

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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THE PROTEGE AND THE PERSONALITY

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Our greatest trouble is to teach pupils not to be befooled by appearances. — MAHATMA K.H.

Meditation, abstinence in all, the observation of moral duties, gentle thoughts, good deeds and kind words, as good will to all and entire oblivion of Self, are the most efficacious means of obtaining knowledge and preparing for the reception of higher wisdom. — H.P.B.

IN HUMAN PERSONALITY are focused all the forces of the separative tendency inherent in matter and therefore belonging to the dark side of life. That Personality is the lowest of the triple Egoity, *Ahamkara*. This *Ahamkara*, says *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 260), is “dark Egotism, the progeny of Mahat, on the lower plane.” The first-born of this dark Egotism who is the last to die is *Abhiman*, Pride. *Abhiman* itself has two aspects — Self-Respect which tends upwards and the lower self-respect which develops the haughty fool who enjoys prideful solitude and perceives no one but himself. To respect the Self within, to acknowledge our obligations to It, to try to listen to Its voice when mundane noises try to drown it — this is performing the Yoga of Self-Respect to attain to the status of the protégé on the way to becoming a disciple.

The personal ego hides the real Ego. So many, even among the aspirants who study the Esoteric Philosophy, fall under the subtle dominance of their own personalities to such an extent that they are not able to recognize within themselves the activities of pride. Their respect for

the Divine in them, let alone the Eternal, is somewhat scanty. This lack of Self-Respect is proportionate to the excess of self-esteem. "Where is there another like me?" says the one fully developed in the lower self-respect. Not in so many words; but in the feeling of self-esteem such a one is clothed. His words may sound humble, but very often they subtly hide pride and conceit.

In Theosophical history, examples of inner successes are not generally known. Those protégés were men of real Self-Respect who remained hidden. They were dubbed by some "blind believers in H.P.B." For a couple of names — *e.g.*, Damodar and W. Q. Judge — who were successes, we have a score of names of failures; but in the eyes of the befooled public they pass off as great, grand and glorious winners in the race of life.

Our perception of other people's failings is often involved with the workings of our own personality and with our own lack of power to discern the glamour under which we have been living. Unless we ourselves are men of true Self-Respect how can we discern the hidden greatness or sweetness in others who respect the Soul within, always striving to be guided by the Inner Ruler? Even when we possess a natural integrity and respect the Soul within, we are not always able to evaluate another whose virtue may be obscured by his vice. For example, a virtuous woman of self-respect may not, often does not, discern the moral powers of a prostitute which are obscured by her vicious existence. Only when the strength of the Inner Warrior sufficiently supports the outer man does the latter become mellowed by the light of love which is understanding.

Among the strivers for spirituality are found two types: (a) Men of "strong" personalities, with capacity to shine in public places — in legislatures, in scientific societies, in pulpits and on platforms; of such, a Master once wrote — "What are these, pray, to his true Self that you cannot see?" That inner was not as good on its own plane as the outer "strong" personality. One's personal powers do not always confer on him "fitness for occult research," or "trustworthiness to keep our secrets"; such cannot rise to the status of the protégé, let alone of the disciple. In such, the Light of the Spirit burns low and dim. (b) Men of inner Egoic strength whose knowledge and virtue are not able to express themselves fully and who, sometimes, err in the direction of neglecting the development of the personal nature along correct lines. This neglect is a hindrance and the advice of the same Master is that such an indi-

vidual should set the inner Ego watching the outer one. The outer, neglected, may play the inner "a bad trick some day." The Warrior must ever keep his sword sharpened for battling against the senses.

In a very important department of life the personal man goes wrong when he does not set the Inner to watch over his own outer self, that is, in dealing with others — colleagues and co-students, co-workers and companions. His conceit hardens and he is apt to undervalue and adversely criticize another. When one sets the Inner watching over his own outer self, he realizes what a difficult task it is to control and curb the outer; to make him amenable to the aspirations of the Inner; therefore, seeing the limitations of the outer in another he is apt to be more charitable, more considerate towards him.

The conflict between one's own inner aspirations and outer conceits is not peculiar to oneself. It is a universal phenomenon. In the maddening world, in the midst of many motions of mind and body, we are apt to forget that others also are carrying on an inner conflict. This forgetfulness is due to our own self overlooking the truth of our own conflict. In mundane affairs, we overlook the very existence of the Lord and the Friend and are under the dominance of the separated, and further separating, lower man. Bereft of the true Friend, we are apt to make enemies or false and dangerous friends in the outer world. Without the Light of the Lord, we walk in darkness, lose our way, and scramble for a place in the sun!

The fighters against the lower personal form the company of fortune's favoured soldiers. Such are among the students of Theosophy. They are real students of the art of warfare, who apply in actual practice from day to day the canons of soul science; also, they help in a spirit of friendliness their companions; bent on making known to all the value of the Holy War, they join hands in the true service of the Race. Such become protégés, often unbeknown to themselves.

There are two ways of beings in this world — godlike and demoniac. Both are ours to choose between. And even when we have gone wrong the Right Turn is very near at hand. The lines of Virgil translated by Dryden contain the truth, but they need to be meditated upon:

The gates of hell are open night and day,
Smooth the descent, and easy the way;
But to return, and view the cheerful skies,
In this, the mighty task and labour lies.

THE FIRST STEPS

Sin must no longer reign in your mortal body, exacting obedience to the body's desires. You must no longer put its several parts at sin's disposal, as implements for doing wrong.

—*Romans*, vi. 12-13

THE KNOWLEDGE that the imperishable dwells within the perishable is priceless. If man but dares to follow this teaching to its inevitable conclusion, he will have to admit that he has all the potencies that reside in that secret part of himself which has always existed and which views life and death as does the ordinary man his nights and days. If this imperishable part has remained unknown, its energies untapped, the fault has invariably been that of the Soul which failed to prepare a suitable vehicle or channel through which the effulgence could be radiated on earth. It is a readily understandable fact that ideally that channel must needs be made up of matter in its highest states, for even though that matter be the most refined, it by its very nature puts its own limitations on that which ensouls it. It is apparent to most that, however transparent the shades that surround the light, it will in some degree obstruct and shut out a portion of the luminosity of the flame that burns within. When that shade is laid over, layer upon layer, by opaque and clinging material, the other extreme is reached and no light emerges. When this happens to the man, the doors and windows of his soul get barred and shuttered and a nether gloom descends upon the being of flesh. It thus happens that, for incarnation succeeding incarnation, life comes to be lived in total or near total darkness so that ultimately the man loses all memory of the existence of the inner light. This memory and innate feeling being lost, it becomes difficult for him to accept the proposition that the light is still there and will surely pour forth in all its effulgence as soon as the layers of opacity are removed.

Not seeing or even sensing the light within his own being, man has failed to imagine or picture to himself the creative powers and potencies that reside in his light. He has therefore postulated a god outside of himself, a being who could do all that he himself cannot do. The ordinary man who lives in darkness thus creates a god he could admire according to his own lights, a god who can grant boons and extend absolutions, and who can moreover break the very laws he himself has made. Thus has been created a god in the gargantuan image of man — a tribal and a national god; a jealous and a revengeful god; a partisan

god who could be made to take sides and whose favours could be purchased on bended knees to the accompaniment of bell, book and candle.

THAT, which is Endless and Unbegun is the ONE LIGHT which is the fount and source of all our lights. It is the Life of our life, the Force of our force. When this is to some extent realized, the man begins to understand the truth of one or the other aspect of the teaching which calls all men the "Children of Light." The learner who grasps this innate idea can no longer make distinctions among men, nor divide them by the artificial barriers of castes and creeds. He can no longer class himself as one of the chosen few of god. The moment that a man, however high, separates himself from any man, that moment he cuts himself away from the Light, makes himself but a fragment that exudes opacity and shuts himself out of the reach of the effulgence that resides in the LIGHT. Since the IT is universal, the man, if he so will, can touch within himself the ubiquity of its Presence. Since the IT is infinite, he can brush aside the illusions that hover round mortal and finite concepts. Since the IT is omnipresent, he can link himself to the aspect of that omniscience that lingers in the atom and the Sun, as it no doubt lingers in the worlds that are extant and those which are yet to be.

