to a leading article that appeared in the *Bombay Gazette* of the 4th instant, (from the pen of a correspondent, signing himself “Senex”), and also to an extract from Bishop Sargent’s *Journal*, dated October the 24th, which also appeared in the *Bombay Gazette* of the same date (Saturday, March 4th, 1882), allow me to make the following conclusions:

“Senex” speaks of “Theosophy” to be a new religion imported into Bombay. Is “Theosophy” a religion, or a belief? Does the Theosophical Society propagate any kind of belief (directly or indirectly)?<sup>1</sup> The Theosophical Society comprises three sections, and each section comprises three classes. I ask whether there is a single member recognized of the first or second section who is permitted (according to the rules of those sections) to retain his orthodox religious views.<sup>2</sup> I presume to answer the question in the negative. *Multum in parvo*, “Theosophy” tends to a Buddhistic philosophical and religious belief. Though the rules of the Theosophical Society do not directly compel one to renounce his orthodox religious views, yet indirectly they do so, for one has to renounce his religious orthodoxy if he desires (to be recognized) to be initiated into

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<sup>1</sup> Useless to repeat that which was asserted over and over again—namely, that the Theosophical Society, *as a body*, has no religion.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Most undoubtedly every one of them is allowed to do so if he likes; but whether, after learning *the* truth, he will do so and persist in his dogmatic views, is another question.—ED.

the higher sections. The "neophytes" receive instruction in what is called "the occult sciences" unknown to the scientists of this day, which sciences treat of "the spirits," and certain fluids and forces in nature. Furthermore, "Occultism" teaches man how he can hold direct communication with these forces (by the so-called Occult Psychological Telegraphy), and how he can have a certain amount of control over them, so as to direct these forces, and make them the means of accomplishing certain wonderful phenomena. If such be the case, "Occultism" disproves the truth of miracles (superhuman powers).<sup>3</sup> "Occultism," then, affects all the popular faiths of this planet, which claim to be of Divine origin (*i.e.*, revealed by God to man miraculously through some prophet).<sup>4</sup> In short, "Occultism" teaches that Paul, Moses, Confucius, Mahomet, Zoroaster, and Buddha were liars and deceivers when they said that they received Divine inspirations.<sup>5</sup> Thus "the Occult Sciences" as professed by Koot-Hoomi and his brother (and sister) Theosophists do indirectly affect the religions of this world. Mr. Sinnett, in his work entitled *The Occult World*, informs us that the Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society "is an adept to the extent of possessing this magnificent power of psychological telegraphy with her Occult friends."

"Senex" goes on to say that "Theosophy" is a speculation of certain visionaries who pretend to be able to hold direct communication with the Deity and to direct and combat the influence of the Deity ("the Supreme Light") by the medium of Genii (spirits), or demons, or by the agency of stars or fluids (as electricity).<sup>6</sup> It must not be forgotten that Spiritualists are already wrangling on points of spiritualistic dogma. "Senex" (referring to the spirits of the dead) is of opinion that the theory of the "Theosophists" (that the raiment is fashioned "out of the cosmic matter of the universe") is a trifle less absurd than that of the Spiritualists. I see no difference between "Occultism" of the Theosophists and "Spiritualism" as professed by Zöllner, Mrs. Hauffe, Eglinton, Slade<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Most undoubtedly it does. It rejects the very idea of there being anything *supernatural* (*i.e.*, above, below, or outside of nature) in this infinite Universe—as a stupendous fallacy.—ED.

<sup>4</sup> To "claim" is one thing, and "to be"—and to prove it—is quite another.—ED.

<sup>5</sup> We would advise our young friend to study a subject before he presumes to speak of it. Buddha never claimed to have received "Divine Inspiration," since Buddha rejected the very idea of a god, whether *personal* or *impersonal*. Therefore, Occultism does *not teach* that he was a "liar," nor does it give that abusive epithet—so generously bestowed by the Christian *padris* on all and every other prophet but their own—any more to Moses, than to Mahomet, or Zoroaster, least of all to Confucius, since, no more than Gautama Buddha, has that great sage ever claimed "divine" inspiration.—ED.

<sup>6</sup> If our correspondent is unable to appreciate journalistic humour and wit, and takes the definition copied out by "Senex" from Webster's Dictionary as a Gospel Truth, we cannot help him to more intuitive perceptions than he is endowed with.—ED.

<sup>7</sup> This is to be deplored, but so long as our correspondent will rush into print to discuss upon subjects he knows nothing about, he is sure to commit such ridiculous blunders.—ED.

and a score of other mediums in the United States, except that the Spiritualists perform their phenomena through spirits pneumatic (?), while the adepts of theosophy do theirs by nature's laws *without the aid of spirits (apneumatic)*. Bishop Sargent informs us "that the king-cocoanut, planted by Col. Olcott and the Tinnevelly Brothers in the temple-yard of the Great Pagoda of Tinnevelly, was soon after removed, and that the whole temple-yard had to be ceremonially purified of the contamination it had thus contracted by the intrusion of the foreigner."<sup>8</sup> Yet Colonel Olcott makes no mention of this in his address at the Framjee Cowasjee Institute of the 12th January.<sup>9</sup>

Either the Theosophical Society has its inconsistencies or the Bombay public have not been correctly informed concerning these matters.

Would you kindly satisfy me (by letter) on the following points:

(1) Whether an adept of "theosophy" like Koot-Hoomi and others can "foretell future events"; whether they have such powers?

(2) Whether "adepts" have the power of curing diseases?

(3) And, lastly, whether "adepts" have the power of temporarily raising the dead as "Senex" gives me to understand.

I remain yours, etc.,

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### ANSWER TO \* \* \* 'S MISCONCEPTIONS

SECRETARY'S OFFICE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,

BREACH CANDY, BOMBAY, INDIA, 10th MARCH, 1882.

SIR — The Editor of *The Theosophist* having no leisure to answer letters, but turning that work over to the Secretaries, I have the pleasure to reply to your letter of 9th March. You seem to rest all your arguments upon the two letters in the *Bombay Gazette* of the 4th instant. One of these is from a correspondent, while the other one is an extract from Bishop Sargent's Journal, dated 24th October, 1881. When reading "Senex's" letter, we were the first to laugh over it heartily, as

<sup>8</sup> Which only proves that Bishop Sargent also speaks of what he knows nothing about or gladly repeats unproved missionary calumnies. (See the remarks under the heading "Milk for Babes and Strong Meat for Men" on page 5 of the Supplement to the last issue.)—ED.

<sup>9</sup> Pleading "guilty" to never reading or paying attention to missionary and other pious organs, and not being endowed with omniscient clairvoyance to help him following the constant intrigues of their editors and their inventions against our Society and its Founders, Colonel Olcott could not "mention" that which he was not aware of: namely that, after the calumny had been well spread by our meek and humble missionaries and effectively shown to be false, no less a personage than a "Bishop" would take it up, and circulate what he knew was a malicious falsehood.—ED.

it is very witty and quite free from any malicious innuendoes, such as some of the hard-headed bigots have been wont to use against us.

At any rate, it is easy to perceive that the writer's intention was far from conveying any such absurd conclusions as you seem to have arrived at — such as “temporarily raising the dead!” Some people seem entirely impermeable to literary wit. They have no sense of true humour, and seem incapable of appreciating it. Hence — their perversion of the meaning.

“Theosophy” and the “Theosophical Society” are two quite different things, since the latter, embracing the former, includes still a few other things. Permit me to remind you that, in our *Rules*, our objects are defined as follows:

(1) To form the nucleus of an Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed or colour.

(2) To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literature, religions and sciences, and vindicate its importance.

(3) To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature and the Psychical Powers latent in man.

Of these, the first is the most important for us. It is urged that this Idea is Utopian. But whether it is or is not, is quite beside the question. What people want to know is whether it is conducive to the happiness and well-being of humanity, and so, worthy of being given a trial — or not. And if it is, that is all we care for. How far we have succeeded in our endeavours can be seen from the practical results of our work. If we have succeeded so far, it is because we ever kept in mind that we could admit only those who were capable of understanding what that term of Universal Brotherhood meant, and of appreciating the honour of having been accepted within its ranks. Therefore, we extended the Brotherhood only to those who could comprehend and hoped to conquer the immense difficulties encountered between Intellectual Solitude and Intellectual Companionship. This is a position difficult to master; but once mastered, the Theosophical Society has found many recruits capable of forming and leading companies of their own.

Thus has the Idea spread, thus have numerous Branches been formed, and thus have our operations extended almost all over the world. And the practical benefits accruing from such an organization, each of our members can testify to, any day. Composed, as we are, of various nationalities and divers religious creeds, it was essentially necessary that we should have certain stringent rules to enforce harmony.

