

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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ADAPTABILITY AND RESOURCEFULNESS

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IN the life of chelaship two fundamental powers are the parents of all faculties and virtues. The tests and trials of chelaship are passed with the aid of these two powers — adaptability and resourcefulness. And these two are not separate powers; they are a dual power. A soul's adaptability to his environment without resourcefulness to master it would mean stagnation. On the other hand, a resourceful person without adaptability would become discontented, not with himself but with his environment and others, and discontent is corrosive. Discontent must be divine, *i.e.*, while a soul does not rest satisfied with his environment, with patience he faces its limitations and stepping on them rises higher. The great symbol of progress is Perpetual Motion. To be passively satisfied with one's environment stops growth. That satisfaction is of the nature of *Tamas*, Inertia. Dissatisfaction with one's environment leads to impulsive action with a desire to produce outer change. Impulsive action is of the quality of *Rajas* — jerky and disturbing motion which frustrates itself. The chela learns to use his own contentment and moves deliberately to self-improvement which effects improvement in his own environment. This is rhythmic motion and is of the nature of *Sattva*, Harmony. If one is satisfied with his existing environment he gives no exercise to his *manasic* limbs and his resourcefulness becomes atrophied. Dissatisfaction and desire to change quickly and radically will make him irritable and impatient with others and with his environment, and that disturbs his resourcefulness and he is likely to squander his funds. To use our environment is to learn the lessons it stores for us, and only when those are learnt are we able to gain freedom.

To rest content with one's environment is to forgo the method of self-induced and self-devised efforts; to be merely dissatisfied with it is to neglect to take into account that such efforts are ever checked by Karma; to seek ways and means within the soul so that the debt of Karma is paid and the lesson is learnt is to practise the Third Fundamental of *The Secret Doctrine*:

The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

This task every human soul performs, but the influences of our civilization lead him to one of the two extremes. Generally speaking, the Westerner emphasizes the virtue of effort and underrates the strength of karmic checks; the Easterner, on the other hand, rests content with fate and does not recognize what the Mahatma K.H. taught, that "it is always wiser to work and force the current of events than to wait for time."

To be resourceful in the practice of adaptability means that we proceed from within without and deliberately labour to overcome the limitations of environment. Fulfilment of Karma is not running away from Karma; the bonds of Karma fall away only through fulfilment.

To be adaptable does not mean to be overpowered by Karma. We must steadily break the bonds of Karma by proper application of the principles of the Esoteric Philosophy and the rules of discipline it enjoins. Knowledge as well as discipline is necessary for overcoming Karma through the fulfilment of duties. Our present resources are the results of previous efforts and have therefore limitations. Knowledge removes the barriers and increases the fund of resources, for knowledge shows how karmic debts can be paid.

When a man takes his evolution into his own hands he may be said to have put himself on the Path of Chelaship. Lay-chelas have for their Guru the Master within (see *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 3, footnote). Such lay-chelas are tested by the processes of Life, called the Mighty Magic of *Prakriti*. That Guru within, allowed to control and guide the personal consciousness, brings the lay-chela to the path of probation proper, when a new principle of the magic of *Prakriti* begins to operate in his life and acts as a bridge to the Occult World of the Masters of Esoteric Wisdom. By following the dictates of conscience a person gains the guidance of the Higher Ego — the Master within; by following that

guidance he becomes ready to enter the Hall of Wisdom, of which it is said:

Seek for him who is to give thee birth, in the Hall of Wisdom.
... That which is uncreate abides in thee, Disciple, as it abides
in that Hall.

This One in the Hall of Wisdom is defined as "the Initiate, who leads the disciple, through the Knowledge given to him to his spiritual, or second birth." He "is called the Father, Guru or Master."

In every grade of chelaship there are tests and trials. Every chela passes through many of them. All tests, however, are but aspects of the One Test — the test of his power to adapt himself to outer conditions. He fails or succeeds in any test due to his own resources. It was said that a new principle of the magic of *Prakriti* begins to operate in the life of the probationer, which tests his adaptability. But also a force is added to his resourcefulness. Not only his own character and his hard-won faculties are there; knowledge offered by the Esoteric Philosophy is also there. No weakness manifests in anyone without the strength to overcome it; no circumstance arises which cannot yield its own lesson; and no test comes to any chela which he cannot pass with the help of the instructions and the aids which are in his possession.

In the higher stages of discipleship, when the chela has seen his Master "face to face," he is sent wherever the call of service is heard. Therefore the probationer prepares himself and gets ready to adapt himself to all climates, psychic conditions, and races of men. He must unfold within himself adaptability so that he may help in the Great Service of Orphan Humanity planned by the Masters.

It is said that the life of chelaship means a life with no breaks of continuity, no gaps, no interludes, not even during those periods which are the *termini* of the long pilgrimages of purely spiritual life, called "post-mortem" states. Therefore *devachanic* experiences are gone through in incarnate existences. For this, greater adaptability and resourcefulness are essential.

By discernment we must ascertain our own duty and by patience we must respond to its call. In contentment we must bide our time while actively pursuing our discipline, noting both success and failure, but never losing the integrity of our own inner consciousness. That inner consciousness is resourceful, and ever finds ways and means to overcome obstacles, and adaptability unfolds thus, more and more.

Just as the body of a traveller must become acclimatized, so the personal nature of the chela must adapt itself to the conditions in which he finds himself. This does not mean that he should become as the worldly are; he has to protect himself against the psychic effluvia of the earth earthy, and he must learn to control the psychic conditions, exactly as the traveller clothes himself suitably to respond to heat or cold. Our own bodily and psychic health makes us immune to the germs of disease on every plane of being.