For him who can sit at ease and dream noble dreams, this ONENESS becomes acceptable and, even by standards of human intellectualism, irrefutable. It is only when we pass from this abstraction to daily realities that problems arise which demand prompt solutions lest, because of procrastination, faith crumble against the continuous onslaught of falsehoods and ignorance. Beset by doubts, what the student would like most is a formula which will make the theoretical existence of the ONE work out in all its implications as applicable to daily actions. If this could be achieved even in part, fact would strengthen faith and make it well-nigh impregnable. The difficulty is in no way lessened by the fact that the formula is known to exist. It has always been there and is at all times available to him who seeks it in earnest. The Sermon on the Mount and the Epistles of Paul are full of it. The *Bhagavad-Gita* and the Aphorisms of Patanjali lay the teachings before the inquirer in precise and well-defined terms. Plato and Iamblichus, Ammonius and the ancients have all recorded it. *The Voice of the Silence* and *Light on the Path* give it in language suited to our generation and age. The excuse that the formula is not available can no longer be valid for this century at least. The Theosophical effort has carried the message far and wide. The failure of man today is seen in his reluctance

to cast away things which the divine formula declares worthless and even harmful. The taste of past divagations lingers in memory, and supporting it and making the temptation greater is the thrill of derring-do. The culminating ecstasy of emotions raised to their highest pitch; the elation of conquest; the acquiring of something for nothing — these are some of the sensations which the personal man covets and which when coveted blind him to the formula that will free him from their thralldom.

Coming as he does from the vast throng of human souls that have for centuries been reincarnating again and again in bodies of gross matter, the disciple brings with him the taint of substances that stain and soil. His familiarity with things of matter generates in him a craving for material things, and that to such an extent that their loss but too often creates an aching void. Then, there are persons who, as Sri Krishna points out (*Bhagavad-Gita*, II. 42–44), while they say that there cannot be any bliss higher than eternal absorption, secretly nurture a desire for the passing joys of an interlude in heaven. These unwise persons, therefore, perform special acts for the acquisition of riches and enjoyment which thus come to them. But these are transient possessions that bring no satisfaction and leave no lasting benefits. Through repeated frustrations in trying to enter a state of perpetual sensuous well-being, the soul learns that though the wished-for results follow, it itself remains a prey to the oscillations that swing it between pain and pleasure, victory and defeat. It has no calm, and being incapable of either contemplation or meditation, it reaches not to happiness.

Man's involvement with things of matter comes because of his attachment to the three qualities that inhere in matter. Before he can renounce all the three qualities and rise above them, he has to abandon *Tamas* (sloth, ignorance, rigidity) and *Rajas* (passion, restlessness, turbulence) and rest constant in the quality of *Sattva* (truth, goodness, equipoise). To enable him to do so, the student is asked to free himself from worldly anxiety; to rid himself of the desire to retain present possessions; to liberate himself from the control that the objects of mind and sense exercise upon him, and above all to remain centred in his own true Self. For the disciple who enters upon the course of such an endeavour, no Vedic rites can have anything to offer; for, whatever they may have to give, he will have already achieved.

There have been persons who, having stumbled upon a portion of the truth, have in their ignorance taken it as a revelation and them-

selves as the chosen ones of God. We have, thus, various systems of practice and belief which have set up man against man. There are schools where the opacity of the shade that covers the flame is sought to be removed by abrasive methods that leave scratches and even injure the material. There are others who believe that, by doing something to the body, they can reach to the inner effulgence. The *Hatha-Yoga* system is based on this belief. It is the opposite of the *Raja-Yoga* system that the *Gita* expounds and that Theosophy advocates. There are other schools that dabble in necromancy and others still that worship the gods and even the spirits of the elements. None of these are founded on the omnipresence of deity and the universal brotherhood that stems from it. Each such school has, therefore, its own concept of duty and its own dictum of what should or should not be done. Each is based not on a universal verity, but has its source in the mind, the vision or even the ambition of a man. Each is dangerous in the sense that it may lead to an injury of the delicate transparent casket that covers the flame. Once that a scar appears on the sheath, the incarnation may have to be written off as a failure. The wrong ideation that produced the catastrophe may require several lives for the erasing of its taint from the inner fabric of the magnetic matter that the soul must inherit through the laws that govern affinity, association and use.

To him who would enter upon the path of *Buddhi-Yoga* that the *Gita* reveals, the motivation for any act must lie in its utility for the discharge of a duty. Any act of any man, however situate, must resolve itself into one which is duty-oriented or one which is not. The results which must ensue from acts dictated by duty are not the man's to desire nor his to assess. When he is thus joined to the desire to perform only those acts as his duty dictates, he loses interest for any benefit that may follow upon such action. He becomes one of balanced mind and thus attains to his first concrete step in progress. The equal-mindedness achieved by this discipline is termed Yoga.

The Voice of the Silence lays down the teachings thus:

If thou art told that to become Arhan thou hast to cease to love all beings — tell them they lie.

If thou art told that to gain liberation thou hast to hate thy mother and disregard thy son; to disavow thy father and call him "householder"; for man and beast all pity to renounce — tell them their tongue is false. . . .

If thou art taught that sin is born of action and bliss of absolute

inaction, then tell them that they err. . . .

Believe thou not that sitting in dark forests, in proud seclusion and apart from men; believe thou not that life on roots and plants, that thirst assuaged with snow from the great Range — believe thou not, O Devotee, that this will lead thee to the goal of final liberation.

Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites thee to thy "silent Self." Think not that when the sins of thy gross form are conquered, O Victim of thy Shadows, thy duty is accomplished by nature and by man.

The blessed ones have scorned to do so. . . .

The Dhyana gate is like an alabaster vase, white and transparent; within there burns a steady golden fire, the flame of Prajna that radiates from Atma..

Thou art that vase.

AND as to our own soul we are to hold that it stands, in part, always in the presence of The Divine, while in part it is concerned with the things of this sphere and in part occupies a middle ground. It is one nature in graded powers; and sometimes the soul in its entirety is borne along by the loftiest in itself; sometimes, the less noble part is dragged down and drags the mid-soul with it, though the law is that the soul may never succumb entire.

The soul's disaster falls upon it when it ceases to dwell in the perfect Beauty, thence to pour forth into the frame of the All whatsoever the All can hold of good and beauty. The measure of its absorption in that vision is the measure of its grace and power, and what it draws from this contemplation it communicates to the lower sphere, illuminated and illuminating always.

—PLOTINUS

OUR WORK

Our declared work is, in reality, more important and more efficacious than work in the everyday plane which bears more evident and immediate fruit, for the direct effect of an appreciation of theosophy is to make those charitable who were not so before.

—H. P. B.

FROM TIME TO TIME we hear the complaint that students of Theosophy only read philosophy and talk metaphysical jargon; that they do not actively organize themselves for social service and the like.

Now on this subject H. P. Blavatsky has said something very direct and useful in the first of her *Five Messages*:

I am confident that, when the real nature of Theosophy is understood, the prejudice against it, now so unfortunately prevalent, will die out. Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. We are the friends of all those who fight against drunkenness, against cruelty to animals, against injustice to women, against corruption in society or in government, although we do not meddle in politics. We are the friends of those who exercise practical charity, who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight of misery that is crushing down the poor. But in our quality of Theosophists, we cannot engage in any one of these great works in particular. As individuals we may do so, but as Theosophists we have a larger, more important, and much more difficult work to do. People say that Theosophists should show what is in them, that "the tree is known by its fruit." Let them build dwellings for the poor, it is said, let them open "soup-kitchens" etc., etc., and the world will believe that there is something in Theosophy. These good people forget that Theosophists, as such, are poor, and that the Founders themselves are poorer than any, and that one of them, at any rate, the humble writer of these lines, has no property of her own, and has to work hard for her daily bread whenever she finds time from her Theosophical duties. The function of Theosophists is to open men's hearts and understandings to charity, justice, and generosity, attributes which belong specifically to the human kingdom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being. Theosophy teaches the animal-man to be a human-man; and when people have learned to think and feel as truly human beings should feel

and think, they will act humanely, and works of charity, justice, and generosity will be done spontaneously by all.

Students should also read her article "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work" reprinted as *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 31*.

A very interesting contribution appeared in Mr. Judge's *Path* for April 1894, which deals with this very topic and which we reproduce below under its original caption:

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND REFORMS

A CONVERSATION

ZEALOUS THEOSOPHIST. Don't you think the Theosophical Society ought to take some definite stand on questions of reform?

CONSTITUTIONAL THEOSOPHIST. What put that into your head? Are you a Nationalist or a Single Taxer?

Z. T. I was reading that "Chat on the Roof" in the February *Theosophist*, where one of the chatters says: "I believe the T.S. must sooner or later adopt a definite attitude toward this question of reform," and although he speaks in reference to Hindu social problems, still it is just as important here as there, while the circumstances are different. The "chat" did not in any way settle the point, but left it all up in the clouds of talk. But we ought to do something.

C. T. Evidently the conversation published is an expression of a desire to get a prominent Theosophist like Mrs. Besant to throw herself on the side of some social question there, forgetting that it is not one or two persons who make up our movement and that our Constitution rules in such matters, and not persons. If you mean that the Society should as an organization take "a definite stand" such as seems called for in that "chat," I cannot agree with you.