And how could we do that except by allowing no one to enter before he pledged himself to abide by the principle of mutual religious Tolerance and Sympathy? There is a great deal of difference between orthodoxy and bigotry. A person may be very orthodox and not at all a bigot. An orthodox will cling tenaciously to his views, whatever they may be, while a bigot will try his best to *enforce* his ideas upon others, whether they be willing or not. We, therefore, have to admit only such persons who will not interfere with the views of their Fellow Members, but will try to promote mutual Intellectual Sympathy. Between calm and philosophical discussion and bigoted compulsion, there is a world of difference; and a person who desires to arrive at Truth must accept it from whatsoever quarter and wheresoever it may be found. Most of us, Asiatics, believe that we can find it in ancient religions, and, therefore, encourage their study.

And here comes in Theosophy. But it is a term which is not properly understood, I fancy, by the majority of our critics: hence — there have been many misconceptions about our Society. Ordinary people say that Theosophy, derived from “*Theos* — God” and “*Sophia* — wisdom,” means the wisdom of God. Hence they rashly jump to the conclusion that we are all believers in a *Personal* Deity. No graver mistake could ever be committed. “Theosophy” with us (and it did so with Plato and other ancient Theosophists) means “divine wisdom,” or rather the knowledge of that which is yet a mystery to the ordinary run of mankind. In this sense, even a Materialist is a Theosophist, because he is ever trying to find the operation of such laws of nature as have not yet been discovered; a Buddhist — who recognizes no God — is also one, for he strives to attain to a knowledge of that which he terms “Motion” and with its help to attain “Nirvana”; so also is a Vedantist, as he is in pursuit of the knowledge of that which he calls “Parabrahm,” and thus tries to reach “Moksha”; similarly is a Zoroastrian, for he is striving after that course which will enable him to perceive, with his inner eye, the God Zoroaster saw; and so on and on.

But, if we take the religious history of the founders of all these different faiths, we find that they proceeded by the same path and arrived at the same conclusions. It might be said: “How is it then that there should be so many antagonistic passages in different religious books? Here then comes in true Theosophy, which is the only key to unlock the mysteries of all these noble, ancient philosophies. Secure this key, and all these inconsistencies will fade away. At least those who

have tried it and have succeeded assert this to be a fact. For a student of Occultism, these externals have no charm. He tries to penetrate into the spirit of everything.

Most certainly, our superior sections are meant only for Occultists. Therefore, very few people are in any of those sections. Occultism is not meant for all. Just as, although surgery is open for all, yet not everyone can be a skilful surgeon, so also, not everyone can be a good Occultist. In that line, as in every other, it is better not to touch it at all than to prove a failure. As Occultism is not meant for the public, very few can appreciate it or understand its true significance, and they, therefore, invent one of their own. Nevertheless, it does seem absurd to find such misconceptions about Occultism. Certainly, the students are taught by its proficientes to believe there is no such thing as a "miracle"; that the idea of something taking place outside of the Laws of Nature is absurd; and, therefore, we reject it most emphatically. To us, however *apparently* miraculous a thing may appear, yet, we are sure that it always happens in obedience to the impulse of forces of Nature, not of any supernatural cause. This is the position assumed by the Occultist. Therefore, he has never said that the miraculous phenomena attributed to the world's sages were not genuine; but only that they were *not* "miracles," in the sense of the supernatural, and were performed through their knowledge of the operations of the hidden or occult forces of Nature. Anyone can produce them; anyone — who is possessed with the purity of Buddha, undergoes the same training and obtains the same knowledge — may become a Bodhisattwa.

Gautama "Buddha" never claimed, to the knowledge of men, any *divine* inspiration — that is, any influence *external* to himself, since he rejected the very idea of the existence of God. He obtained his Buddhahood by developing his *latent* psychological faculties, which every man more or less possesses. The Occultists, therefore, never called him or any one of the personages enumerated by you — "*liars*." From the above you will also realize, it is to be hoped, that no Eastern Occultist ever "pretended" or claimed to "hold *direct* communication with the Deity," since he believes in and invokes no other Deity but the one enthroned within his own being. Having thoroughly realized that man is the microcosm within the macrocosm, he does not go to seek that in the external universe, which he fails to find within himself.

If you see no difference between Occultism and vulgar Spiritualism, it is to be regretted, but it is not our fault. We cannot read books and

understand things for you. Instead of seizing one or two humorous remarks made by witty correspondents and *interested* enemies, if you had carefully, and *with an impartial spirit*, read our various publications, you would have been spared the trouble of writing your letter.

If you take Bishop Sargent's words as Gospel Truth, we do not. Here, again, if you had read the other side of the case, you would not have committed such a mistake, as the Editor's *note* above will perhaps convince you of having made. I again refer you to the *Subodha Patrika* of 4th December, 1881, as we cannot waste our time with persons who will take up *ex parte* statements to establish their own *preconceived* theories. You will find in the *Subodha Patrika* above referred to, the two trustees themselves, of the temple where Colonel Olcott planted the cocoanut, stating that the worshippers of the place, of their own accord, *formally* purified the place, *according to their usual custom*, and that no disrespect, as no exception, was meant to Colonel Olcott. According to custom, they would have purified the place in the same way, if any other European or even a *Hindu of a lower caste* had entered the place.

The cocoanut plant was never "rooted out," nor was it ever removed from its original place. On the contrary, it is well taken care of and surrounded by a fence, within the enclosures of which it flourishes and thrives, as if defying the calumnies and malicious lies of our detractors.

No "inconsistencies" in the Theosophical Society, therefore, exist in the mind of any *evenly* disposed person; but they do, and in a very high degree, in those of *partisans*, as none are as blind as they who WILL NOT SEE.

I am not at liberty to mention anything about the adepts. For myself, I would never even utter their names to the *profane* ears of persons bent only upon picking holes in other people's coats. Enough and too much has already been said by Mr. Sinnett in his *Occult World*, and anyone who reads that book carefully has no need to put such childish questions as you have. Upon one more subject I can enlighten you, however, and that is that no living adept has ever set up the ridiculous claim of being able to "raise the dead," once that a person is really dead. To do so, would be a "miracle" indeed — never yet performed in *history* by any living man — but in *fables* — by many.

Yours obediently,

DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR,

Recording Secretary.

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## DEATH IS LIFE

Death is but a new birth, and spirit is immortal; thus humanity can never die, for the *Destroyer* has become the *Creator*. . . .

—*Isis Unveiled*, II. 453

THE TITLE "Death is Life" may appear to many to be paradoxical. The generally accepted view is that death means the extinction of life, and even in the dictionary it is defined as "the end of life."

Theosophically speaking, death is by no means the end of life, but is, on the contrary, as H.P.B. points out in *The Secret Doctrine*, "merely the door through which he [man] passes to another life on earth after a little rest on its threshold — Devachan."

Death is a universal fact in nature, and, as H.P.B. points out, there would be no life possible without death. There cannot be regeneration or reconstruction without destruction. "Plants would perish in eternal sunlight, and so would man, who would become an automaton without the exercise of his free will and aspirations after that sunlight, which would lose its being and value for him had he nothing but light."

Therefore everything in the universe is subject to constant change, and man's physical body is no exception to this. From birth it is subject to nature's orderly processes, which consist in an incessant borrowing and giving back of the atoms which compose it. Man faces a responsibility, for as he thinks and feels so he can either help on the evolution of the beings who receive the atoms he has impressed, or retard their progress. There is no standing still. In the course of time his body as also his thoughts will become more refined or grosser, depending on the direction they take and the impress the lives are given. This constant change is not limited only to man. *Nitya Pralaya* or constant dissolution, says *The Secret Doctrine*, is "the change which takes place imperceptibly in everything in this Universe from the globe down to the atom — without cessation. It is growth and decay (life and death)."

Going deeper into the nature of man, we see that his emotions and desires and thoughts change. The emotions and desires of a child are not those of a grown-up man; daily and hourly there is, or should be, the killing out of the old and undesirable emotions to make way for the new ones. The type of desires and emotions arising in man will depend upon the direction his thoughts take. He becomes either their slave or their controller; this means for him either a new birth in spirit and progress up the ladder of evolution, or a further descent into matter and the

death of higher thoughts and desires. If no higher impress is given, man will go from incarnation to incarnation sinking lower and lower, and become in time one of the "living dead" — one who thinks of nothing but himself. He retards not only his own evolution, but also the evolution of all those impressed by his lives.

Thus for man, whether we consider only his physical body or his inner nature, death is life, but the change from one condition to another will be for either good or ill depending on the type and kind of thoughts he has. He has within himself the power to make his new birth a higher and better one than the old.