Of far greater difficulty are the ebullitions of our own personal nature; they interfere with our tapping our own soul resources. The climber must possess strong heart, lungs, and legs, and the spiritual mountaineer needs his soul resources all the time. Therefore the tests of the probationer, if successfully passed, make him immune to the nefarious influences of the Astral Light—the chela's great tempter and enemy.

Adaptability and resourcefulness are like reincarnation and karma—two in one, the unit with a dual aspect. Through successive lives on earth we become adaptable and by overcoming our own karma we increase our fund of resources. This the chela does deliberately.

It is said that when the Great Ones emerge from Their retreats to teach mankind They work with the mind of the race as They find it. This is adaptability on Their part. But every time They retire after due labour in the world, some men have grown in wisdom and virtue. This is due to Their resourcefulness.

Similarly, between pupil and Master there is the play of magic rooted in adaptability and resourcefulness. The chela adapts himself to the Master who in turn adjusts the mind of the chela; the Guru using the resources of the chela enables him to gather the force of the Occult World for the benefit of the race of mortals. The highest aspiration of the Theosophical student should be so to train himself that the Master to whose bidding he has devoted his life may think him worthy of the act of Great Sacrifice whereby the Master pours into the disciple the Light of His own consciousness. This demands supreme adaptability on the part of the chela, for thus he comes to command resources of the highest order.

SEARCHING FOR THE IMPERSONAL

Now if a man worship Brahman, thinking Brahman is one and he another, he has not the true knowledge.

—*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*

MAN stands perpetually between two fires. He burns himself badly at the fire of his personal predilections, but is fascinated by it as is the moth by his night lamp. The other fire is benign. It illumines; and for those who earnestly seek its light, it protects. This is the fire of the impersonal self. Justice, truth, mercy, charity, faith and love flower under its warmth. But its light is inimical to the weeds and plants that grow under the heat of the personal flame. The man of mature mind can choose to bar entry to that light which for the moment he finds inconvenient, and can, as it were, draw a curtain shutting off the unwanted rays. Man can train himself to avert his eyes from the unethical and therefore the undesirable. He can, however, glut his eyes on the sensual, the unseemly and the evil. The choice is his to make.

When man chooses to emplace his consciousness in the personal, he views himself as a thing apart from other men and from the world outside. He groups this external world of his into two broad divisions: those who can help him satisfy his desires and those others who stand in his way. He is therefore constantly at war with his fellow men. He believes that the world is his to plunder and each circumstance an opportunity for turning to his own benefit. Thus, for sport he will slaughter without any compunction; for his so-called researches, he will maim and torture both men and animals; for his vanity, he will drag the names of others in the mire; for his glory, he will wade through slaughter to a throne. Inquisitions, burnings, fratricides, wars, genocides and artificially created and directed pestilences are but the natural outcome of a personality gone amuck, a mind that is poisoned and choked by the weeds of insatiable desires.

The personal touch is unclean. It defiles in each and every case. It may please at times and bring a contentment of sorts. But the while it satisfies, it corrodes; and its inevitable companions of pain and destruction step in to claim their victims. The personal bias is to be eschewed because it lends to the animal the cunning and the power that human intellect can give. This bias cannot be transformed. The malignant cannot become the benign. It is therefore an abomination to

say: "Let my desires be fulfilled this once and then I will become impersonal with the tremendous force that satisfied desires can generate." All desires are like soiling substances. They mar the surfaces they settle upon. No desires born of flesh can act as cleansing media and it were foolish to imagine that their touch will leave the mind untarnished. The impersonal does not grow out of the personal. The two cannot mix, nor can the one appear when the other holds the man's undivided attention.

However, it were wrong to presume that the impersonal is so far removed from us as to be reached by the very, very few. The impersonal is at the elbow of the personal. It is the very source from which the ray that is to become the personal man was emitted. At birth, this ray enters and enmeshes itself in a capsule of matter and desires. The personal is, therefore, an offshoot of the impersonal. As it awakes to consciousness in the growing man, it is gripped fast by lust, anger and greed as they arise from unsatisfied desires. These in their fury course through the veins of the subtler body of man and force him to satisfy their hunger through mental or physical indulgence. Says *The Voice of the Silence*: "Heaven's dew-drop glittering in the morn's first sunbeam within the bosom of the lotus, when dropped on earth becomes a piece of clay; behold, the pearl is now a speck of mire."

Neither the personal nor yet the impersonal can function without the instrumentality of the human mind. But the mind cannot be shared by both. The one must quit before the other can enter. The mind is the abode of the man, is definitely not the man himself. If it is to be used as a temple, the dirt and filth of ages must be swept clean away, the stench removed, the pollution eradicated. Traces of all selfish trends which are the progeny of the personality have to be removed and the spots susceptible of attracting dirt taken care of. Translated in terms of daily living, it means that all upsurges of the personal have to be suppressed and the mind kept so concentrated on the impersonal that it is full and active and has no vulnerable chinks or neglected spots through which the cohorts of selfishness can enter and storm the citadel.

The struggle between the personal and the impersonal is hardly sensed in its true perspective by the average man of the day. He sees life as a shifting kaleidoscope of blacks and whites, and so great is the illusion which dominates him that what he considers as virtue, he may acknowledge later as sin, and *vice versa*. When the man has reached the stage at which he can distinguish between desire and aspiration,

he reaches a new orientation in thought. Pleasure diminishes in its glamour and starting with vague imaginings, he encounters that which makes its presence felt even though it remains beyond the reach and range of ordinary sensations. It is at this stage that he glimpses the continuous struggle that is going on within his own mind. He now sees that he is fighting something which is not outside of him but verily a part of himself. He seems to have two faces: that of his personal self held prisoner by the hundred cords of desire and that of his impersonal self to which he reaches in moments of aspiration. It is now that the battle of the will-powers starts. Hard blows are given and taken and the fortunes of war sway from one side to the other. Here no devil nor angel can intervene. The man becomes his own friend and also his own enemy. At each blow for or against, it is he alone who must bear the brunt and agony of it and so continue till the eyes become incapable of tears and the self is emplaced firmly in the true.