Z. T. Do you mean that you are opposed to social or other reforms?

C. T. No, I do not. Whatever reforms are needed — and there are many — they should be taken up by individuals or the State, but that is a very different thing from asking the Theosophical Society to adopt a definite attitude either way. It has been proposed that the T.S. should formally approve of hypnotic suggestion as a means of curing drunkenness, lying, and stealing. Why not have us go in for that as well as social reforms? Those vices have a great deal to do with social difficulties.

Z. T. Well, why not? Take definite corporate action, and then members will have something tangible to talk of and to work for.

C. T. A few members, you mean; the rest would leave the Society. Divisions would arise and sides be taken. But the proposal is contrary to our Constitution, it is against the very reason for our existence, it nullifies our organic law, it is contrary to the spirit of the Society. The Constitution wisely prohibits the adoption of such definite attitudes. This applies to every doctrine, to all schemes, save the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, the one idea on which men of all religions will agree. Other doctrines and plans have supporters and opponents; they have no majority; but Universal Brotherhood has a constant and growing majority of supporters. One would have supposed that this "Chat on the Roof" of the building where was reposing the recently revised Constitution of the T.S., certified and published, should have led to some of the chatters advertent to this fundamental point before the conversation was printed. That revision puts the matter in strong terms, thus:

The society does not interfere with caste rules or other social observances, nor with politics, and any such interference in its name is a breach of the Constitution.

And immediate expulsion is the penalty fixed for violation of this rule.

Z. T. Then you place social questions and reforms under the same ban as religious doctrines and creeds, in so far as definite corporate action by the T.S. goes?

C. T. Most certainly. Why, man, reflect a moment. Is it not true that H. P. Blavatsky, H. S. Olcott, and William Q. Judge have always since 1875 proclaimed their personal belief in the Mahatmas or Masters as facts and ideals?

Z. T. Yes, they have; and of course had a perfect right to do so, as they never said it was a T.S. belief.

C. T. Well, have they not persistently said that this belief, regarded by many as vital, has no place in our Constitution and cannot be — must not be — erected into a T.S. dogma either directly or inferentially? It stands precisely with social reforms so far as "definite attitude" is concerned. But, curiously enough, there are those who loudly object to the expression of personal beliefs by such as have firm ones regarding Mahatmas, while at the same time the objectors would heedlessly violate the Constitution by having us adopt some definite attitude toward a passing question of social reform.

Z. T. I think I begin to see that in zealousness for getting into the gaze of the world I had almost forgotten that we are a free Society, wholly unattached, founded on toleration, neutrally situated between all contentions, and drawing our support from men considered as souls and not from any sectarian or separatist feeling. That must be why you did not encourage or discourage nationalism, but opposed the endorsement of it by the T.S.

C. T. Precisely. Had we endorsed that social movement, where should we be now? Opposed by every man and woman who is not a nationalist. But at the same time recollect that many members of the T.S. were prominent in the starting of the movement when it began in Boston. Similarly with questions in India. Were the T.S. involved with widow-remarriage, it would be violently opposed by a large body of men who found their opposition to such marriages on the religious books of the land. We might as well be asked to endorse and support Moslemism against purely theological Hinduism. A good man can live under any form of government or social order. What we should strive to do is to increase that toleration for everyone which alone will open up men's minds to the truth.

Z. T. Do you know of any striking instance in our history to illustrate these points?

C. T. Yes. In the Indian Headquarters once, while H.P.B. was there, a prominent Hindu asked her to get the opinion of her Masters on a question relating to widow-remarriage or that of child-marriage. The opinion was authoritatively refused, although there was an opportunity to enlist many prominent Hindus interested in the question. Had the distinct opinion been given, we should now have to be fighting for it or against it as a dogma. Happily we are free, and supporters and opponents alike of both sides are yet in our ranks.

Z. T. But what definitely is the proper function and attitude of the T.S. in and to social and other reforms?

C. T. Its attitude should be neutral as to any form or method, but not neutral as to the general doctrines of justice and Universal Brotherhood. The latter doctrine supports all application of justice; it is sufficiently declared in the Constitution; there is no need for further declarations. The function of the T.S. is to give its members aspiration to high ideals; to furnish a free, tolerant platform where all men may assemble if they wish. The bigot — social or theological — who asserts that no one else is right violates in himself the principle of toleration,

and has no place on our platform because his nature is intolerant; hence he will either leave the T.S. if he cannot ruin it, or he will be gradually altered by the silent but powerful influence of the toleration, even for his bigotry, which surrounds him in our ranks. Toleration, then, is our watchword, for it is one effect and one expression of brotherhood; that will bring unity in diversity, and with diverse elements held in one bond our strength would be invincible.

THEOLOGIANS teach that our ultimate felicity will consist in the development of a single divine humanity made up of innumerable unique and sympathetic individualities or "members," each one shining with its proper and peculiar lustre, which shall be as unlike any other lustre as that of a sapphire is from that of a ruby or an emerald; and they further teach that the end of this life is the awakening and growth of such individualities through a faithful following of the peculiar good which is each individual's "ruling love"; since each has his ruling love, if he knew it, that is, his peculiar and partial way of discerning and desiring the absolute good, which no created being is capable of discerning and desiring in its fullness and universality. Every man who is humanly alive . . . is conscious that the bond of man with man consists, not in similarity, but in dissimilarity; the happiness of love, in which alone is happiness, residing . . . not in union but conjunction, which can only be between spiritual dissimilars. That man is created in the capacity for uniqueness of character is shown by the human face, which is never at all alike in any two persons, and of which the peculiarity is nothing but an expression of the latent inherent difference which it is the proper work of life to bring into actuality.

—COVENTRY PATMORE

RAMA—THE DIVINE KING

THE STORY OF RAMACHANDRA, the Divine King, has proved to be of perennial interest and inspiration to generations of Indians. According to Hindu tradition, he was the seventh *Avatara* or Incarnation of Vishnu, who closed the *Treta* and opened the *Dvapara Yuga*. The *Ramayana* is the most popular record of his achievements, but there is a good deal of interesting material on him also in *Raghuvamsa* and *Yoga-Vasishtha*.

According to the Esoteric Philosophy, there was a great struggle between the Aryan Adepts of the early Fifth Race and the Fourth-Race Atlanteans, or the "Sons of God" and the "Sons of the Dark Wisdom" — our forefathers. H. P. Blavatsky states that "no one can fail to recognize the Atlanteans of the Secret Doctrine in the *Rakshasas* of Lanka." She adds that:

The whole History of that period is allegorized in the *Ramayana*, which is the mystic narrative in epic form of the struggle between Rama — the first king of the *divine* dynasty of the early Aryans — and Ravana, the symbolical personation of the Atlantean (Lanka) race. The former were the incarnations of the Solar Gods; the latter, of the lunar Devas. This was the great battle between Good and Evil, between white and black magic, for the supremacy of the divine forces, or of the lower terrestrial, or cosmic powers. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 495)

This is the central theme of the *Ramayana* — the triumph of righteousness over evil, the suppression of demoniac forces, of *adharma*, and the resurrection of the values of Truth and Goodness. As the hero of the Epic, Rama upholds the ideals of virtue and righteousness and overthrows Ravana, the King of the *Rakshasas*, who was oppressing mankind with his immense power and inordinate lust. Here is also presented in the ideal rule that prevailed under Rama (*Rama-rajya*), the concept of a state in which none harmed another (*ahimsa*) and which was based on the principle that the King himself was only a regent of *Dharma* which was enthroned as the sovereign ruler. Rama declares in a significant context in the Epic, "I shun that military ideal which is unrighteousness masquerading as virtuous principle, and is followed by low and cruel persons indulging in evil actions."

There is more than one description of the actual training and preparation of Rama as a Prince ere he was called by his father Dasaratha to ascend the throne of Ayodhya, which call precipitated the tragedy of

his banishment. It will be seen how different this training was from that of the “rulers” and “leaders” of today. We shall follow the version of the *Yoga-Vasishtha* and summarize the story of Rama’s acquisition of the proper knowledge to rule over a vast empire. Why has his administration been remembered these many thousands of years? What was the spring of his righteousness from which flowed such glorious beneficence? Even today *Rama-rajya* evokes in the hearts of the common people of India, and not only in the learned, a glow of pride in the past and of hope for the future.

On the threshold of manhood stood Rama: the frolicsome days of boyhood were over; the field of sports spread out before him. The learning of Vedic lore was accomplished, and there arose in the young Prince the desire to travel — to go to places of pilgrimage which shed spiritual beneficence, and to visit sacred Ashrams where Sages whisper in the ear of the ardent seeker the wisdom of the ages.

Lotus-eyed Rama, of beautiful dark complexion, with the gait of a swan, came to his father, saying, “My mind longs for the sacred shrines and forest resorts. Please give me leave to depart.”

Crossing many rivers, passing through many dark forests in which the light of *Tapas* (meditative austerity) alone shone, visiting many hermitages Rama went, and full of rich experience returned to Ayodhya amidst the thick showers of flowers and the praises of men.