There comes a time, however, when the cohesive power of the lives making up man's physical body can no longer be maintained; that is, for one or another reason, whether it be disease or natural old age, the physical body ceases to be a fit instrument for the Real Man within to manifest through. Just as a craftsman cannot do good work using an imperfect tool, so, too, the Ego cannot work perfectly through an imperfect instrument. The unnatural prolongation of life in the body through, for instance, the transplantation of various organs, with all that that entails, makes for an unnatural existence. Life and death have today become unnatural. Natural death means the gradual separation of the lives; just as birth is a gradual process, so too is natural death. This comes about when, as explained in the article "The 'Elixir of Life'" (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, July and August 1966), "our will ceases to be strong enough to make us live."

It is at this point, when physical death takes place, that an important event occurs. In her *Key to Theosophy* H.P.B. describes what happens:

At the solemn moment of death every man, even when death is sudden, sees the whole of his past life marshalled before him, in its minutest details. For one short instant the *personal* becomes one with the *individual* and all-knowing *Ego*. But this instant is enough to show to him the whole chain of causes which have been at work during his life. He sees and now understands himself as he is, unadorned by flattery or self-deception. He reads his life, remaining as a spectator looking down into the arena he is quitting; he feels and knows the justice of all the suffering that has overtaken him.

This is the event which awaits everyone who dies. Another important point to be borne in mind is the attitude of those who assist at a death-bed, whether of a very near and dear relative or of a friend. It is natural to feel grief when the physical connection is broken. However, who is it

who feels the grief, and why? Is it for the one who has gone? He is now released from his personality, is no more limited by it, while those left behind are still so limited and bound down. "Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend," says H.P.B. So pity and sorrow should not be felt for the one just gone, or, if felt, such emotions should be controlled in such a way that there is no disturbance. The reason for this is given by one of the Mahatmas, who advises:

Speak in whispers, ye who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have ye to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflection upon the veil of the Future.

Therefore, just as we do not disturb a person who is sleeping, no more should we disturb the one who has just died, because it is a hindrance and upsets the quiet stream of thought within his inner consciousness.

After this event is over, the physical body is left behind, and, life energy having departed, the remaining five principles enter the first of the after-death states known as *Kama Loka*. Those who die a natural death enter this state without conscious remembrance. If pure, they pass through it quickly. "The rule is that a person who dies a natural death will remain from 'a few hours to several short years' within the earth's attraction, *i.e.*, in the *Kama Loka*." It is the habitat of shells and victims of accidental death, including suicides. It is a sphere, we are told, which is "divided into innumerable regions and sub-regions corresponding to the mental states of the comers at their hour of death." Therefore, in death, as in earth life, we reap the exact consequences of our thoughts and actions, and create our own place in the scheme of things in the universe.

When this stay in *Kama Loka* is over, the real man is reborn into another of the after-death states; he awakens to the joys and bliss of *Devachan*. Here, too, the thoughts and impressions and feelings generated during life will determine the time spent in this state. We create, while here on earth, our *Devachan*, and it will last "in proportion with the intensity or feelings that *created* it," and no longer. There comes, however, a time when the memories of the previous incarnation are "added to the series of other innumerable incarnations of the Ego, like the remembrance in our memory of one of a series of days, at the end of a year."

Then, just as the man at the moment of death has a retrospective review of the whole life just lived, so too

the moment he is reborn on to earth, the *Ego*, awakening from the state of *Devachan*, has a prospective vision of the life which awaits him, and realizes all the causes that have led to it. He realizes them and sees futurity, because it is between *Devachan* and rebirth that the *Ego* regains his full *manasic* consciousness, and rebecomes for a short time the god he was, before, in compliance with Karmic law, he first descended into matter and incarnated in the first man of flesh. The "golden thread" sees all its "pearls" and misses not one of them.

Thus a cycle is completed, and, just as death is implicit in birth, so, too, rebirth is implicit in death, and man is once again reborn. His new incarnation will depend entirely on the quality of thoughts, emotions and desires generated in previous lives. As man moves from incarnation to incarnation, he can make each new birth either a heaven or a hell for the *Ego* within. He can involve himself deeper into matter, or raise himself higher and higher in Spirit. He need not wait for a new incarnation for this to happen, for at each minute, each hour, and each day, a new birth can take place, either in spirit or in matter.

On a larger scale, we see this constant change, as H.P.B. says, "in everything in this Universe from the globe down to the atom — without cessation." The seed must die to make way for the plant; old twigs and leaves drop off the tree to make way for new ones; universes come and go. When the time comes for a universe to die, it does not suddenly go out of existence, but "sends its energies into space and gives similar life or vibration to cosmic dust — matter" which results in the course of time in the birth of a new universe. Death in every case means life, because a new instrument is formed for the manifestation of life when the old form has ceased to be a fit vehicle, but at no time does life cease or is it extinct.

In each case the old but makes way for the new in a continuous chain. "The Present is the child of the Past; the Future, the begotten of the Present"; and all three are "the ever-living trinity in one." So far as man is concerned, his goal is to strive to make his dreams a daily reality, so that he has no cause for *Kama Loka* and no need for *Devachan*. "To live is to die, and to die is to live."

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## UNIVERSAL LOVE OR CHARITY

THAT GREAT THEOSOPHIST, Paul, the follower of the risen Christ, speaks to us, when we read his Epistles to his followers, just as much as he spoke to them in their time. Remembering what H.P.B. said, that he was an Initiate, let us take heed of his words as though he were addressing them to us in this century.

In his first Epistle to the Corinthians he wrote these well-known words:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

The dictionary meaning of the word charity is "universal love; the disposition to think favourably of others, and do them good." Does not this remind us of what is said in *The Theosophical Glossary* under "Kamadeva"? Just as we have, today, limited *Kama* to ordinary love, so we have thought of charity as mere "almsgiving." This is how Paul goes on to describe charity:

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up;

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth. . .

Keeping in mind that we are students of the same ancient wisdom which Paul reiterated, let us see how we can apply his words to ourselves. Let us try to realize, as a fact, that no matter what we say, no matter how eloquently we say it, no matter how much knowledge we possess, unless the foundation of our motive and our attitude is "to live to benefit mankind," all our knowledge and words are useless to ourselves and to those who hear us. In other words, though we may

be able to quote all that our philosophy teaches regarding life after death, reincarnation, karma, the ego, the Three Fundamentals, the Masters of Wisdom, etc., if we are puffed up, if our motive is to show off our knowledge to others and not primarily to help them, we are, as Paul puts it — “nothing.” It is the philosophy that matters, not our exposition of it. Jesus brought this out when he said to his disciples: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Let us pass on the Teachings, pure and untinged by our motive or preference.

Are we willing to suffer long and still be kindly disposed to others? Are we really unenvious? Are we willing to keep out of the limelight? If we are, then we will behave ourselves in a seemly manner; we will not all the time be thinking of our rights and demanding this and that; we will not be upset over real or imaginary wrongs. More than this, we will not think evil.

What does it mean, not to think evil? It does not mean that evil is not to be seen where it is; it means that we do not *think* evilly. No untoward act or speech comes without thought behind it. If we never think evil, we shall not do evil. But there is another side to this also; we must not impute evil to others.

What a great psychologist Paul was! He tells us that charity “rejoiceth not in iniquity.” Can any one of us truly state that we have not, at one time or another, rejoiced at finding that someone had done wrong? If this were not so, there would be no gossip; and many would have to admit that to gossip is one of their greatest joys in life — only they never think of it that way!

How do we view our family and companions, our nation and the world? Are we genuinely sad when they choose the path of iniquity? Do we choose for ourselves what line we shall follow according to our Teachings, or do we fight shy of mentioning what our Teachings say on any particular topic? Do we, indeed, often take sides with iniquity?

Does our belief in Karma make us *bear* all things, have *faith* in the Law, “hope still,” and be a firm rock in the midst of the storms that surround us?

“*Charity never faileth.*” What wonderful words these are! Though all else fails, charity remains because it is the foundation stone of the unchanging universe, the heart of Brahma, the compassion that wishes well to all. All else must pass from sight, blending into that one Unity whose Heart is Compassion Absolute.

There is that aspect of life which is permanent through all destruction, the silent, stable hub of the wheel of life. All things fade away in time; all disturbances cease; only harmony remains. The only changelessness that can exist within changes is that root of all which is in us — the all-embracing desire for the welfare of all beings.

The desire for Universal Good, Compassion Absolute, Charity, are all ONE.