In the fight for mastery, the disciple oftentimes forgets that the impersonal can be reached only through the region of the higher mind. It is not to be contacted on the physical plane. It functions on the plane of ideas from where its influence percolates through and acts upon the physical, provided the physical is willing. The impersonal dwells on ideas that synthesize and bind. It seeks to add its force to any movement that exists anywhere in the world for the strengthening of human faith in the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood. Its own essence of ONENESS and solidarity precludes it from desiring baubles for itself. Possessions, status, wealth have a value only when they are compared with the quantum possessed by others. They require the odious comparison of their being owned in larger or smaller measure by oneself vis-à-vis another.

Practice demands that at each turn the upsurge of the personal be held up to the scrutiny of the impersonal. In the preliminary stages, the student has to imitate in action the qualities and the marks of that impersonal. Such exercise is highly distasteful to the personality which, to escape the bridle, is liable to feign illness or to stampede and rebel and go through all the antics that an animal adopts when under the compulsion of training. It is then a question as to whose will shall ultimately dominate—that of the brute energy that is aroused to lashing point by the awareness that it is being trapped into losing its freedom, or that of the trainer who refuses to consider defeat even though for long periods the animal proves intractable.

The impersonal has to be evoked, its habitat made ready to suit its functioning. You cannot be the possessor of a vast all-comprehending charity and still have the desire to live on the love of others. You cannot serve in the true sense until you have renounced all rewards. You cannot expect to have divine powers released to you as long as you do not so impersonalize the use of the powers you already possess that at no time will you by their use break or violate the laws of universal brotherhood. These considerations are preliminary and the truth which lies behind them has to be acknowledged before any search for the impersonal can be undertaken.

Now, the voice of the personal cannot reach to the impersonal until the personality is able to throw its voice on to that plane on which the impersonal resides. Every aspiration upwards, every effort at emulating the impersonal establishes a bridge along which communication can be established. The impersonal has a voice, but the ears have to be tuned to its frequency before the first sounds can be heard.

Unless the student sees the impersonal within himself, he will fail to perceive it in others. To the man who is steeped in personal considerations, the acts of the impersonal man appear jejune and futile, acts of sacrifice that can only end in suffering, a renouncing that would banish pleasure and leave no comfort behind.

How can a man mount to impersonality? *Light on the Path* gives the answer in a series of paradoxes:

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| i | Kill out ambition. | But work as those work who are ambitious. |
| ii | Kill out desire of life. | But respect life as those do who desire it. |
| iii | Kill out desire of comfort. | But be happy as those are who live for happiness. |
| iv | Kill out all sense of separateness. | But stand alone and isolated. |
| v | Kill out desire for sensation. | But learn from sensation and observe it. |
| vi | Kill out the hunger for growth. | But grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air. |
| vii | Desire power ardently. | But that power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men. |

- viii Desire peace fervently. But the peace you shall desire is that sacred peace which nothing can disturb.
- ix Desire possessions above all. But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united.

The accredited agent of the Masters of Wisdom when referring to herself said that she was only the window through which the light came. This is impersonality *in excelsis*. This is an example that students can emulate.

THE great end in religious instruction is not to stamp our minds upon the young, but to stir up their own;

Not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own;

Not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth;

Not to form an outward regularity, but to touch inward springs;

Not to bind them by ineradicable prejudices to our particular sect or peculiar notions, but to prepare them for impartial, conscientious judging of whatever subjects may be offered for their decision;

Not to burden the memory, but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought;

Not to impose religion upon them in the form of arbitrary rules, but to awaken the conscience, the moral discernment;

In a word, the great end is to awaken the soul; to bring understanding, conscience, and heart into earnest vigorous action on religious and moral truth, to excite and cherish the spiritual life.

—WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING

FORCE OF PREJUDICE

[Last month we reprinted some words of vital importance under the caption "Basis of Investigation." Those words were penned by a freethinker and secularist in the *Secular Review* for June 2, 1888. The message implicit in that reprint is amplified by H.P.B. herself in the article which we reprint here from *Lucifer* for July 1889. It is an impassioned and reasoned appeal for dispassionate and balanced examination of teachings and doctrines and ideas, wherever they come from. This article deals with some remarks by Charles Bradlaugh against Theosophy. That even such a man (who can help respecting this great champion of freedom of belief and of speech?) should be influenced by creedalism is a surprising psychological phenomenon. Once again in this article Rationalists and Agnostics, Theosophists and Gnostics alike will find a message of great practical value.—Eds.]

The difference is as great between

The optics seeing, as the objects seen.

All manners take a tincture from our own,

Or some discolour'd through our passion shown;

Or fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,

Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

—POPE

"It is, indeed, shorter and easier to proceed from ignorance to knowledge than from error," says Jerdan.

But who in our age of religions gnashing their teeth at one another, of sects innumerable, of "isms" and "ists" performing a wild *fandango* on the top of each other's heads to the rhythmical accompaniment of tongues, instead of castanets, clapping invectives—who will confess to his error? Nevertheless, all cannot be true. Nor can it be made clear by any method of reasoning, why men should on the one hand hold so tenaciously to opinions which most of them have *adopted*, not *begotten*, while they feel so savagely inimical to other sets of opinions, generated by somebody else!