Thereafter Rama formed the habit of rising to greet the dawn and to await the day listening to the tales of *Tapasvis* which Vasishtha and other Munis told. Thus he grew, like unto the cool moon which inspires the lover, like unto the delicious nectar which exhilarates the Sage — sought by all, gracious to all.

Suddenly a change came over him. His body grew thin, his mind sullen, his heart pensive. Ever sitting in a meditative posture, like a statue, he was full of despondency and neglected the performance of his routine duties. At this juncture the famous Muni Vishvamitra appeared at the court and was apprised of the situation. Summoning the Prince, he appealed to him: “Tell me the subject of your reflections.”

Thereupon Rama said:

There is not even an iota of bliss in this world. Death exists only for birth, and birth is for death again. Therefore all are illusory in this world. All worldly things are generative of pains only, fraught with all dangers, unrelated to one another, related to

one another only through the speculation of the mind, obdurate like an iron rod, and fruitful of great material wealth. Therefore of what avail are the enjoyments of objects and kingdoms? Having reflected well upon these things, quiescent sages like yourself are ever engaged in deep *Samadhi*. The proclivities of my discriminative mind are also towards the identification of myself with *Kutastha*; but like a lady separated from her dear lord, my mind will neither attain the certainty of Brahman nor incline towards material desires. Therefore in this dilemma, please point out to me that ever resplendent and eternal seat devoid of pains, frailties, troubles, doubts or delusion. What is that eternal state unapproachable by pains wherein I shall remain unscathed by the fire of sensual objects, though moving in them, like a ball of mercury exposed to fire? Like the ocean which is everywhere nothing else but its waters, *Samsara* rests on words only, proceeding from the power of speech. How did the righteous Great Ones manage to avoid the pains of this world? My mind will not incline towards wielding the regal sceptre or towards pleasures or pains. Without love or hatred, I shall only preserve taciturnity and be desireless, statuelike.

Thus did Rama, "with a face like the stainless cool full moon, a sweet accent and a mind now full blown through Atmic discrimination," deliver himself before the assembly of the joyful Munis. It was a mood of *Vairagya*, of indifference, which had come over Rama. The world seemed unreal because devoid of bliss; pain and suffering were the prevailing realities — why live in such a world? Why labour for such a humanity? Conceived in darkness, born in pain, bred in strife, going on through decay to death — to what avail?

Vasishtha explained to Rama how he could follow the ancient method and overcome his difficulty, and find out that behind illusion was reality, behind pain was bliss, behind death was Life Eternal. The desire for Soul Freedom cannot be attained without Soul Enlightenment. People pursue the unreal with a zest which fades away, leaving them in the company of pain, and then only they turn to the Real. But the Real must be longed for. It is necessary to go after Soul Freedom and Soul Enlightenment with the same zest as shown in the pursuit of worldly things.

When Rama heard this he said to his teacher: "I am under the sway of desires. What am I to do? These keep me in bondage. I who am looked up to as lord and master am but a poor slave — slave to these desires."

And the Sage replied:

Like four sentinels at the four gates of the palace who allow ingress to the visitors without to see the King within, there are four sentinels who stand watch over the crowd of desires which throng outside the palace of the Soul. They are: (1) *Kshanti*-Patience, that naught can ruffle; (2) *Vichara*-Reflection — not ordinary reflection but reflection that is so deep that no doubt of the Spirit can ever arise; (3) *Santosh*-Contentment which follows the perception of the immutable Justice which rules the universe and all the kings of the universe; (4) lastly, *Sat-Sanga* or *Sadhu-Sanga*, the company of the Good, the friendship of the Wise. When the snake of worldliness entwines a man he will die unless he hears the *Mantra* of Soul-Knowledge. When Wisdom is gained through these four sentinels, pain ceases, delusions vanish, and the mind becomes pellucid as the waters of a pool in autumn. That is the Way. Others have used the sentinels. Do you use them yourself, O Rama!

It was the conquest of desires — sense-impulses, fleshly passions, mental cravings — that marked the *Kshatriya*-Soul. A King by caste is ever a *Kshatriya*, a warrior, who first and foremost has conquered his own self. Rama was able to destroy Ravana because he had conquered himself.

Sorrow and suffering, trial and endurance, were a part of Rama's training. He suffered for 14 years in exile and was chastened by privations and misfortunes before he ascended the throne of his father. One can see in Rama's life the success and triumph which follow upon endurance and faith and devotion to duty. It is the truth and endurance of Rama under sufferings and privations which impart the deepest lessons to us even today and constitute the ideal of a righteous life.

Today, the Crown and the Sceptre are baubles. Even as symbols they have lost their old significance. In our age, bravado and bragging, tyranny, high-handedness and exploitation of the weak by the strong are everywhere in evidence. It is said that the tears of the weak undermine the thrones of kings, but it is equally true that the Soul-strength of even a few brings to birth the Soul of Royal Qualities — the servant of his people and beloved by them, strong in his justice, magnificent in his mercy, dispassionate in his charity, a master of his ministers, a ruler of his household, a priest in the temple of his kingdom.

The Coronation of such a King was a Consecration. Romesh Chunder Dutt in his poetic rendition of the *Ramayana* has described it thus:

Vasishtha the Bard of *Vedas* with auspicious rites and meet
Placed the monarch and his consort on the gemmed and jewelled
seat,

Gautama and Katyayana, Vamadeva priest of yore,
Jabali and wise Vijaya versed in holy ancient lore,

Poured the fresh and fragrant water on the consecrated king,
As the Gods anointed INDRA from the pure ethereal spring!

Vedic priests with sacred *mantra*, dark-eyed virgins with their song,
Warriors girt in arms and weapons round the crowned monarch
throng,

Juices from each fragrant creeper on his royal brow they place,
And his father's crown and jewels Rama's ample forehead grace,

And as Manu, first of monarchs, was enthroned in days of yore,
So was Rama consecrated by the priests of Vedic lore!

Brave Satrughna on his brother cast the white umbrella's shade,
Bold Sugriva and Bibhishan waved the *chowri* gem-inlaid,

VAYU, God of gentle zephyrs, gift of golden garland lent,
INDRA, God of rain and sunshine, wreath of pearls to Rama sent,

Gay *Gandharvas* raised the music, fair *Apsaras* formed the ring,
Men in nations hailed their Rama as their lord and righteous king!

There is something very touching and tender in the description of the love of Rama for his subjects and the loyalty of his people towards Rama:

As a father to his children, to his loving men he came,
Blessed our homes and maids and matrons till our infants lisped
his name,

For our humble woes and troubles Rama hath the ready tear,
To our humble tales of suffering Rama lends his willing ear!

In the *Ramayana* we also have a description of what the state of the Kingdom was during Rama's reign. The following verses may sound fanciful, but may it not be that in them we have the answer to the question sometimes asked — what is it really which has kept Rama's name alive through centuries and millennia?

And 'tis told by ancient sages, during Rama's happy reign,
Death untimely, dire diseases, came not to his subject men,

Widows wept not in their sorrow for their lords untimely lost,
 Mothers wailed not in their anguish for their babes by YAMA crost,
 Robbers, cheats, and gay deceivers tempted not with lying word,
 Neighbour loved his righteous neighbour and the people loved
 their lord!

Trees their ample produce yielded as returning seasons went,
 And the earth in grateful gladness never failing harvest lent,

Rains descended in their season, never came the blighting gale,
 Rich in crop and rich in pasture was each soft and smiling vale,

Loom and anvil gave their produce and the tilled and fertile soil,
 And the nation lived rejoicing in their old ancestral toil.

Rama and his consort Sita are the ideals of a Perfect Man and a Perfect Woman; their truth under trials and temptations, their endurance under privations, and their devotion to duty under all vicissitudes of fortune, form the ideal of a Perfect Life. Our own ideals in the present day may not be the ideals of the period the *Ramayana* depicts, but mankind will not willingly let die those great creations of the past which shadow forth the ideals and beliefs of interesting periods in the progress of human civilization.

HE is indeed foolhardy who thoughtlessly acts at first and then considers the pros and cons of his action.

Honey-coated words there are ever so many people to utter. But bitter truth, though benevolent, is rarely spoken, much less listened to by any.

A man's conduct will reveal his lineage, valour, high or low birth, and the purity or otherwise of his thought and deed.

An action which does not yield the expected result must be done over again with firm resolve to produce the desired object.

Great men do not retaliate the wrongs done to them, as they care more for the maintenance of their dignity and character.

Cheer leads to prosperity. Cheer is happiness. All actions done with enthusiasm lead to good results.

—From *The Ramayana*

WORDS OF LIGHT

THE PATH

2. THIS IS THY TASK

If thou wilt do My will, then shalt thou live at peace within the House of Circumstance.