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AS TO OUR FELLOW STUDENTS: we are apt to be mistaken in regard to their real attitude towards us. It is so often *our* attitude towards them that presents to us a false conception of theirs. That we all have defects is quite certain, and a defect of one kind is no better than a defect of another kind. We notice defects in others, or what appear as such, in much the same way as they may notice defects in us, and then on both sides there is judgment of one another on the basis of the *defects* perceived. This is the opposite of that respect for our fellow students which we ought to have, because they *are* such, and all are working for a common purpose. We will readily admit the common ground, but say at the same time that on no other basis would we be at all congenial; so it must be true that there rests misunderstanding of one another. What this may be has to be searched out by each one. There is something that causes it. Is it fear, doubt, ambition, jealousy — or what? These things we have to determine and act upon for ourselves, regardless of what any other may do, or what we may have thought of that other. All this will keep us so busy in watching ourselves that we will have no time nor inclination to take offence at others. And all the time we will be raising ourselves to a higher and better degree of discrimination and power to help in the best and most effectual way the very ones whom we may have placed in a pigeon-hole that we have specially constructed for them.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## “CHITTA VRITTI NIRODHA ”

### IV

See to it, brothers, that no one among you has the wicked, faithless heart of a deserter from the living God; but day by day, while the word “Today” still sounds in your ears, encourage one another, so that no one of you is made stubborn by the wiles of sin.

—*Hebrews*, III. 12-13

Not only by discipline of moral principles, nor only by resolutions and vows; not only by much study, nor even by attainment in meditation, or in seclusion and solitude, do I release myself from bondage unto Bliss. This is not attained by worldlings. O Bhikkhu, be not deceived in self-confidence as long as you have not reached the extinction of desire.

—*Dhammapada*, Verses 271-272

THE SHUNNING OF EVIL and the doing of good is excellent discipline. Yet is it a mere preparation and that too on one plane of existence only. It is not an end in itself, but a stepping-stone to startling realities. The door to those realities has to be found and the keys which unlock it, discovered. This is no small task, but even the little progress made thus far signifies that the approach to concentration has been undertaken, and in the right way. Ere the door can be opened with safety, it becomes necessary to understand what lies beyond.

Behind the outer forms of life, there is always an inner or a motivating force which guides the forms and which survives their destruction. The planet and the blade of grass, as also all forms that move and breathe and are subject to change — each is animated or rather “lit” by a mysterious something which no physical instrumentation can probe. To the scientist, Life itself has remained an enigma — a thing for conjecture because it cannot be grasped or tamed or understood, either by any machinery that the physical brain can devise, or by senses which, limited to the physical, are useless for realms which are above the physical. In order that he understands that part of himself to which he is yet a stranger, the man has to recognize and then develop those senses and organs which alone can afford his consciousness an egress on planes beyond the physical. Just as without the aid of the microscope the man has no eye for the denizens that crowd, for instance, in a drop of water, so too with regard to the astral and the spiritual senses. Unless these are brought consciously into action and used in the manner

for which they are best suited, the inner light appears to the man darkness. Without an arousal of these senses and organs, whole strata of human and divine consciousness are not available to the man and he has to remain content with such fragments of knowledge as are obtainable by the physical senses alone.

Each child when born has to force its lungs to breathe. By effort, however unconscious, is this achieved. This is its first hold on physical life, and does not come easy to it since it represents a radical change from conditions obtaining in the pre-natal stages. Yet the child does it through the force of habit formed through innumerable incarnations. Its next great effort is the co-ordination of the eyes and the brain. This also the child has to do by itself. No physician or parent can help the process. So, too, with the ears and with the other senses. Each has to be so trained and mastered that it will bring its messages of the outside world with as little distortion as possible. On the same analogy, the inner life and the inner senses have to take birth. While it is quite true that in the inner man are latent all the powers and peculiarities of the astral body, it is equally true that those powers are in the generality of persons still latent or only partially developed. To him who denies this inner realm, birth into it is as impossible as for the child who refuses to breathe. But, for him who intuitively senses that realm, everything is possible within the limits of his effort.

In the ordinary man, the inner being is inextricably mixed and mingled with the physical body — cell by cell, fibre by fibre. At the stage of development already reached, it becomes necessary that this inner man be carefully extricated from cell and fibre and from the surrounding pulp of bones, mucus, bile, skin and flesh. The process is neither easy nor quick, and careful training and experimentation must continue over long periods until the inner man coheres into something more than irresponsible and quivering jelly. This development and coherence follow upon perfecting the power of concentration, which is really the control and eradication of the *vruttis*. Thus, whereas in the average man there is no demarcation between, say, the inner and the outer ear, in the man of concentration the inner ear begins to awake and to separate itself from its bodily counterpart. Concentration has thus the power to arouse each inner organ, and the man begins to duplicate his powers. His bodily organs are not injured but remain for use on the plane to which they belong. The new organs which he is in the process of acquiring he will be able to use, apart from the ordi-

nary physical ones, on the plane of nature which is peculiarly theirs.

If concentration can give birth to and awaken the inner organs, these same organs can be destroyed or their utility seriously impaired by actions done on the physical plane. Therefore, during this stage which is so dependent on the acts and the thoughts of the physically matured man, several changes, reactions and interactions have to be carefully observed. In the initial stages, this newly forming ethereal body begins by having a cloudy wavering appearance. It begins to have certain centres of energy which are produced by the dawning emergence of organs which correspond to the brain, heart, lungs, spleen, liver, etc. As concentration deepens, this new body and its organs begin to have coherence. The man is as it were creating himself limb for limb, organ for organ. And just as the infant has to learn how to use the organs and the senses, so too this ethereal infant born in the world of light has to familiarize itself in the use of the ethereal senses; must, in fact, use and exercise them constantly lest they become powerless through disuse. In fact, as a child of the world must creep before it can walk, and must learn to walk before it can run, so this ethereal child must do the same.

When the man has familiarized himself with the conditions obtaining in this tenuous state of matter, when breathing and action in the new atmosphere have become automatic, or rather intuitive, then will he understand why the kingdom of heaven has to be taken by storm. For, this inner realm has its own laws; and ethics, or the lack of them, become immediately perceptible by signs which appear on the ethereal body. Here, there can be no pretence, no camouflage of feelings. Beauty or ugliness here is a portrayal of the true man, and he thus shifts his psychic health up or down, high or low. It is when this process of the inner growth is going on that the man will discover for himself proofs of the compelling necessity to observe virtue and practise brotherhood. Anger, envy and vanity, to take only three, react on the ethereal body like poison on flesh and cause a psychic ill-health which may result in death or a long convalescence during which no great progress can be achieved.

Anger, for instance, has the effect of pulling the ethereal body apart. It may even act like an explosive and shatter it, in which case either death may result or that which was so laboriously extracted from flesh and fibre is made to fly back to it and the whole process of extrication has to be started *de novo*. It matters not whether the anger was justi-

fied or "righteous." It is an explosive, and the effect of the explosion is the same, even though it may have been caused by ignorance or pressure of events. Calmness ever present and an all-abiding love are the only protection.

Envy has yet another type of effect on the inner body. The green-eyed monster that doth mock the flesh it feeds upon produces in the inner body a very disagreeable colour that is the precursor of putrefaction. This is followed by the dissolution of the inner body, and this process leaves its scars on the outer man.

Vanity, on the other hand, produces a different kind of reaction. It has the tendency to conjure up all sorts of erroneous and evil pictures before the mind's eye, and has the effect of so distorting judgment that anger or again envy is aroused, and thereafter destruction of the ethereal body becomes inevitable. The remedy for vanity is, of course, selflessness and the poverty of heart that both Jesus and the Buddha preached. One of the forms of vanity is the parading of one's achievements in concentration, or the claiming of occult powers. This vain show of superiority in virtue, acquisitions or knowledge brings on the inner delusion with its drastic results.

It has to be understood that these corroding vices are the more dangerous because they attract to the student's vicinity thousands of malevolent beings of all classes. These break through the student's protective shield and precipitate themselves upon him, arousing in him every evil passion to which his particular nature makes him susceptible.

It will thus be seen how dangerous it is to go in for concentration or meditation, or to enter into the Silence without long and often tedious preparation. When a man is steeped in the clinging attachments of the outside world and is not willing to abandon those attachments and the fruits garnered from them — when money, pleasure, fame, sex and the thousand other attachments which stupefy the soul have still their lure for him, how can he be expected to succeed? When teachers ask for or accept money for instructions, how can they be expected to teach the divine Sapienza?

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## IMMORTALITY IS ONE'S UNBROKEN CONSCIOUSNESS

MASTER, I do not understand this. What "breaks" the consciousness? What *is* consciousness, in fact? Why should immortality be concerned with *unbroken* consciousness? Why cannot my consciousness be broken and yet I be immortal?

Friend, what imparts immortality to man? *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 110) tells us that "Atman . . . alone is able to impart to the inner man, or the reincarnating Ego, its immortality." Is this immortality imparted only for this Maha-Manvantara or for all time? Try to understand this.

But, Master, all things are immortal, imperishable, in their ultimate essence. What does it matter if my awareness of life is broken at times so long as one aspect of what I call "myself" is immortal?