Of this truth the past history of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society is a striking illustration. It is not that men do not desire novelty, or that progress and growth of thought are not welcomed. Our age is as greedy to set up new idols as it is to overthrow the old gods; as ready to give lavish hospitality to new ideas, as to kick out most unceremoni-

ously theories that now seem to them effete. These new ideas may be as stupid as green cucumbers in a hot milk soup, as unwelcome to the majority as a fly in communion wine. Suffice it, however, that they emanate from a scientific brain, a recognized "authority," for them to be welcomed with open arms by the fanatics of science. In this our century, as all know, every one in society, whether intellectual or scientific, dull or ignorant, is ceaselessly running after some new thing. More so even, in truth, than the Athenian of Paul's day. Unfortunately, the new crazes men run after, now as then, are not *truths*—much as modern Society prides itself on living in an age of facts—but simply corroborations of men's hobbies, whether religious or scientific. Facts, indeed, are eagerly sought after, by all—from the solemn conclaves of Science who seems to hang the destinies of the human race on the correct definition of the anatomy of a mosquito's *proboscis*, down to half-starved penny-a-liners on the war-path after sensational news. But, it is only *such* facts as serve to pander to one or another of the prejudices and preconceptions, which are the ruling forces in the modern mind that are sure of their welcome.

Anything outside of such facts; any new or old idea unpopular and distasteful, for some mysterious reason or other, to the prevailing *ismical* authorities, will very soon be made to feel its unpopularity. Regarded askance, at first, with uplifted eyebrows and in wonderment, it will begin by being solemnly and almost *a priori* tabooed and thence refused *per secula seculorum* even a dispassionate hearing. People will begin to comment upon it—each faction in the light of its own prejudice and special craze. Then, each will proceed to distort it—the mutually inimical factions even clubbing their inventions, so as to slay the intruder with the more certainty, until each and all will be running amuck at it.

Thus act all the religious *isms*, even so all the independent Societies, whether scientific, free-thinking, Agnostic or Secularistic. Not one of these has the faintest correct conception about Theosophy or the Society of this name; none of them has ever gone to the trouble of even enquiring about either—yet, one and all will sit in Solomon's seat and judge the hateful (perhaps, because dangerous?) intruder, in the light of their respective misconceptions. We are not likely to stop to argue Theosophy with religious fanatics. Such remarks are beneath contempt, as those in "Word and Work" which, speaking of "the prevalence of Spiritualism and its advance *under the new form of Theosophy*" (?), strikes both with a sledge-hammer tempered in holy water, by first

accusing both Spiritualism and Theosophy of "imposture," and then of *having the devil*.¹ But when in addition to sectarian fanatics, missionaries and foggy retrogrades, in general, we find such clear-headed, cool, intellectual giants as Mr. Bradlaugh falling into the common errors and prejudice — the thing becomes more serious.

It is *so serious*, indeed, that we do not hesitate to enter a respectful yet firm protest in the pages of our *journal*—the only organ that is likely to publish all that we have to say. The task is an easy one. Mr. Bradlaugh has just published his views upon Theosophy in half a column of his *National Reformer* (June 30th) in which article — "Some Words of Explanation" — we find some half-a-dozen of the most regrettable misconceptions about the supposed beliefs of Theosophists. We publish it *in extenso* as it speaks for itself and shows the reason of his displeasure. Passages that we mean to controvert are underlined.

SOME WORDS OF EXPLANATION

The review of Madame Blavatsky's book in the last *National Reformer* and an announcement in the *Sun* have brought me several letters on the subject of Theosophy. I am asked for explanations as to what Theosophy is, and as to my opinions on Theosophy. The word "theosoph" is old, and was used among the Neoplatonists. From the dictionary, its new meaning appears to be, "one who claims to have a *knowledge of God*, or of the laws of nature by means of internal illumination." An Atheist certainly cannot be a Theosophist. A Deist might be a Theosophist. *A Monist could not be a Theosophist. Theosophy must at least involve Dualism.* Modern Theosophy, according to Madame Blavatsky, as set out in last week's issue, asserts much that I do not believe, and alleges some things which to me are certainly not true. I have not had the opportunity of reading Madame Blavatsky's two volumes, but I have read during the past ten years many publications from the pen of herself, Colonel Olcott, and other Theosophists. They appear to me to have sought to *rehabilitate a kind of Spiritualism in Eastern phraseology*. I think many of their allegations utterly erroneous, and their reasonings wholly unsound. I very deeply indeed regret that my col-

¹ "Many, however," it adds, "who have had fuller knowledge of spiritualistic pretensions than we have, are convinced that, in some cases, there are real communications from the spirit world. If such there be, we have no doubt whence they come. They are certainly from beneath, not from above." *O Sancta Simplicitas*, which still believes in the *devil* — by perceiving its own face in the mirror, no doubt?

league and co-worker has, with somewhat of suddenness, and without any interchange of ideas with myself, adopted as facts, matters which seem to me *as unreal as it is possible for any fiction to be*. My regret is greater as I know Mrs. Besant's devotion to any course she believes to be true. I know that she will always be earnest in the advocacy of any views she undertakes to defend, and I look to possible developments of her Theosophic opinions with the very gravest misgiving. The editorial policy of this paper is unchanged, and is directly antagonistic to all forms of Theosophy. I would have preferred on this subject to have held my peace, for the publicly disagreeing with Mrs. Besant on her adoption of Socialism has caused pain to both; but on reading her article and taking the public announcement made of her having joined the Theosophical organization, I owe it to those who look to me for guidance to say this with clearness. —C. BRADLAUGH

It is of course useless to go out of our way to try and convert Mr. Bradlaugh from his views as a thorough Materialist and Atheist to our Pantheism (for real Theosophy *is that*), nor have we ever sought by word or deed to convert Mrs. Besant. She has joined us entirely of her own free will and accord, though the fact gave all *earnest* Theosophists unbounded satisfaction, and to us personally more pleasure than we have felt for a long time. But we will simply appeal to Mr. Bradlaugh's well-known sense of justice and fairness, and prove to him that he is mistaken — at any rate, as to the views of Col. Olcott and the present writer, and in the interpretation he gives to the term "Theosophy."