How shall I live?

As the bird lives, and as the flower, to show forth My truth, so shalt *thou* live to show forth purity, humility, rectitude, love.

Perseverance in well-doing is the path that shall lead thee to Me; well-doing towards those who are about thee, well-doing towards Me, thine Indweller.

Do thy work in simplicity and trust, with courtesy to all, and thou shalt be given greater.

Life is given thee for the increase of life.

Teach those things that abide.

Arrest decay and death.

Thou art My votary.

Wait thou upon Me.

Thou shalt do My pleasure at the time that is appointed.

Let the be-ing of BRAHMAN grow in thy mind that His knowledge may enlighten thy heart.

Learn well the lessons thou hast been given.

Study those things thou hast been taught.

Meditate upon them.

Thou shalt serve Me by cleansing the temple in which My light shall shine.

Sweep the floors; garnish the walls; deck the altar with the flowers and fruits of devotion.

Be true to thine innermost self.

Fill the phial of the heart with sweet odours of obedience and service.
More than this thou canst not do now.

I am with thee in the tasks of the day, if thou doest them in purity of
heart.

I am not found in meditation only.

I am with thee in the work that is appointed thee.

Let there be a constant casting of impurities into the sacrificial fire, a
constant offering up of the fruits of action.

Thou shalt play upon the harp of thy being a well-ordered melody.

Thou shalt not let thy hands wander heedlessly over the strings.

And what should'st thou play but a song of praise to Me, the Giver and
Preserver of all?

Yet I would not seek praise for its own sake, as do those who follow
earthly satisfactions.

I would but that thou should'st fulfil thine own being through devotion
to THAT which sustaineth it.

Let this be thy discipline: to do thy work outwardly, and inwardly to
meditate on Me.

Not with scarlet and purple, not with jewels and gold, but with pure
thought and chastened desire deck the temple of thine heart, where
I shall meet thee.

Entrust thyself to Me.

I will hold thee by the hand.

I will lead thee and bring thee to Myself.

(To be concluded)

You can reflect what is another's; you can radiate only what
is your own.

—CHINESE PROVERB

PAPYRUS—THE GEM

[This story was originally published in *The Path* for March 1887. The pen-name is one of the many Mr. Judge used.—Eds.]

THE ROADS were thronged with the people moving toward the great square, for it was the feast of the Goddess. The temples were crowded, while long lines of men and maidens in the robes of "The Sacred" wound in and out toward the river.

Music and song rose and fell upon the evening breeze, like the pulse of a throbbing heart. Here and there could be seen the Scribes, and seated in an open space, the Tale-tellers. One of these, as I rested near him, told the tale of

ONE WHO FOUND THE GEM

"In the land of the Wise Men there dwelt a young man. Many years had he laboured in a strange mine, the "Mine of the Priceless Gems — hopefully, bravely, but fruitlessly. He had long known that he who should find the Master Stone, would be free, be full of peace, and dig no more, for nothing better could be found. He also knew that he who found the stone should seek to share it with all men.

"Many small stones had he found, but they were laid aside to be used when the great stone was reached.

"Silently and steadily he worked on, until one gloomy day when he had grown so weak that he could make but one more effort, that effort was rewarded, and before him lay the great gem. Weary, weak, but joyful, he gathered it into his bosom, and went forth to share it with others; for he who told not of his gem, or shared it not with all men, must lose the stone.

"Far he wandered, telling his wonderful story, the *finding of the Priceless Stone* — the stone that made men greater, wiser, more loving than all things living; the stone that no man could keep unless he gave it away.

"Far he wandered in his own country, seeking to tell his story and give of the stone to each one he met. Silently they listened — gravely they meditated and gently they said to him: 'This is Kali-yuga, the dark age. Come to us a hundred thousand years from now. Until then — the stone is not for us. It is Karma.'

“Far into another land he wandered, ever trying for the same end. Gravely they listened, quietly they spoke: ‘Peace be with you. When the Lotus ceases to bloom and our Sacred River runs dry, come to us. Until then we need not the stone.’

“Over the seas into another land he went, for fully he believed that there they would hear and share with him. The many days of wandering and the long journey across the sea had made him thin and ragged. He had not thought of this, but as he told his story he was reminded of it and many other things, for here the people answered in many ways, and not always gently.

“Some listened, for his story was new to them, but the gem was uncut, and they wished it polished.

“Others paused and desired him to tell his story in their tents, for that would make them exalted and famous, but they wanted not the gem. As he did not belong to their tribe, it would bring discredit upon them to receive anything from him.

“One paused to listen and desired some of the stone, but he desired to use it to elevate his own position and assist him in overreaching his fellows in bartering and bargaining. The Wanderer was unable to give any of the stone to such as this one.

“Another listened, but inasmuch as the Wanderer refused to make the gem float in the air, he would none of it.

“Another heard, but he already knew of a better stone, and was sure he would find it, because he ate nothing but starlight and moonbeams.

“Another could not receive any of the stone or listen to the story, for the Wanderer was poor and ragged. Unless he was dressed in purple and fine linen and told his story in words of oil and honey, he could not be the possessor of the gem.

“Still another heard, but he knew it was not the gem. As the Wanderer had been unsuccessful before, surely he could not have found the stone. Even had he found it, he could not have the proper judgement to divide it. So he wanted none of the stone.

“Near and far went the Wanderer. Still ever the same. Some wanted it, but the stone was too hard, or not bright enough. He was not of their own people, or was ignorant. He was too ragged and worn to suit their ideas, so they wanted none of the stone.

“Saddened, aged and heart-sore, he wandered back to the land of

the Wise Men. To one of these he went, telling of his journeyings and that no man would share with him the magnificent stone, and also of his sorrow that he too must lose it.

“‘Be not troubled, my son,’ said the Wise One, ‘the stone is’ for you, nor can you lose it. He who makes the effort to help his fellow man is the rightful owner, and still possesses the entire stone, although he has shared it with all the world. To each and every one to whom you have spoken, although they knew it not, you have given one of the smaller stones which you first found. It is enough. When the Master Stone is cut and polished, then is the labour of the fortunate possessor ended. The long journeying and weary wandering, the sorrow-laden heart and tear-dimmed eyes, have cut and polished your gem. Behold, it is a white and a fair stone!’

“Drawing it from his bosom, the Wanderer gazed into the wonderful light of the stone while an expression of great peace stole over his face. Holding the gem close to his bosom his eyelids closed, and he fell asleep, a wanderer no more.”

—RAMESES

AVARICE closes the eyes of a sensible man; greed brings birds and fishes into nets.

What should I say when it is better to say nothing?

A wound inflicted by the tongue is worse than one inflicted by a sword.

The tongue is the heart’s interpreter.

A salty land will produce no flower.

Only a stone can break a stone.

A branch which becomes tall will receive the axe.

Patience is bitter, but it bears sweet fruits.

An empty drum makes much noise.

He who searches will find at the end.

However much thou mayest study knowledge, thou art ignorant if thou dost not practise.

Thinking is the essence of wisdom.

A happy beggar is better off than a discontented merchant.

—PERSIAN PROVERBS

THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS is an Association of students of Theosophy. We often repeat this statement, but have we considered the full implications of the name of this Association? It is interesting to see how the various clauses of the Declaration of Policy fit in with the phrase "United Lodge of Theosophists," so let us take it word by word.

UNITED. This is one of the most important ideas which H.P.B., and following her, W. Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie, put forward. The stress of any association or society of Theosophists should be on *unity*; for, as H.P.B. wrote in the second of her *Five Messages to the American Theosophists*, "UNION IS STRENGTH." In another message she refers to the parable of the bundle of sticks, which, "divided, will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood." Looking at it in another way, the statement in the Declaration that the Lodge is not attached to any Theosophical organization does not imply a policy of isolation, but only that since it is wholly devoted to the Great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, association with any other group might involve the Lodge in "dissensions or differences" which almost invariably arise unless there is complete unity of aim, purpose and teaching. It is interesting and salutary to realize that the splits which have arisen in the Movement have almost all come about because there was disagreement on this basis for union, this platform on which all Theosophists could and should unite. U.L.T. recognizes H.P.B. as the messenger of the Masters, and what she taught, now known as Theosophy, was given out at Their behest and, one might say, under Their supervision.

Now for the next word — LODGE. A Lodge, according to one dictionary, is a "shelter," and what better word could be found to designate our Association? At the Lodge, Theosophy is taught, and its great doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, together with the rest of the philosophy, can be a refuge or shelter for all Souls who are struggling along the weary path towards that other concept of unity — unity with the One Self, spoken of in the second clause. It is by uniting our "self" with the One Self that we can realize the main object of the Theosophical Movement, *i.e.*, the forming of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood; for, if we are all part of this One Self, then there must be an intimate relationship between all the units of that Self. Here, in the Lodge, we can forget the trials and tribulations of our daily lives,

and our minds and hearts be comforted by the spiritual teachings of the great philosophy.