Friend, you have forgotten, or have not properly noted, the very important statement in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 53-54):

Paranishpanna, remember, is the *summum bonum*, the Absolute, hence the same as Paranirvana. . . . But there is a great difference between *conscious* and *unconscious* "being." The condition of Paranishpanna, without Paramartha, the Self-analysing consciousness . . . is no bliss, but simply extinction (for Seven Eternities).

Look again, also, at the Third Fundamental (*S.D.*, I. 17) and note what is said: ". . . no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle — or the OVER-SOUL" — has reached the condition of "the holiest archangel (Dhyani Buddha)." We are told of the several vehicles in which "consciousness is individualized and attains to self — or reflective — consciousness."

"Self-analysing" and "reflective" consciousness are terms which need to be thought about. We reflect the whole; the whole is reflected in and through us; we know we *are* for we can analyse ourselves and know ourselves as that reflective whole.

What is there in any earth life that is retained throughout the whole period of the cycle of incarnation? Is it not what that earth life has garnered by way of experiences of the soul nature, experiences which can be impressed on Buddhi? Recall what is said in *The Key to Theos-*

*ophy* (p. 157): "... if it can be said of Buddhi-Manas that it is unconditionally immortal, the same cannot be said of the lower Manas. . . . In its turn, Buddhi would remain only an impersonal spirit without this element which it borrows from the human soul. . . . Buddhi-Manas is the revelation of the divine *plus* human intellect and self-consciousness." Buddhi has to become an "active" principle, so to say. Manas, "the conscious principle of the Monad," makes for self-awareness of all that is inherent in Atma-Buddhi. It reflects the whole; it sees the whole. The whole — the matter aspect and the Universal Mind aspect focused in the subtle matter of Buddhi, the first covering of Atma — is made "alive," active, through this functioning of Manas. Manas can bring the ideas in the Divine Mind to objectivity and in time become the wielder of the great Cosmic Laws. To do this, it must have some kind of a vehicle, however fine. It must retain an "idea" of its own individuality or it will be submerged in the whole and lose its *conscious* identity. Therefore we are told that there is "a great difference between *conscious* and *unconscious* 'being' " (*S.D.*, I. 53). There must be the "Self-analysing consciousness" if immortality is to be realized. If not, there is extinction, and no bliss. That is, extinction for a time, for all will re-enter the new Manifestation after Pralaya.

Note what H.P.B. goes on to say (*S.D.*, I. 54): "... it is only. . . an assimilation of the merit of manifold existences devoted to being in its collectivity (the whole living and sentient Universe)" that enables one to achieve this real conscious immortality. Thus we see the importance of the above-cited words from *The Key to Theosophy*. If we do not begin to gain some knowledge of, and attain to union with, the whole of manifestation while living, we cannot become part of the Whole in *Pralaya*, consciously. As we, today, are not conscious of the suffering of all creatures, how can we expect to be conscious of the essence of all in *Pralaya*, when everything goes into obscuration? Have we begun to see or even tried to see what Non-Ego, Voidness and Darkness imply? To realize that these are "Three in One and alone Self-existent and perfect," we cannot dissociate ourselves or anything else from the rest of creation or non-creation, as *Transactions* says. Therefore we must here and now get ourselves accustomed to the kind of thoughts which will enable us to be in a state of conscious immortality during *Pralaya* and at the end of our struggles here. The *Glossary* defines *Nirvana* as "the highest state of spiritual bliss . . . absolute immortality through absorption of the soul (*spirit* rather) into itself, but *preserving individuality*

so that, *e.g.*, Buddhas, after entering Nirvana, may reappear on earth — *i.e.*, in the future Manvantara.”

In *Transactions* (p. 148), speaking of the “Day after Mahamanvantara,” or the “Day-Be-With-Us,” we are told: “Then everything becomes one, all individualities are merged into one, yet each knowing itself, a mysterious teaching indeed. But then, that which to us now is non-consciousness or the unconscious, will then be absolute consciousness.” And on page 138 we read: “Everything, from spirit to the tiniest particle, is part of the whole, at best a link. . . . There is a series of vehicles becoming more and more gross, from spirit to the densest matter, so that with each step downward and outward we get more and more the sense of separateness developed in us. Yet this is illusory. . . .” Let us try to think of ourselves as an integral part of the Whole.

Master, this seems a grand new idea to me. We do not hear much about it, though we hear so much of other Theosophical teachings, such as those of reincarnation, Karma, life after death, etc.

Yes, my Friend, we fall short in our Theosophical life because we do not remember that “to live to benefit mankind is the *first* step.” And benefiting mankind does not merely mean teaching others how to improve themselves, or how to learn all about Theosophy and Masters. To how many of us does a Master mean a sublimated God who will help us, who loves us, and whose favourite disciples we dream of becoming? This kind of “glamour” might make us spend thousands of years in *Devachan*, in enjoyment of our high dreams, whereas study of the other aspect of our teachings outlined above will enable us in time to forgo *Devachan* and use the precious time on earth, doing Masters’ work for humanity. We must *feel* ourselves a part of humanity’s trials and woes, as also try to become one with, part of, Spirit. Let us beware of this kind of emotional aspiration which stops us using our *minds*. And let us remember that our minds must be constantly purified by *work* in terms of what is learnt, for otherwise they do, in truth, become rusty!

Master, could you explain further what it means to become part of humanity, as also of Spirit?

Friend, broaden, instead of narrowing, your sympathies. Are you grateful to all Nature? Are you grateful to the road-sweeper, to the road-maker, to the shopkeeper, to your servant, to your leaders? Are you grateful to the trees, to the plants, to the animals, all of whom

help you? Are you grateful to the earth, to the water, to the sun, to the clouds? Do you do what you can to help all creatures? Do you give thanks to the inner essence of all when you eat the products of Mother Earth? Do you feel grateful to any and every one who helps you in the slightest way? Or is your life centred round your own personality and your own benefit and aggrandizement? Do you feel yourself an important person, or a tiny cog in the universal wheel of life? Do you see God in a grain of sand and in the sunset? If not, then begin the task of trying to sense the oneness throughout the whole universe, the oneness of essence, which gives rise to the one consciousness in all separated beings, so that when everything enters the state of *Pralaya* you can remain consciously one with the Whole.

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THE BLACKNESS cannot be removed from charcoal by a hundred washings.

Is a lamp pleasing to the blind, a song to the deaf, or science to the fool?

With fire, fire is kindled.

Too great exaltation is the cause of a downfall.

More is the fruit of much.

After happiness, sorrow; after sorrow, happiness; happiness and sorrow revolve like a disk.

Where there is friendship, the friend is never far off.

A fool is honoured in his own house; a proprietor is honoured in his own village; a king is honoured in his own country; a learned man is honoured everywhere.

Having crossed yourself, get others across.

Dismay, the obstacle to all enterprises, is by all means to be eschewed; therefore, having discarded dismay, success in what is to be accomplished is attained.

—SANSKRIT PROVERBS

# THE PILGRIMAGE OF ANIMA

## VII

ANIMA'S DEVOTION to the Wise One bore her on unflaggingly for a period of time beyond her estimation, and it was no lessening of it but pure weariness which ultimately brought her to a halt. She was now close to a range of mountains, which looked high and difficult, though the Path undoubtedly led over them; so to strengthen herself she sat down and read her book, finding a delightful passage which, though not explicitly saying so, evidently described the approach to the realm of Sat — or so, at least, Anima chose to imagine.

*“The road that leads therethrough is straight and smooth and green. 'Tis like a sunny glade in the dark forest depths, a spot on earth mirrored from Amitabha's paradise. There, nightingales of hope and birds of radiant plumage sing perched in green bowers, chanting success to fearless Pilgrims.”*

So fair was this prospect that Anima fell a-dreaming. It was pleasant to sit there in the fresh mountain air and picture the joys that awaited her. Yet, even though they did, she felt strongly disinclined to go on. An agreeable languor crept over her, marred only occasionally by a passing thought — or was it fear? — that though so much of her journey had been accomplished, there might remain far more to come.

“Greetings, Anima!” called a fresh youthful voice — no, two voices, actually, for when Anima looked up, she saw what appeared to be twin sisters regarding her with interest. One had an eager, determined young face; the other was graver, with a thoughtful expression. Both had bright, earnest eyes. “Greetings!” said Anima, rising, after which she surveyed the two expectantly, for she had come to regard all new-comers as potential teachers of the wisdom which was part of her quest.

The graver maiden smiled understandingly. “You wonder, Anima, who we are. I trust our interruption of your thoughts did not startle you. I am Patience, and this is my twin sister. Her name is Perseverance.”

Perseverance chimed in merrily, “And we are definitely no philosophers, either of us. We have only come to talk with you, and, if need be, help you on your way with some practical advice.”

“I shall be glad of any that you are kind enough to give me,” replied Anima. “I am ever in need of it, despite the many wise teachers who have aided me already.”