It will be sufficient to say that if Mr. Bradlaugh knew anything of the *Rules* of our Society he would know that if even he, the Head of Secularism, were to become today a member of the Theosophical Society, such an action would *not necessitate his giving up one iota of his Secularistic ideas*. We have greater atheists in the T.S. than he ever was or can be, namely, Hindus belonging to certain all-denying sects. Mr. Bradlaugh believes in mesmerism, at all events he has great curative powers himself, and therefore could not well deny the presence in some persons of such mysterious faculties; whereas, if you attempted to speak of mesmerism or even of hypnotism to the said Hindus, they would only shrug their shoulders at you and laugh. Membership in the Theosophical Society does not expose the "Fellows" to any interference with their religious, irreligious, political, philosophical or scientific views. The Society is not a sectarian nor is it a religious body, but

simply a nucleus of men devoted to the search after truth, whencesoever it may come. Mrs. Annie Besant was right when stating, in the same issue of the *National Reformer*, that the three objects of the Theosophical Society are:

to found a Universal Brotherhood without distinction of race or creed; to forward the study of Aryan literature and philosophy; to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man. On matters of religious opinion, the members are absolutely free. The founders of the society deny a personal God, and a somewhat subtle form of Pantheism is taught as the Theosophic view of the Universe, though even this is not forced on members of the Society.

To this Mrs. Besant adds, over her own signature, that though she cannot, in the *National Reformer*, state fully her reasons for joining the T. S., yet she has

no desire to hide the fact that this form of Pantheism appears to promise solution of some problems, especially problems in psychology, which Atheism leaves untouched.

We seriously hope that she will not be disappointed.

The second object of the T.S., *i.e.*, the Eastern philosophy interpreted esoterically, has never yet failed to solve many a problem for those who study the subject seriously. It is only those others, who, without being natural mystics, rush heedlessly into the mysteries of the unexplained psychic powers latent in every man (*in Mr. Bradlaugh himself*, as well as in any other) from ambition, curiosity or simple vanity — that generally come to grief and make the T.S. responsible for their own failure.

Now what is there that could prevent even Mr. Bradlaugh from joining the T.S.? We will take up the argument point by point.

Is it because Mr. Bradlaugh is an Individualist, an English Radical of the old school, that he cannot sympathize with such a lofty idea as the Universal Brotherhood of Man? His well-known kindness of heart, his proven philanthropy, his life-long efforts in the cause of the suffering and the oppressed, would seem to prove the contrary in his practice, whatever his theoretical views on the subject may be. But, if perchance he clings to his theories in the face of his practice, then let us leave aside this, the first object of the T.S. Some members of our Society, unfortunately, sympathize as little as he might with this noble,

but perchance (to Mr. Bradlaugh) somewhat Utopian ideal. No member is obliged to feel in *full* sympathy with all three objects; suffice that he should be in sympathy with one of the three, and be willing not to oppose the two others, to render him eligible to membership in the T.S.

Is it because he is an Atheist? To begin with, we dispute "the new meaning" he quotes from the dictionary that "a Theosophist is one who claims to have a knowledge of God." No one can claim *a knowledge* of "God," the absolute and unknowable universal Principle; and in a personal god Eastern Theosophists (therefore Olcott and Blavatsky) do *not* believe. But if Mr. Bradlaugh contends that in that case the name is a misnomer, we shall reply: *theosophia* properly means *not* a knowledge of "God" but of gods, *i.e.*, *divine*, that is superhuman knowledge. Surely Mr. Bradlaugh will not assert that human knowledge exhausts the universe and that no wisdom is possible outside the consciousness of man?

And why cannot a *Monist* be a Theosophist? And why must Theosophy at least involve *dualism*? Theosophy teaches a far stricter and more far-reaching *Monism* than does Secularism. The Monism of the latter may be described as materialistic and summed up in the words, "Blind Force and Blind Matter ultimating in Thought." But this—begging Mr. Bradlaugh's pardon—is *bastard* Monism. The Monism of Theosophy is truly philosophical. We conceive of the universe as one in essence and origin. And though we speak of Spirit and Matter as its two poles, yet we state emphatically that they can only be considered as distinct from the standpoint of human, *mayavic* (*i.e.*, illusionary) consciousness. We therefore conceive of spirit and matter *as one in essence* and not as separate and distinct antitheses.

What then are the "matters" that seem to Mr. Bradlaugh "as *unreal* as it is possible for any fiction to be"? We hope he is not referring to those physical phenomena, which most unfortunately have been confused in the Western mind with philosophical Theosophy? Real as these manifestations are—inasmuch as they were *not* produced by "conjuring tricks" of any kind—still the best of them are, ever were and ever will be, no better than *psychological illusions*, as the writer herself always called them to the disgust of many of her phenomenally inclined friends. These "unrealities" were all very well as *toys*, during the infancy of Theosophy; but we can assure Mr. Bradlaugh that all his Secularists might join the T.S. without ever being expected to believe in them—even though he himself produces the same "unreal"

but *beneficent* "illusions" in his mesmeric cures, of many of which we heard long ago. And surely the editor of the *National Reformer* will not call "unreal" the ethical and ennobling aspects of Theosophy, the undeniable effects of which are so apparent among the bulk of Theosophists — notwithstanding a backbiting and quarrelling minority? Surely again he will not deny the elevating influence of such beliefs as those in Reincarnation and Karma, doctrines which solve undeniably many a social problem that seeks elsewhere in vain for a solution?