Finally, what are the THEOSOPHISTS? In the fourth clause of the Declaration we find stated that a Theosophist is one who works for the benefit of Humanity by offering *true* service, and there has to be a recognition that in order to do this, there can be no distinctions of race, creed, colour or sex. This may come as a surprise to anyone who is apt to consider that only one affiliated with a Theosophical organization could be called a Theosophist! We have to do some thinking here. There are many who do not call themselves Theosophists, but who are true workers for Humanity, and equally there are many "Theosophists" who have no right to the name. And maybe here we can think of that last little clause which bothers many students: "The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

The U.L.T. welcomes all to its Association, with the proviso that they give sufficient thought to the aims and objects as set out in the Declaration of Policy. The time and energy they will devote to fitting themselves to be the better able to help and teach others will have to be determined by themselves. The Lodge puts no hindrances in the way of joining, such as compulsory subscriptions, rules or regulations; it leaves each one free to decide for himself how best he can serve the cause of Universal Brotherhood. Self-discipline, in terms of self-induced and self-devised efforts, is the key to becoming in the true sense a THEOSOPHIST.

EITHER THEOSOPHY pure and undefiled is the most real thing in the world, or we are all wasting our time and effort. If we are able to conceive its reality in all seriousness, we should then never cease trying to understand and apply what has been recorded by Masters' Messenger for our guidance and instruction. What is the distinction between Theosophy and anything else? In Fundamental Principles, I should say. Nothing else affords an all-inclusive view of existence. . . . Theosophists of every degree should realize that under Karma much is required of those to whom much has been given in opportunity and knowledge. We can only use our opportunities and knowledge to the best possible advantage and continue to do so, if we would not ourselves fall short of the requirement of "the Law of Laws — Compassion absolute."

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THE LIGHT THAT IS WISDOM

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

—LONGFELLOW

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE is not a life of somnolence and ease. It demands a virile approach to all problems; and, in consequence, the strain of exertion is always present. In such sustained effort which spreads over vast periods of time, there must come moments of gloom when the man despairs of making any progress. Yet, the ensouling force of the initial resolve carries him onward and his life bears on the face of it the characteristic marks of his involvement with universal principles. To embrace religion, one has to live it, so that it becomes a part of the animating life, a force that cannot be denied recognition, a thing of beauty and of joy that permeates the man's thoughts and actions and infuses into them the quality of genius.

Man but toys with religion when he pays lip homage to it the while he satisfies his sensual appetites and human emotions. Hunger for possessions, power and love is inimical to the religious life. It destroys the atmosphere in which alone the tree of knowledge can take root and grow. In smaller or in larger measure, the man's life reflects the religion of his adoption, and whether he likes it or not, the truth or falsity of his beliefs shows through his approach to life and its problems. If his approach to religion is narrow and bigoted, so will be the record of his life. If, on the other hand, he sees in religion the force that binds him back to deity, his actions will reflect his high thought and noble endeavour. When a man does come under the influence of the true, the inner force of the transcendent life becomes so powerful that in the ultimate analysis it dominates all actions on any of the several planes on which he is wont to act. Even such mundane actions as are necessitated by the struggle for existence get permeated by the force of the religious impulse so that the life of the man becomes more purposeful and his actions become invested with a benign spontaneity.

Religion has in it the science of all life and therefore comprises all knowledge which includes the teachings about the dawn of manifestation, the emergence of divine emanations and the rules which guide their evolution. It shows that the present is in intimate conformity with all

the pasts and it reveals the position of man in the grand scheme of things, his pedigree, purpose and destiny. Religion has an answer for any problem — physical, psychic, mental, moral or spiritual. Further, it provides the rules that govern the conversion of this science into art — the application of principles to action. Genius for its outflow makes its own rules for manifestation suited to the instruments which are available to it for expression. The theorems of life exist so that they be taken as aids to action under all circumstances and during all eras.

The one eternal wisdom-religion has always existed and has at all times been handed down by its custodians to the elect among men. For him who hungers for it, it is always available provided he furnishes the requisite conditions. It comes to him in strange ways and sometimes under circumstances bordering on the unbelievable. Unknown to himself, he makes the call for wisdom and that call must be answered. It cannot be denied. A chance meeting, the random selection of a book, the reading of an article, essay or poem may lead the aspirant by imperceptible stages to the source from which he is to reach to his quota of knowledge. It is as though an unseen benign force responds to the nobler urge and moves by strange ways to perform its duty. The instruction is always readily available to the man who realizes that to deserve the gift he must earn it through service, search and humility coupled with an unreserved acceptance of universal brotherhood.

Arjuna, the prototype for the Kali Yuga of the devoted disciple, had fulfilled the prerequisites for obtaining wisdom, and having so fulfilled them, he received on the field of Kurukshetra his instructions for the battle of life. They come to him as had previously come the celestial weapons which were to serve him in battle but which were to be surrendered once that their utility had ended. The first chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* had found Arjuna confused and in despair at the conflict of duties. In the second chapter Krishna as the divine Guru allays his fears and takes his mind off personal involvements by leading him to a consideration of such principles and verities as bear directly on his problems. Arjuna had been exercised over the sin which would follow upon killings even though these were forced upon him in an unsought fight. Krishna shows that the immortal aspect in Arjuna as also in those of the Kaurava clan which he was fighting could neither kill nor be killed. He shows that sin attaches itself to any fight and to any action which is motivated by a personal and interested bias. Sin therefore is not in the act but in the motive that generates the act. Where the mind

of man discriminates between that which is pleasant and that which is unpleasant, there the seeds of sin are laid and nemesis steps in sooner or later to fulfil its duty. Wherever there is the personal and the divisive, there sin arises and darkness prevails. Conversely, where the personal is eschewed and the man seeks to lend himself to nature as an impersonal force for good, there harmony prevails and a benign force is generated which cuts across all sin and sorrow. "Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, the same to thee," says Krishna, "and then prepare for battle, for thus and thus alone shalt thou in action still be free from sin."

How can man achieve such a dispassionate and detached view of men, matters and things? Can an Arjuna visualizing death by his own hands of sires, brothers, kinsmen, teachers and persons high of soul form a detached, disinterested outlook and then proceed to inflict death, pulverize the caste system, and put an end to an institution on which society itself was raised? The answer seems to be that all these, however valuable, are but the ephemera of a day, that these but exist to subserve the nameless Lord within and that the discarding and even the disintegrating of these can have no validity if they stand opposed to the discharge of a fundamental or spiritual duty. That duty must, however, be to the highest and not to perishable, finite things. Things which are consumable by or which deteriorate at the touch of earth, water, fire and air are transient and perishable. They must, therefore, rate a secondary importance and need have no weightage where the onward march of the soul demands their relegation or even demolition. But it must be the soul which makes the demand — that soul which is of a nature other than the perishable and to which the lower desires and worldly ambitions are anathema.

This, in short, is the instruction in the first half of the important second chapter of the *Gita*. It demarcates for the disciple the borderland that separates the realms of *Asat* (the false) from that of *Sat* (the true). As the holy dialogue proceeds, the disciple is given the rules of the Higher Life. But, though volumes be read, the knowledge so gathered must for the most part remain theoretical unless the disciple begins the arduous task of blending his mind and soul.

In the path of Occultism, it is dangerous to run when the art of walking has yet to be mastered. The initial teachings, the preliminaries about the Supreme, have to be so deeply burnt into the consciousness that the knowledge becomes automatically alive as soon as the need for

it arises. In this second chapter a glimpse is given of the pedigree of man, and although this is developed in subsequent chapters, this first revelation is the key without which much of the later instruction would remain meaningless. Arjuna is told that within the perishable man there exists the imperishable, indestructible Spirit. It is *Aja* — the unborn. Things made of the “earth” element are powerless to destroy it; “air” and its denizens have no power over it; “fire” cannot reduce it to ashes, nor can “water” wet or corrupt it. This Supreme, this unnamable Spirit enters and quits its garments of flesh in order that ultimately there can be reproduced on earth its sovereign, its absolute will. This Spirit is not only indestructible. It is inexhaustible. It is not swayed by desires, it cannot be aroused by prayers and propitiations, rites and ceremonies. It can have no possessions. It is of the nature of Light. It gives and still is itself without diminution — without change. It is from this wondrous Spirit that man has descended the stairways of emanations. Man has the mission to radiate on earth and in *jagrat* (the waking consciousness) the potency of that beam of immaculate Light which is his Father, Progenitor and Lord.