“Ah, you mean Discrimination, Renunciation, and the others,” said Patience, nodding. “We, I fear, are not like them. We have no gift for deep discourse. We do what we can by repeating certain sage precepts, which, very possibly, you have read for yourself. Admittedly, a humble form of service, but if we cannot originate profound doctrine, dear Anima, we can always pass on such lessons as we ourselves may have learnt. All helps to keep the Wheel of the Good Law turning.”

“Like a mill-wheel you must have passed on your journey,” said Perseverance. “I expect you watched it threshing out the chaff from the grain — a sight that always fascinates me. ‘*Learn above all,*’ it seems to say to us, ‘*to separate Head-learning from Soul-wisdom.*’ I am sure that you, Anima, know the distinction between the two, and how the name of the latter, the Heart Doctrine, is ‘Great Sifter,’ since, like the mill-wheel, it separates grain from chaff, the true and lasting from the illusory and impermanent.”

Anima smiled at the bright young face. “You may call yourself no philosopher, if you will, but it seems to me that you *are* one, none the less, dear Perseverance, for those are wise words,” she said appreciatively.

“But, as we told you, not our own,” put in Patience, smiling likewise. “We are of those who, having learned in all humility, can only confess, ‘*Thus have I heard.*’ ”

“That, if I may venture to make the claim, is my own way,” said Anima, “and usually my mind is well occupied. But when you came upon me just now, I was, admittedly, dreaming, seeing bright visions of my journey’s far end.”

“Which,” said Perseverance, “is indeed permissible, from time to time, by way of encouragement; but actual progress, my sister, requires constant effort, renewed day by day. It is written, ‘*The more thou dost advance, the more thy feet pitfalls will meet,*’ but also that ‘*the more one dares, the more he shall obtain.*’ Already the worth of right action has been taught you — we know you have had this lesson — so practise it, both inwardly and outwardly. Do not yield to idle dreaming of ultimate attainment, dear Anima, but try to master ‘*all the mental changes in thy Self*’ and to slay ‘*the army of the thought sensations that, subtle and insidious, creep unasked within the Soul’s bright shrine.*’ Try also, on the outer plane, ‘*to be prepared to answer Dharma*’ satisfactorily when these questions shall be put to you: ‘*Hast thou attuned thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind? Hast thou attuned thy being to Humanity’s great pain, O candidate for light?*’ ”

“And do not despair,” said Patience, “if progress seems to be slow. *‘Hope still. For if the “Secret Path” is unattainable this “day”’* — meaning, Anima, in this birth — *‘it is within thy reach “tomorrow.”’* Only *‘follow the wheel of duty,’* as your little book of wisdom and your teachers have shown it you. Then *‘be of good cheer and rest content with fate.’*”

Anima listened attentively as the sisters quoted these various precepts, and waited eagerly for more, but it seemed that they had both said their say and were preparing to leave her. Perseverance adjusted her sandals and Patience drew a fold of her mantle over her head. The former, however, suddenly asked to see Anima’s lamp and, taking it in her hand, examined it carefully. As she restored it, she said approvingly: “*‘The Lamp burns bright when wick and oil are clean.’*”

“We will accompany you to yonder turning,” said Patience kindly, “before we bid you farewell. I would add only one word, dear Anima — never give way to despondency. Remember that *‘each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time. The holy germs that sprout and grow unseen in the disciple’s soul, their stalks wax strong at each new trial, they bend like reeds but never break, nor can they e’er be lost. But when the hour has struck they blossom forth.’*”

This, too, Anima received gratefully, and at the turning of the road the three parted. “*‘Have patience,’*” said the graver sister, “*‘as one who fears no failure, courts no success.’*” “*‘Have perseverance,’*” said the other, “*‘as one who doth for evermore endure.’*” It had been a comparatively short encounter, but Anima felt that she had learnt much from it and rejoiced to have met the twin sisters.

From this point the Path grew steeper and began to wind among rocky clefts, which she eyed doubtfully, wondering what might lurk there, though ashamed of such fancies. Yet that they were not baseless was proved presently when she came, of a sudden, upon a tragic sight — a warrior lying dead, his sword still in his hand and the signs of battle all around him.

Anima was shocked and full of pity, but, subduing these emotions, she bent over him, seeking for some spark of life that she could fan and preparing to dress his wounds. Alas, his mortal day was over. She could only pass on sorrowfully. Eventually she found a small way-side hut and was able to take shelter there, and even to bar the door. Here she spent the night safely, devoting some hours of it to reading and meditation, comforted throughout by the light of her lamp. But

she could not forget the warrior. The sight had moved her deeply, for his death seemed cruel and untimely; moreover, it had been brought about by violence, and so was a reminder of human frailty and of the fact that a man may be assailed, in some unguarded moment, by evil forces, even while his feet are upon the Path that leads to the realm of Sat, the True.

Yet even here her little book did not fail her; indeed the tragedy was actually made a source of more strength to her when, in the course of her lonely night-watch, she found a passage that gave the answer to her troubled inward questioning. It spoke of the "*warrior volunteering fight in the fierce strife between the living and the dead*" — that is to say, between the immortal Higher Ego and the lower personal Ego — and ended with this assurance: "*If he falls, e'en then he does not fall in vain; the enemies he slew in the last battle will not return to life in the next birth that will be his.*"

(*To be concluded*)

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AS LEON BLOY has well said, "Souffrir passe, avoir souffert ne passe jamais." ["Suffering disappears, but the fact of having suffered remains always with us."] . . . Victory may indeed be achieved over what has been experienced, and yet that experience is still in our possession as a permanent enhancement and extension of the reality of our spiritual life. What has once been lived through cannot possibly be effaced. That which has been continues to exist in a transfigured form. Man is by no means a completely finished product. Rather he moulds and creates himself in and through his experience of life, through spiritual conflict, and through those various trials which his destiny imposes upon him. Man is only what God is planning, a projected design.

—BERDYAEV

## WHY RACES DIE OUT

[This article by W. Q. Judge was first printed in *The Path*, Vol. VI, pp. 211-12, for October 1891, and was reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for April 1933.—EDS.]

IN OUR OWN TIME we have instances of the disappearance of races, and very often it is attributed to the influence of civilized vices. The Hottentots have entirely gone, and the decimation of the Hawaiian Islanders is about complete. Similarly the Red Indians of the Continents of North and South America have been surely, if slowly, passing away, so that now there is only a remnant of them left, and soon after the Spanish conquest the great masses of the aboriginal inhabitants had faded away.

The Hottentots had reached almost the acme of decline when we knew them, but the Aztecs, Toltecs, and other South Americans had not reached such a pitch when they encountered the Spanish. The Red Indians had gone down between the two, while the Hawaiians were still below the Indians. It has always seemed to me that the claim that these races were destroyed by taking up our vices is not well founded. The decrease of population in the Hawaiian Islands cannot be justly attributed to rum and social evils taken over from us, although a great deal of injury no doubt arose from those abuses. About the Hottentots we may feel pretty sure, because their degradation was almost complete when they were discovered, and the Mexicans and South American people had no time to adopt Spanish vices.

The theory outlined by H. P. Blavatsky is that when the Egos inhabiting any race have reached the limit of experience possible in it, they begin to desert that race environment and seek for another, which, in the sure processes of nature's evolution, is certain to be in existence elsewhere on the globe. The Egos then having left the old families, the latter begin to die out through sterility attacking the females, so that fewer and fewer bodies are made for inhabitancy. This goes on from century to century *pari passu* with mental decay. And this mental deterioration arises from the fact that the small stock of what we might call the retarded Egos who come in during the process have not had the experience and training in that particular environment which had been gone through by those who have deserted to another race, and hence — on the theosophical theory that brain is not the producer of mind — the whole *personnel* of the old race rushes down in the scale, sooner or later presenting the sad spectacle of a dying race. Final extinction is

the result when the process has gone far enough.

At the time when the first steps toward old age and decrepitude are taken by such a race, the eternal cyclic laws that always bring about a universal correspondence between the affairs of man and the operations of cosmos cause cataclysms to happen, and even in the seeming height of a nation's power great numbers of bodies are destroyed. Some indications of this may be seen in our own day in the great destruction of human life that has begun to overtake the older portions of the Chinese nation. These are finger-posts that declare the beginning of the exodus of the Egos who have had such a long experience in that race environment that they have begun to emigrate elsewhere because their experience has wrought in their character changes which unfit them for dealing with the old bodies, and those are left for the starting of other less progressed men. After the lapse of more years the natural cataclysms will increase in violence and extent, engulfing more and more millions of bodies and preparing for other cycles.