The Secularists are fond of speaking of Science as "the Saviour of Man," and should, therefore, be ready to welcome new facts and listen to new theories. But are they prepared to listen to theories and accept facts that come to them from races which, in their insular pride, they term effete? For not only do the latter lack the sanction of orthodox Western Science, but they are stated in an unfamiliar form and are supported by reasoning not cast in the mould of the inductive system, which has usurped a spurious place in the eyes of Western thinkers.

The Secularists, if they wish to remain consistent materialists, will have perforce to shut out more than half the universe from the range of their explanations: that part namely, which includes mental phenomena, especially those of a comparatively rare and exceptional nature. Or do they imagine, perhaps, that in psychology — the youngest of the Sciences — everything is already known? Witness the Psychic Research Society with its Cambridge luminaries — sorry descendants of Henry More! — how vain and frantic its efforts, efforts that have so far resulted only in making confusion worse confounded. And why? Because they have foolishly endeavoured to test and to explain psychic phenomena on a physical basis. No Western psychologist has, so far, been able to give any adequate explanation even of the simplest phenomenon of consciousness — sense perception.

The phenomena of thought-transference, hypnotism, suggestion, and many other mental and psychic manifestations, formerly regarded as supernatural or the work of the devil, are now recognized as purely natural phenomena. And yet it is in truth the same powers, only intensified tenfold, that are those "unrealities" Mr. Bradlaugh speaks about. Manipulated by those who have inherited the tradition of thousands of years of study and observation of such forces, their laws and modes of operations — what wonder that they should result in effects, unknown to science, but *supernatural* only in the eyes of ignorance!

Eastern Mystics and Theosophists do *not* believe in *miracles*, any more than do the Secularists; what then is there *superstitious* in such studies? Why should discoveries so arrived at, and laws formulated in accordance with strict and cautious investigation be regarded as "rehabilitated Spiritualism"?

It is a historically recognized fact that Europe owes the revival of its civilization and culture, after the destruction of the Roman Empire, to Eastern influence. The Arabs in Spain and the Greeks of Constantinople brought with them only that which they had acquired from nations lying still further Eastward. Even the glories of the classical age owed their beginnings to the germs received by the Greeks from Egypt and Phœnicia. The far remote, so-called antediluvian, ancestors of Egypt and those of the Brahmin Aryans sprang once upon a time from the same stock. However much scientific opinions may vary as to the genealogical and ethnological sequence of events, yet the fact remains undeniable that every germ of civilization which the West has cultivated and developed has been received from the East. Why then should the English Secularists and Freethinkers in general, who certainly do not pride themselves on their imaginary descent from the lost ten tribes, why should they be so reluctant to accept the possibility of further enlightenment coming to them from that East, which was the cradle of their race? And why should they, who above all, ought to be free from prejudice, fanaticism, and narrow-mindedness, the exclusive prerogatives of *religious bodies*, why, we ask, should they who lay claim to free thought, and have suffered so much themselves from fanatical persecution, why, in the name of wonder, should they so readily allow themselves to be blinded by the very prejudices which they condemn?

This and many other similar instances bring out with the utmost clearness the right of the Theosophical Society to fair and impartial hearing; as also the fact that of all the now existing "isms" and "ists," our organization *is the only body entirely and absolutely free from all intolerance, dogmatism, and prejudice.*

The Theosophical Society, indeed, as a body, is the *only* one which opens its arms *to all*, imposing on none its own special beliefs, strictly limited to the small *inner* group within it, called the Esoteric Section. It is truly *Universal* in spirit and constitution. It recognizes and fosters no exclusiveness, no preconceptions. In the T.S. alone do men meet in the common search for truth, on a platform from which all dogmatism, all sectarianism, all mutual party hatred and condemnation

are excluded; for, accepting every grain of truth wherever it is found, it waits in patience till the chaff that accompanies it falls off by itself. It recognizes and knows of, and therefore avoids its representatives in its ranks — but one enemy — an enemy common to all, namely, Roman Catholicism, and that only because of its auricular confession. But even this exception exists only so far as regards *its inner group*, for reasons too apparent to need explanation.

Theosophy is monistic through and through. It seeks the one Truth in all religions, in all science, in all experience, as in every system of thought. What aim can be nobler, more universal, more all-embracing?

But evidently the world has not yet learned to regard Theosophy in this light, and the necessity of disabusing at least some of the best minds in the English-speaking countries, of the prejudices springing from the tares sown in them by our unscrupulous enemies is felt more than ever at this juncture. It is with the hope of weeding these minds from all such misconceptions, and of making the position of Theosophy plainer and clearer, that the present writer has prepared a small volume, called *The Key to Theosophy*, now in the press, and to be published very shortly. Therein are gathered in the shape of dialogue all the principal errors about, and objections to, Theosophy and its teachings, and more detailed and fuller arguments in proof of the assertions made in this article will be found in that work. The writer will make it her duty to send an early copy — not to the editor of the *National Reformer* — but to Mr. Bradlaugh *personally*. Knowing him by reputation for long years, it is impossible for us to believe that our critic would ever condescend to follow the example of most of the editors, lay or clerical, and condemn a work *on faith* even before he had cut open its pages, merely because of the unpopularity of its author and the subject treated.

In that volume it will be found that the chief concern of Theosophists is *Search after Truth*, and the investigation of such problems in Nature and Man which are mysteries today, but may become secrets, open to science, tomorrow. Is this a course which Mr. Bradlaugh would oppose? Does *his* judgment belong to the category of those that can never be open to revision? “This shall be your creed and belief, and therefore, all investigation is useless,” is a *dictum* of the Roman Catholic Church. It cannot be that of the Secularists — if they would remain true to their colours.