WE ARE CONFRONTED with the necessarily determined everyday world in which processes are taking place in time and the future appears as fated. Man is fettered and weighed down. He both longs for freedom and fears it. The paradox of liberation is that in order to preserve freedom and to struggle for it, one must in a sense be already free, have freedom within oneself. Those who are slaves to the very core of their being do not know the name of freedom and cannot struggle for it. Ancient taboos surround man on all sides and fetter his moral life. In order to free himself from their power man must first be conscious of himself as inwardly free and only then can he struggle for freedom outwardly. The inner conquest of slavery is the fundamental task of moral life. Every kind of slavery is meant here — the slavery to the power of the past and of the future, the slavery to the external world and to oneself, to one's lower self. The awakening of creative energy is inner liberation and is accompanied by a sense of freedom. Creativeness is the way of liberation.

—NICOLAS BERDYAEV

LETTERS TO A LODGE

VIII

[Reprinted from *The Irish Theosophist* for August 1895.—Eds.]

COMRADES:

What you ask me of pertains to the mysteries. Therefore I must make answer in parable.

You say: "Who are the companions?"

It is said:

Before the aspirant can become one of the Companions, he shall have taken the vow of Poverty. Now this Poverty shall be intimate and interior.

And when one of them is attacked the Companions shall defend him, because he is their Brother. But they shall defend him without malice and without aggression, because he is their very Self.

In that Self are the aggrieved and the aggressor; the minute and the inexhaustible; the good, the evil and that which is the Cause of both.

Therefore the poverty of the Companions is that great humility of soul which manifests itself by the abandonment of results. It is not what the world calls humility, which is but another form of vanity arising from intense self-consciousness. By this is meant consciousness of the false self as "I," or perception confined to a reflected and distorted light. Study the laws of light on this plane and a clue will be manifest.

When the Companion turns his face to the world, he will not be seen to be in a state of great sweetness and light. What the world sees as such qualities are but rays proceeding from the false and refracted lights. THE PEACE is not objective; it is not a state of *human* serenity; it is a Consciousness of the Universal. A Western mystic, Thomas à Kempis, has bidden men beware of this mental state of sweetness and false satisfaction, which is one of the more subtle snares of Maya. Those *who know*, in facing the world, wear the gathered brows of self-restraint and have a power of silence. When the light of the Master Presence is upon them they are only seen by one another. Yet there are many who are of this company and know it not; they will know when their lowliness of mind has dispelled those mists which throw up the mirage of the false self.

A Companion passed through the Hall of Learning, the rock corridor

leading to THE LODGE. All must pass through its various stages, but none should linger.

Where the spiritual consciousness is fully developed, the psychic consciousness exists also, for it is the vehicle of the higher consciousness, for use, *when trained*, upon lower planes of being. He who has the whole, has the parts.

There are sentences written in light upon the walls of the Hall of Learning. They sparkle out as the neophyte advances. Some fade; they are not for him as yet. Others sparkle out and engage his attention. These are the clues by means of which he may pass safely through the labyrinthine Hall. They are in cipher, but this cipher makes their meaning known at once to the brain in any language. A first difficulty is that the neophyte is prone to strive after those sentences which fade as he approaches and to neglect those which are obvious and easy to be had. The evanescent lures and bewitches him, while any time will do for the sentence so deeply graven there, as he thinks. This is a false concept, for all things have their karmic hour. Let him take only that which is his own.

A Companion saw this:

THE TRUE MASTER

The true Master is felt; He is not seen.

When He who was unseen is seen, He disappears..

Then the spiritual Presences are gathered into the Unity; they know not one another, but they are the One Self.

In that Darkness there is but One.

In that silence there is no knowledge, but Being — which is all — is fulfilled.

This is the path of the true disciple.

Before man, the lowest immortal, can find the true Master, he must lose Him; that loss is pure gain. To lose Him thus, is to find Him indeed.

This should be known: the disciple who finds Him on the plane of the senses has objectivized his Karma; he loses the Master after a higher fashion.

When He speaks through the soul, the ignorant disciple says, 'it is I myself'; he rejoices to be so wise.

Know that there is only the ONE SELF, THE MASTER, and lose thyself also to find Him who is never found until He has been lost.

When He is lost to every sense then the One Flame arises, pure as before the beginnings of worlds.

This thou shalt never know: thou art It.

There are many and serious mistakes made on the subject of so-called appearances of Masters. The voice, the form of the Masters, all can be parodied or simulated. All exist as pictures in the nerve-aura of individuals, for the brain, the wonder-worker, has fashioned them out of nervous matter only one degree less gross than the matter of the physical brain, but many degrees more subtle and dynamic. The play of energy, liberated by Thought, upon these pictures, sets them in motion, and their vibrations, communicated along the lines (or media) of nervous ether, cause the brain to receive their reflection. Anything which (a) inhibits physiological action, or (b) heightens nervous action, or (c) causes increased tension in the etheric field (such as, for example, (1) the creation of vortices or currents therein, whether by magnetic passes, music, sound or concentrated thought, and also (2) the control, by a magnetizer, of the mere physiological senses of any person or persons), would cause such voices, sounds, odours, forms or what not else, to be visible or to be made visible in the place where they exist, to wit, the aura or magnetic sphere of man, or in the nervous ether of the earth. The more evolved elementals — as well as consciously dark powers among men — and intelligences could also clothe these pictures, so existing, with grosser matter, thus causing these to become visible and for their own purposes. There is thus both (a) evocation and (b) automatic action tending to objectivization of these pictures.

Consider these lines of *The Voice of the Silence*:

Allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine. . . .

Silence thy thoughts and fix thy whole attention on thy Master, whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest.

Merge into one sense thy senses, if thou would'st be secure against the foe.

The one sense is the sense of *feeling*. With eyes closed, ears stopped, we know the presence of one friend from another, all untouched by them. We have sensed the aura. The true Master may be truly known by the aura, read esoterically. The Companions know Him "by His lights."

There is but one safe mode by which the disciple of at least seven years' training (and it is usually far more) may know the Master. This means is by the seventh (esoteric) principle; it is the highest akashic differentiation. To sense it, or rather to have the apperception of it, you must have developed to some extent, at least, a rudiment of the same thing in yourself. The path leading to the Master is through "that sense alone which lies concealed within the hollow of thy brain" (*The Voice of the Silence*). This purely spiritual quality must be, to some extent, developed in the seer before he can "feel" its like. There must be, in his own sphere, a conscious centre of similar akashic substance to receive and register (*i.e.*, feel, or get the impression stamped upon it) this highest akashic vibration. This hidden centre is made "white" by will; to this refer all the sentences in the *Voice* about cleansing the "mind-body" and also paralysing the lunar body; the lower vibrations of the nervous ether are checked and the *akasha* in the hidden spot of the skull held "white" or negative, plastic, by will-power. It is a matter involving a distinct knowledge of noetic action in a high grade of substance, and how to prevent the atoms, or monads, from throwing up those pictures which they hold, as already impressed upon them by the action of energy. This is the difference between the medium and the disciple. The one makes his nervous ether and brain stuff passive. The disciple rolls back all currents from the secret hollow and "whitens" (*i.e.*, intensifies its tension) by a supreme effort of will-power. But this will-power must be intelligently directed *and it must be fire-born*.

Most of the forms of Masters seen are these mind-forms made temporarily visible by increased vibration, as that caused by a train, or by the etheric tension in an audience, or in many other ways. The Master might use these pictures as a vehicle to impress an idea to those seeing them; so, also, may the dark powers in Nature or among men. By "dark powers among men" I mean and include those persons who merely work for some end to which they are partial. Hence Masters by preference, in cases where there is no Adept-guru helping on the physical plane, prefer to speak "through the inner planes of being," which are the soul and mind. But mere sentiment and religious gush are not within the Master Mind.

As I understand the matter, the thought-body (*Mayavi-Rupa*) of a Master (which is himself) does not visit any but a highly trained disciple, unless an Adept be at hand to modify the great vibrations coming from this energetic "body" for the unprepared (by long training) dis-

ciple. As in the case of H.P.B. when Colonel Olcott first saw the Master. Otherwise the energetic volume and force would injure the physical and nervous body of the perceiver. The training extends over many years and even many lives. It differs in different races. Embryo students of less than seven years' training in any one or several lives, and without the aforesaid "Spiritual quality," are unable to tell whether an appearance of a Master, or any of His manifestations, down to letters written by His order, are genuine or not genuine. Seven years are required for each new body, even by an Adept. Those who have evolved certain centres, and can cause them to "breathe" (*i.e.*, intensify and vibrate) at will, at a spiritual rate far beyond any known to ordinary men — only such persons can "feel" the Master. And these persons will never be found to use terms of the senses to describe "The Presence," even "feel" being a blind or substitute for "tremble" or "vibrate." Nor will they endeavour to prove the spiritual Presence by terms of sense to the material mind. The Companions say fearlessly:

The spiritual is its own proof. Only to Consciousness can Consciousness be known.