We may suppose that the Red Indian's predecessors went through similar experiences, for there are in the Americas evidences of great convulsions such as upheavals from below and overflowing by water that deposited great masses of mud. In one of the States there was lately found good evidence that animals had been thus buried for ages. The men, having reason to guide them, removed themselves to other parts to carry out the sad decrees of Karma which had ordered their demise. And under the suggestion made above, the egos untried in that environment only occupied the racial body for the sake of the experience which might be gained during the time that is left. Now our civilization with weapons and other means is completing the work, as it on its part fulfils the law by creating on the old soil a new race in which the experience gained by the mind in prior cycles of existence may show itself forth.

This process is almost exactly that which happens in families. Reincarnating egos continue in families that suit their mental progress just so long as is needed; and if no more egos are in the cycle of rebirth exactly fitted to the physical, psychical, and mental state of the family, it begins to die out. And it even exhibits often in its own small way the phenomena of natural cataclysm, for we know that sudden ruin and quick extinction often carry off an entire family.

Hence I conclude that, like families, Races disappear when they are of no further use in the gaining of experience by the great pilgrim soul.

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## SPEAK—

to the awakening Spirit of Humanity, to the human Spirit, and the Spirit in Man, these three in One and the One in All.—H.P.B.

[This article is reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XI, pp. 145-48, for August 1941.—Eds.]

THREE POWERS were contending for the supremacy of the mental world during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Occident, in the vanguard of "civilization," felt the effects of the war most and first. The cycle of Asia in general and of India in particular had not yet finished, and its downward course was continuing in the sixties of that century.

The three contending powers were, first, organized religion, firmly entrenched when the second, modern science, was born; the latter had developed as an enemy to religion and was giving battle to the former; the bible of the then modern science, *viz.*, *The Origin of Species*, had already disarrayed the ranks of the orthodox, and the fight between the ape and the angel was going in favour of the beast. The third movement was slowly rising and, in 1872-73, attracted considerable attention; it was named Spiritualism. Its votaries claimed that the "spirits of the dead" had returned to commune with mortals living on earth. This, in their opinion, showed how the materialism of science was proven false and how it aided the spread of beliefs which the organized churches preached—the existence of the Soul in man, its survival of bodily death and the nearness of another world, that of an eternal and heavenly summerland.

On to the field of war came a peacemaker—Theosophy. H. P. Blavatsky, using her deep knowledge and extraordinary powers, showed to the contending hosts that there was truth and falsehood in each party: that Christianity was not Churchianity and that the salaried priests were not the expounders of Christ-Wisdom; that man was not descended from the beast, though there was in each man his animal nature, and that the universe was not a chaos, not a fortuitous concurrence of atoms; finally, that the entities which appeared at *séances* were spooks and not spirits, were ghosts and not souls, and that invoking and contacting them was highly dangerous.

Theosophy the peacemaker could have reconciled the differences between the warring sects, if the latter had been intelligent enough

to be humble and eager to learn the truth. With amazing coxsureness, however, neither would listen, and all fell upon what appeared to them a common foe. Fighting between themselves, neither of them took the hand of fellowship extended by H.P.B.; on the contrary, each declared open war on Theosophy. When in 1877 *Isis Unveiled* was published, votaries of each group did not discern the help it gave to each, smarting under the exposure it made of the foibles and the falsehoods of each. Their eyes riveted on the weeds pulled out by H.P.B., they would not look at the soil prepared and the seeds she offered ready for sowing.

Here in India, religious orthodoxy had received a blow from the Brahma Samaj, and in the decade of which we are writing, the Arya Samaj was dealing another. Then, recently established universities were turning out graduates so "educated" that they verily believed their forefathers fools; these, having loosened the hold of their sacred thread of old, were tightening the Western necktie newly bought in British shops. No doubt religious superstitions and religious chicanery thrived then as now, but behind the scenes real chelas and their Gurus, and pure practitioners of Raja Yoga, were labouring, serving the cause of the true spiritual science or Theosophy. These were a mere handful and the torch of Truth they were carrying burnt very low and might well have been extinguished in the public world but for the arrival of H. P. Blavatsky. In 1879 H.P.B. landed in Bombay with the double object of awakening the slumbering spirituality of India, and, through that awakening, pointing to the Wisdom which would benefit the Occident — religiously, scientifically and psychically. Her work was progressing well when church missionaries, perceiving real danger to their trade, employed nefarious means to try to check the march of Theosophy — the friend of ancient Indian culture, of real patriotism, and the home of pure Occultism.

The work of the Theosophical Movement begun in the last quarter of the last century, retarded now here, now there, has been unfolding in recent years; and though the catastrophe of today may dishearten some among us, signs are not wanting that the Power of the Wisdom-Religion will be the healer of large numbers in both hemispheres. The genuine students of Theosophy are not many — though their number is by no means negligible — and the devoted servants of the Cause are a handful; but there is the philosophy, and its power is so grand that even a few promulgators who practise it in every vocation and in every sphere of life can, if they persevere, succeed in changing the mind

of the race. In fact, at no time since 1877 when *Isis Unveiled* was published has the number of practising promulgators been large; only a few gave themselves in loving labour, keeping alive the fire kindled by H.P.B. And so in the present a few who have *given* themselves, body, mind and soul, will succeed in not only keeping the fire alive, but, following the example of their predecessors, seeing to it that as large a number of people as possible benefit from their unselfish efforts.

Strange as it may seem at first sight, one simple but grand, self-evident but neglected truth is what our humanity needs as that of 1877 needed it. Many are the ramifications of that truth, especially when it is applied; understanding its numerous implications requires time, but the basic idea is as simple as it is self-evident. What is that truth? That the Real is within. That to seek for the Real in the without is to go astray. The Real in man, the Real in humanity, the Real in the universe is the spiritual which is invisible and intangible, but all the same is living and vital.

In inaugurating the Theosophical Movement, the aim of H.P.B., like the aim of every Great Instructor down the ages, was to show to men that their salvation and enlightenment did not depend on agencies outside of themselves. Was not the civilization to which H.P.B. came shot through and through with the falsehood of the without and the neglect of the Within? Christ was sought in the churches, Krishna was worshipped in the temples — instead of in the heart of man. Science was busy with tubes and retorts, with microscopes and telescopes, with lancets and balances, seeking ultimate truth in flesh and in matter. The Spiritualism or spookism of 1877 was sinning as did the *bhut-* or ghost-worshippers of old, looking for the glory of Spirit in the without, instead of in the within; disembodied spooks were valued as superior to embodied spirits.

As a result of H.P.B.'s mission there are today more worshippers of the Christ-Krishna residing in the human heart. As she predicted, modern science did receive a blow that killed the materialism which pronounced as true that all is matter, that an atom of carbon is an atom of carbon from the dawn of time to the night of doom. Again, the Psychological Researcher has been in a measure successful in negating the claims of the Spiritist on the one hand and the denial of the Scientists on the other. Demos has grown in size and strength; today more men and women seek for truth and stand up for liberty of conscience, of speech and of act. All the same the knowledge of Theosophy is sorely needed by

our humanity, and the basic principle — look within, seek within, pray within — has to be preached and promulgated in 1941 as in 1879, when H.P.B. began her work in her beloved India, or in 1875, when she started her Movement in the United States of America.

In the sphere of religion we need to preach that—

There never was, nor can there be more than one universal religion; for there can be but one truth concerning God. Like an immense chain whose upper end, the alpha, remains invisibly emanating from a Deity — in *statu abscondito* with every primitive theology — it encircles our globe in every direction; it leaves not even the darkest corner unvisited, before the other end, the omega, turns back on its way to be again received where it first emanated. On this divine chain was strung the exoteric symbology of every people. Their variety of form is powerless to affect their substance, and under their diverse ideal types of the universe of matter, symbolizing its vivifying principles, the uncorrupted immaterial image of the spirit of being guiding them is the same. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 560)

*The religion of the ancients is the religion of the future. A few centuries more, and there will linger no sectarian beliefs in either of the great religions of humanity. Brahmanism and Buddhism, Christianity and Mahometanism will all disappear before the mighty rush of facts. (Isis Unveiled, I. 613)*

The world needs no sectarian church, whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin, or any other. There being but ONE Truth, man requires but one church — the Temple of God within us, walled in by matter but penetrable by anyone who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God. (Isis, II. 635)*

In the sphere of Science we need to remember and to teach that—

There can be no possible conflict between the teachings of occult and so-called exact Science, where the conclusions of the latter are grounded on a substratum of unassailable fact. It is only when its more ardent exponents, over-stepping the limits of observed phenomena in order to penetrate into the arcana of Being, attempt to wrench the formation of Kosmos and its *living Forces* from Spirit, and attribute all to blind matter, that the Occultists claim the right to dispute and call in question their theories. Science cannot, owing to the very nature of things, unveil the mystery of the universe around us. Science can, it is true, collect, classify, and generalize upon phenomena; but the occultist, arguing from admitted metaphysical data, declares that the

daring explorer, who would probe the inmost secrets of Nature, must transcend the narrow limitations of sense, and transfer his consciousness into the region of noumena and the sphere of primal causes. To effect this, he must develop faculties which are absolutely dormant — save in a few rare and exceptional cases — in the constitution of the off-shoots of our present Fifth Root-race in Europe and America. He can in no other conceivable manner collect the facts on which to base his speculations.