LOOKING AT THE QUESTION

“Looking at the question in the light of Theosophical theories.”

—*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 133

III

“What should be our duty, then, as students of truth?”

—*Vernal Blooms*, p. 146

HERE is a question put, as it were, to Mr. Judge by one such student, who surely speaks for all of us, even though, in the actual context, it refers specifically to the right attitude to adopt to modern science. But taking it as it stands, “What should be our duty, then, as students of truth?”, we could not have a better starting-point for gathering together all that we can find in answer to it from the teaching of one of the greatest of Theosophists.

What a privilege to study Truth! What an undertaking to which to devote ourselves! It is like a great mountain rising above us, waiting to be climbed, and, like any good guide in such circumstances, Mr. Judge begins with a warning to us tyros. He reminds us that, in the present age, there is “so much materialization of thought” (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 144), and makes the telling point that “an excess of the technical and special knowledge of the day very often acts to prevent men from apprehending the truth” (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 122). This is indeed so. Many of us must have proved it. Have not we found that when our *mind* is overbusy with current matters (interesting enough in themselves as they are, admittedly), our *spirit*, though still functioning on its own plane, which is that of the Eternal Verities, cannot get its message through to our consciousness, so that, progressively, these things cease to be real to us?

Mr. Judge would have us beware of the cycle we live in, such is its deadening power. “This cycle is known as the dark one; in Sanskrit, Kali Yuga, or the black age. It is dark because spirituality is almost obscured by materiality and pure intellectualism. . . . Governed chiefly by the mind apart from spirit, its characteristic gain is physical and material progress, its distinguishing loss is in spirituality” (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 198). In 1893, Mr. Judge perceived that even his fellow Theosophists were in danger of putting mind before spirit. Some workers, he wrote, “have begun to pay too much attention to the intellectual side of Theosophy and too little to that phase on which

the Masters who are behind us insist and which is called by H.P.B. in *The Voice of the Silence* the 'heart doctrine' " (*The Heart Doctrine* p. 3). "Oh, my friend," he urges a correspondent, "direct your thoughts to the Eternal Truth." (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 1)

Now, "direct" implies effort; it is the total opposite of drifting with the tide. So we find Mr. Judge indicating two courses, one negative, one positive, for students anxious to be informed about their duty in the search for and service of Truth.

The first, the negative course, he states simply. "We are to avoid all these immoral things and many others not so regarded by the crowd at all, but which are just as much so because we know to what increased ignorance and darkness they give rise through the ferment which they cause in the nature, and that this impedes the entrance of the clear rays of Truth" (*Letters*, p. 29). A most salutary injunction, for all too often we tend to want to run ere we can walk, meaning, we think of Truth as something to be sought through mystic practices, but Mr. Judge restrains us with the practical good sense which always accompanies his deepest wisdom. To repeat some words of his already used in a previous article, but of which we cannot be reminded too often — "Let the seeker know, once for all, that the virtues cannot be discarded nor ignored; they must be made a part of our life, and their philosophical basis must be understood." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 18*)

"Immoral things," one takes for granted, are far from any reader of this magazine, so it is the "many others" we must recognize as a danger to us, since, as Mr. Judge rightly says, they can cause an inner ferment which will destroy our calm and obscure the clear rays of Truth. They are habitual to us, unfortunately. We acknowledge the harm they do us as soon as Mr. Judge begins urging "the need for less selfishness, less personality, less dwelling on objects and desiring them — or sensation" (*The Theosophical Forum*, July 1895). All of these are injurious. There is "a large number of persons," Mr. Judge fails not to remark, "who are in the class which has been deprived of spiritual discernment through 'diversity of desires'" (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 136). "We must have fewer desires," he bids us. "Let those be high, pure, and altruistic" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*). For, if we allow ourselves to remain in that class, we are no real students of Truth.

Desires blind our insight, and, primarily, "there must be in us a power of discernment" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 18*, p. 8), or else we may fail to perceive Truth, it not being always what we where we imag-

ine it. We need not enlarge on this, but only say in passing that organized religion never shows us Truth *in its entirety*. "Religion is always man-made. It cannot therefore be the whole truth," says Mr. Judge (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 41). The various religions present various aspects of Truth, emphasizing now one and now another, and in the past have contended over them bitterly, as many martyrs could testify. But "Eternal Truth," says Mr. Judge, "is one and indivisible" (*Letters*, p. 12). How, indeed, could it be otherwise when Truth and Reality are a unity! If we know the Real we know the Truth, and *vice versa*.

Passing now from the negative to the positive, we are shown how even *desire* can be made to serve us, since, as H.P.B. says, "when desire is for the purely abstract — when it has lost all trace or tinge of 'self' — then it has become pure" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 13). Accordingly, we are to "desire truth with the same intensity that we had formerly wished for success, money, or gratification" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*, p. 12), and to do more than desire — to seek. "'Seek the truth by strong search,' by doing service, and by inquiry" (*Letters*, p. 121). Note those words, "by doing service." Mr. Judge believed firmly in "intelligent contact with life." In fact, one of his definitions of Truth is the "true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny" (*Path* Editorial for April 1886). So his bidding to any student anxious to fulfil his duty to Truth would be "not to retire but, seeking contact, to plunge into the misery and sorrow of the world, and with your cheering word, if you have no more, strive to lighten the burden for some struggling soul" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36*, p. 3). As already noted, Mr. Judge puts *motive* always to the fore. Only an unselfish one can justify any act. So even our attitude to Truth should have as its basis "the enlightenment of oneself for the good of others" (*Letters*, p. 75), since, for all involved in them, "the events of life and their causes lead to knowledge; they must be studied when they are manifested in daily life." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36*, p. 2)