A large proportion of men and women know what absolute, interior conviction is. To such, the first rudiment of the real Consciousness is known. It would be wise to trace it *to its source* in ourselves; a clue lies there.

Consider also that paragraph in *The Secret Doctrine*, where the seer is depicted as watching the first differentiation of a milky "spiritual substance." The human process is an image or model of the world process.

—JASPER NIEMAND

(To be continued)

THERE ARE many wonders, but nothing more wondrous than man.

—SOPHOCLES

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“The pursuit of *profit*, *productivity* and *progress* rests on *property* and is sustained by *publicity*.” These five elements make up what Lewis Mumford calls “The Pentagon of Power” (*Gandhi Marg*, July 1972). What binds them together is the pecuniary motive, the dominant motive in our society; but they are divorced from the rest of life and dominate life for the sake of an ultimate gain measured in terms of pecuniary aggrandizement.

What we need, says Mr. Mumford, is “a unified culture capable of absorbing and ordering the entire experience of man, external and internal,” and therefore “all the aspects of life which were rejected or neglected must come back into the world of science.” Science has for long rejected all the subjective life of humanity; it has also rejected the historic experience of the human race. This has been its great weakness.

We have produced more power than we know how to use properly. Mr. Mumford suggests that the present situation requires the co-operation of the entire human race. We seem to think that there is a purely technological answer to the problem, say, of environmental pollution, whereas it actually requires a change of mind on the part of large populations. “We need a morality, we need almost a religion capable of dealing with the situation.” Mr. Mumford goes on to say:

Each member of the human race must take it personally as an essential duty to help to preserve the human race. Each one of us must examine his own life, he must examine the life of his own community and his nation, and the part that it plays in the world, if we are ever to get within sight of viable life free from these terrible dangers, but capable of enjoying the benefits of our technology. . . .

If one looks at the situation with a calm eye one realizes that the disintegration is becoming universal on a large scale. Plainly large populations in the world today are demoralized: they have been cut off from their past, they have no life that is worth living, and they are in a state where almost anything may happen. One can say that a considerable number — and this applies to all populations, not to one or two countries — are in a psychotic state. We have reached a point where we cannot go any further in the direction that we have been going without suffering continual

physical breakdowns as well as mental breakdowns. Both are taking place. We close our eyes to them, and pretend that everything is going right — just as the Romans in the fourth century A.D. did. But everything was going to pieces at that time in the Roman Empire, and I believe things are going to pieces today. On the other hand, while that is happening, inventions are made, many useful social measures for health and sanitation are adopted. So this is not entirely a black picture. If it were, there would be no sense in talking. Two things are going on at the same time: one radically bad, which may eventually lead to the entire disintegration of our civilization even without any nuclear war, and the other, in the midst of this, is that fresh forces are coming to the surface. And I find some evidence of this among the young. . . .

The first sign that a fresh idea is taking place is often iconoclastic: the tearing down of visible symbols of the old order. It has happened in the case of the Churches, of course, again and again. And it is taking place obviously today. This is a very painful procedure, yet it is something that happens when the existing order is not sufficiently flexible, sufficiently alive, to meet the situation half way. When it is, this need not take place. . . .

In our belief that progress is indefinite and that there are no limits to technological expansion, we have taken over all the vices of the ruling class in every age. We have held before the common man the notion that everybody should be entitled to all the appurtenances that the upper classes had. When the upper classes were only a small minority they had to tax the majority with terrible burdens of labour in order to have their advantages. Now if the entire population of the world were to enjoy all the things which for the moment we regard as the marks of civilization, there would not be enough to go round anywhere: we should find ourselves destitute as never before. If 10,000 people go to a beauty spot to enjoy the beauty, the beauty disappears. There are limits to the advantage you can have from any one facility, from any one resource. All of us will have to embrace a much more moderate life. We shall have to think of selecting and refining life to such an extent that we shall have enough for a good life but not enough for an extravagant life, not enough for a foolish life. A large part of the so-called necessities, the things that obsess people today, are very often foolish things. . . .

All the vices of the leisure class in the past now threaten our whole society. There is only one cure for it, and it is a cure that even the leisure classes of other ages found for themselves. One must work. . . . Work certainly plays a very important part in

keeping everybody's life in balance. We all have to go back to manual occupations. Not for profit. We all of us, for the sake of living a balanced, interesting life, will have to give our services and our products freely to others: we need what the French have called "an economy of gifts," and to practise many occupations purely for the joy of work itself, and not for any extraneous reward.

In his article "Science and the Modern Predicament" (*New Scientist*, February 24), Henryk Skolimowski, Professor of Philosophy in the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, poses the question: "Does science control people or do people control science?" At the beginning of the 17th century, when Galileo faced the inquisition, science was on trial for attempting to extend man and his universe beyond the limits in which they were bound. Today, as the author sees it, science is on trial once again, but for quite a different reason and in quite different circumstances. In the course of time, science itself became a bondage, restraining and suffocating the people, their society and their civilization. Science is the *pursuit* of truth — not the embodiment of truth and of human dignity, as many still believe it to be.

Science as an integral part of western civilization is clearly much more than a collection of physical facts and a body of pure ideas. It is above all a social phenomenon. It is only with regard to science so conceived, as a part of the fabric of society, that we can meaningfully ask: "Does science control people, or do people control science?"...

The course of a civilization is determined by the quality, quantity, and character of learning pursued in the institutions of learning in that civilization. Since science has continually shaped the character of learning pursued in our schools and universities, its influence should be expected to be profound. And so it is. For we inherit from our schools not only knowledge about the world. We inherit also a particular conception of the world....

Seen in this context, science does control people; it does control people subtly and indirectly because it furnishes them with the categories of understanding; it acts as a series of filters through which we view reality.... The conceptual framework of western man in modern times has been profoundly influenced by science; and so was his language and his thinking....

A sharp distinction is often made, particularly by the priests of pure science, between science and technology; the rationale given is that science is innocent and that technology is responsible for the present crisis in society. This separation is, of course, artificial. . . . Technology, seen in the broad perspective of science as a social institution, is only an extension of science; and it is only within this broad perspective that we can meaningfully discuss the social consequences of either science or technology. . . .

The most obvious but mutually exclusive answers to my question are: (1) Yes, people control science because individual people make contributions to science following their chosen line of inquiry; (2) No, people do not control science because even scientists and the whole institution of science are manipulated by the power structures of society.

None of these answers is adequate. Science is an exceedingly complex affair and our loaded question can only be answered by reconstructing the various contexts of science. . . . We must be clear what kind of science or what context of science we mean. If it turns out that the existing science or the existing contexts of science are such that we cannot help but be controlled by science — if, in other words, our destinies are diverted into directions which we know to be undesirable — then perhaps the time has come for us to evolve a new science.

It may appear heretical, but it is, nevertheless, worth considering whether our dilemmas arise primarily from the misapplication of science and technology, or from the very nature of science and technology, from the nature of our rational ideology. Are there some inexorable tendencies in science which make our present predicaments inescapable? If so, the only answer is not to try to curtail existing science, but to create a New Science.

Polygraph expert Cleve Backster's experiments to show that plants have emotions, memories and possibly even a way of reading people's minds were commented on in "In the Light of Theosophy" for September 1969 and November 1970. In further experiments he has tried to demonstrate that when a leaf trembles, it may really be frightened. He attached his polygraph to a dracaena's leaves to see if they would register any change showing a kind of neutral response when the roots were watered.

Medical World News reports that Mr. Backster's polygraph emitted pattern from the just-watered dracaena similar to that of a person under emotional stimulation. To see if the plant would react to a threat of trauma, he decided to burn a leaf. As the idea crossed his mind, Backster contends, "the recording pen bounded right off the chart."

Other polygraph experiments show that plants can "faint" when a human who has "killed" a neighbour plant comes near. Eggs also faint when picked up to be broken and get nervous when other eggs are broken.

This idea of intelligence in all living beings and communication between them may seem new to today's scientists, but is, in fact, an ancient one. It opens up a whole range of possibilities and goes to show the basic oneness of all life.

Many medical men have of late expressed themselves against steady "social" drinking, even in small amounts. Dr. George E. Burch, chairman of the department of medicine at Tulane University, says that drinking can in some cases lead to the weakening of the muscle fibres of the heart (*Science Digest*, June 1972). The heart turns into a flabby and inefficient pump and develops congestive heart failure or a fatal abnormal rhythm.

Drinking regularly [Dr. Burch asserts] is worse than smoking. Some physicians have said in the past that alcohol is a heart tonic, but I do not subscribe to that view.... Under no circumstances do I recommend cocktails on a steady basis.

While heart damage, known as cardiomyopathy, has long been a complication in alcoholics, it is only recently that the condition is becoming evident in social drinkers who have been examined at autopsy.

To those who believe that drinking can correct a sluggish appetite, Dr. Burch suggests that the wiser way is to find out why the appetite is sluggish.