Materialism and scepticism are evils that must remain in the world as long as man has not quitted his present gross form to don the one he had during the first and second races of this Round. Unless scepticism and our present natural ignorance are equilibrated by intuition and a natural spirituality, every being afflicted with such feelings will see in himself no better than a bundle of flesh, bones, and muscles, with an empty garret inside him which serves the purpose of storing his sensations and feelings. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 477-78; 480)

*The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter. (The Secret Doctrine, II. 149)*

We must bravely face Science and declare... that the true Occultist believes in "Lords of Light"; that he believes in a Sun which... is, like milliards of other Suns, the dwelling or the vehicle of a god, and a host of gods. (*S.D.*, I. 479)

**In the sphere of psychism and the occult arts we must preach and demonstrate that—**

It is only when the power of the passions is dead altogether, and when they have been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will; when not only all the lusts and longings of the flesh are dead, but also the recognition of the personal Self is killed out and the "astral" has been reduced in consequence to a cipher, that the Union with the "Higher Self" can take place. Then when the "Astral" reflects only the conquered man, the still living but no more the longing, selfish personality, then the brilliant *Augæides*, the divine SELF, can vibrate in conscious harmony with both the poles of the human Entity — the man of matter purified, and the ever pure Spiritual Soul — and stand in the presence of the MASTER SELF, the Christos of the mystic Gnostic, blended, merged into, and one with IT for ever. (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, pp. 34-5)

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Ronald Sampson, in his comparative study of Tolstoy and Gandhi (*Peace News*, August 2), stresses the basic motivation of these two great men:

Both Tolstoy and Gandhi were profoundly religious men. They believed, that is to say, that life is given to men ultimately for the perfection of the soul. For both men the essential key to the welfare of the soul, in its quest for Truth and its struggle to draw nearer to God, is to be found in the struggle to be free from the demands of the imprisoning flesh. Since most of us find the meaning of our lives in the advancement of what we believe to be our earthly welfare, we are deeply attached to our bodies, whose appetites we seek to satisfy. This is the root source of our desire for wealth and security, and the reason why we are so prone to fear when these satisfactions are threatened. To the extent that a man is not wedded to his earthly body, finding the meaning of his life in the struggle for self-perfection, he is apt to strike most of us as strangely quixotic, ascetic, indifferent to the comfort or security of his body, fearless. I lay particular emphasis on this because both Tolstoy and Gandhi were enormously influential individuals at the purely political level of experience, and are widely and deeply respected on this account even in a culture as profoundly alien to religion as our own.

There is accordingly a widespread disposition to respect the achievement while rejecting that from which it sprang. Just as conservative-minded people try to separate Tolstoy the novelist from Tolstoy the prophet or thinker, and in so doing fail to understand either, in the same way radicals often acclaim Tolstoy or Gandhi in their political roles while rejecting their religious base. But this is not reasonable. Tolstoy and Gandhi were what they were, and achieved what they did achieve, because of their religious convictions — out of which arose their political stance and influence. The rigid committal to non-violence or reverence for life as an axiom, the deliberate acceptance of all the frightening consequences and risks necessarily entailed, derived directly from their religious beliefs, and for both of them would have been bereft of meaning on any other basis.

Gandhi once wrote: "Most religious men I have met are politicians in disguise; I, however, who wear the guise of a politician, am at heart a religious man." But what did he mean by "a religious man"?

Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself.

As for the religion of Tolstoy, H.P.B. wrote:

Count Leo N. Tolstoy does not believe in the Bible, the Church or the divinity of Christ; and yet no Christian surpasses him in the practical bearing out of the principles alleged to have been preached on the Mount. And these principles are those of Theosophy; not because they were uttered by the Christian Christ, but because they are universal ethics, and were preached by Buddha and Confucius, Krishna, and all the great Sages thousands of years before the Sermon on the Mount was written.

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“Pictures began to dance on the wall. Light bulbs exploded. The phone rang although no one was on the line.” This, according to a recent report in the *New York Post*, was the situation in Sigmund Adam's law offices in Rosenheim, Germany, which Dr. Hans Bender, the University of Freiburg psychology professor, was asked to investigate. Noting reports that “sparks would fly” every time a certain girl went near anything electrical, Dr. Bender discovered that the girl, 19-year-old apprentice Annemarie Schneider, had considerable psychokinetic powers. Voltage-measuring instruments recorded for weeks extreme deflections which proved to have nothing to do with the electrical current. These are believed to be purely psychokinetic effects. (*Newsletter of the Parapsychology Foundation*, New York, January-February 1968)

While the popular press seized on the spectacular aspects of the case, Dr. Bender realized its important implications for parapsychological study. Miss Schneider is now being tested at the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene in Freiburg. Since her departure, no further incidents have been reported at the office in Rosenheim.

Madame Blavatsky has described “the occasional abnormal magnetic surcharge of human beings,” and she refers to “a *blind* though living force; one subjected to an intransgressible law of attraction and repul-

sion — in its causes and *effects* — a law which exact science has yet to discover; for it is one of innumerable correlations due to magnetic conditions which are supplied only when both animal and terrestrial magnetism are present.” (See “Nature’s Human Magnets” and “Stone-Showers”: *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, pp. 154–56 and 132–33; THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, June 1940 and January 1939, respectively.)

A rich field of scientific research awaits the open-minded seeker for an “intimate practical knowledge of magnetism and electricity, their qualities, correlations, and potencies,” and especially “their effects in and upon the animal kingdom and man.” Such knowledge constitutes today, as it always has constituted, the cornerstone of Magic, which is poles apart from “miracle.” How soon will researchers into abnormal happenings deem it worth their while to follow the priceless leads offered in Madame Blavatsky’s reformulation of the Ancient Wisdom for our century?

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A “Disaster Early Warning System” to collect and analyse pre-recorded premonitions was recently established by the London *Evening Standard*. This is partly a result of the many prophetic dreams and premonitions reported concerning the disaster at Aberfan, a Welsh village. The tragic event occurred last October when an avalanche of slag rolled down the mountainside, killing 116 children and 28 adults. Dr. J. C. Barker of Shropshire, England, who investigated the accident, found 22 well-documented cases of dream warnings which had been reported before the disaster. (*Newsletter of the Parapsychology Foundation*, March-April 1968)

The single most striking case was that of a 10-year-old girl who dreamed on the previous night that she had been buried under a suffocating black blanket along with two of her friends. She reported the dream to her parents at breakfast time, and then went reluctantly off to school. When the bodies were retrieved from beneath the black slag that day, the child was found dead between the bodies of her two best friends.

In the past, other disasters have also been preceded by a large number of precognitive experiences. Since dreams are true impressions of “things seen,” “facts witnessed,” they may and do convey to the physical brain happenings that for men are not yet present. Dreams of warning are a strong urgent effort made through a person’s higher

nature to save him. Such dreams are "real" and they require "the active co-operation of the inner Ego." The warning, however, is often not heeded, and dire are the consequences.

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A permanent headquarters for teaching acupuncture, the millennia-old Chinese art of healing "with golden needles," is to be established at Leamington Spa by the British College of Acupuncture, according to its chairman, Mr. J. R. Worsley. The College now has 72 students and expects its enrolment to increase considerably by the time its new headquarters are ready (*Newsletter of the Parapsychology Foundation* January-February 1968). An interesting point to note is that it takes between nine and ten years to train a doctor of acupuncture in China and that all the students at the College have had five years' full-time experience in medicine.

In "Psychic and Noetic Action" H. P. Blavatsky laid the basis and indicated the explanation for such "phenomena" as the obtaining of relief by puncturing the right points in the body. "The whole human body," she wrote, "is . . . a vast sounding board, in which each cell bears a long record of impressions connected with its parent organ, and each cell has a memory and a consciousness of its kind, or call it instinct if you will. These impressions are, according to the nature of the organ, physical, psychic, or mental, as they relate to this or another plane." She goes on to speak of those who have the power of "paralysing and will the *memory* and the instinctual, independent action of all the material organs and even cells in the body of flesh." The pain-impressed memory of a cell may be temporarily paralysed by a needle inserted at precisely the right point. Once the tension produced by past pain is broken, the cell is enabled to resume its normal activity.

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The authoritative medical weekly, *The Lancet* (London), warned in its issue of July 12 of increasing evidence that the use of the contraceptive pill is linked with thrombosis.

A report by medical researchers who have studied all available evidence states that there appears to be at least a casual relationship between the pill and the increase in the deaths of young women from blood clotting.

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