"This brings us naturally" — to quote Mr. Judge — "to the proposition that the aims of the members in a Branch should be to eradicate selfishness and to promulgate and illustrate the doctrine of universal brotherhood, basing the explanation upon the actual unity of all beings. *This of itself will lead to the explanation of many other doctrines, as it underlies them all, great and small.*" (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 77)

The italics are ours, not Mr. Judge's, for that last sentence seems to bear so vitally on what is the duty of students of Truth. The unity

of all beings! A moment's thought will show us how it includes the two great doctrines of Karma and Rebirth, and immediately a distinct aspect of our duty to Truth will present itself. For, says Mr. Judge, "there is a mysterious power in these doctrines of karma and reincarnation which at last forces them upon the belief of those who take them up for study. It is due to the fact that the ego is itself the experiencer of rebirth and karma and has within a clear recollection of both, and rejoices, as it were, when it finds the lower mind taking them up for study. . . . *The ethics of Theosophy as enforced and illuminated by these twin doctrines should therefore be the object of our search and promulgation.*" (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 79)

Once again, italics! For here, if anywhere, our duty to Truth is plainly stated. "I, as an individual," Mr. Judge avows, "believe certain things are true, and I would be a poor sort of man if, believing certain things to be true, I did not try to show that they are." (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, July 1968, p. 325)

Should not all students say the same? In so far as they have gained a measure of "the light and peace and power of truth" (*Letters*, p. 71), should not they, "supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time"?

With this reference to the Masters let us complete an earlier quotation which was purposely broken off short. "'Seek the truth by strong search,' by doing service, and by inquiry, *and Those who know the Truth will teach it*" (*Letters*, p. 121). Here again is proof that in the spiritual life, as in the world of nature, law prevails and brings its consequences. The process of strong search, doing service, and inquiry "opens up a channel in the mind," says Mr. Judge, and "serves to make the conducting lines for the forces to use which the Mahatmas wish to give out."

So the duty of the student of Truth seems to expand illimitably, and we shall leave it to each to trace it further, as he may, concluding with an invocation which our devoted teacher utters in the very accents of the *Upanishads*:

May the Blessed Masters guide us to the everlasting Truth!
 May we tread the small old path on which the sages walk who
 know Brahman! May we all pass beyond the sea of darkness!
 Hari! Om! (*Path Editorial*, April 1888)

ASK, SEEK, KNOCK

IN the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus advises us to ask, seek and knock, and assures us of receiving what is asked for, of finding what is sought, and of the opening of the portals to the secret chamber when we knock in the right manner. It does not mean asking and seeking and knocking for material things and possessions of a fleeting nature, but rather implies true effort along spiritual lines to unveil the mysteries of the inner world. It is the true yearning of the heart to rise above mundane existence that will enable one to do so. Preliminary preparation in the form of purity of motive, of mind and heart, assuming a firm position with full confidence in the justice of the great Law, and true realization of one's being a divine ray of life and light, is required. We are to ask, seek and knock at the very source of our being, our Divine Parent, the Father in Heaven, all-seeing and almighty. We cannot ask or seek for anything less than divine, anything which is not worth asking, seeking and knocking for.

Who is it that asks and seeks and knocks? The awakened human soul, the self-conscious thinker in us, the reincarnating ego. When it is free from all attachments and allurements of physical existence, all illusions and delusions, all taints of a lower nature, then only can it ask its Divine Parent, the Higher Self. What can it ask? It can ask for the light of clear understanding, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent. Each one of us is a preceiver, and as such it is necessary to understand what we observe around us in the objective, visible universe, as also what lies in the hidden aspects of nature and of man; to distinguish between what is real and everlasting and what is fleeting and perishable; to learn to evaluate things correctly. It is also necessary to ask for patient submission to the Law, bearing the burden of life cheerfully, accepting all the tests and trials smilingly, conforming to the pleasure and disposition of the Divine Will.

What shall we seek? True knowledge, at the same time rendering gentle service to all that lives. We are not to wait for opportunities, but rather to put forth the effort to find out the needs of others, helping them to walk the narrow path. Service is to be rendered not only to our fellow beings but also to the kingdoms below us as well as to the Elder Brothers of humanity who need companions to carry on their work in the world. We are expected to serve on all planes, physical, moral, mental, through deeds, words and thoughts; to keep always in

touch with the needs and sufferings of others. "For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in SELF" (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 54). Service is one of the means of gaining Wisdom, as Sri Krishna points out in the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. True service is spiritual service which seeks to elevate the minds and hearts of the people, helping them to change their mode of thinking and living so that peace and harmony may reign supreme in the world. Jesus says: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." How can we seek the Kingdom of God before we have become pure and chaste and childlike? Sustained effort at self-purification is required till the endless end.

Where shall we knock? At the door of the heart. There is a fount within us which will give us strength and guidance because it is the Knower and also the Knowledge itself.

Light on the Path states: "Inquire of the earth, the air, and the water, of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this." The lessons learnt from nature are the true lessons and take us to a higher level. The earth teaches us humility and generosity. It cheerfully bears the burden of all that exists on it. It nourishes all the plants and trees and grass and shrubs with its own life-energy. It produces food for all beings, and gives in abundance without thinking of a reward. So the secret of the earth is both humility and generosity. The air is the greatest purifier. The air breathed in keeps us alive; without it we would perish. We need the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Whether we shall survive or perish depends on the choice made by each of us and on the extent to which we let the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom blow around us. Theosophy is in the world to enable human beings to make the right choice to reach the goal contemplated, that of human perfection. The waters of life keep ever moving, flowing. If not, they stagnate. So also the goddess Saraswati, Ardivisura-Anahita, needs channels through which wisdom can flow from one to another so as to keep alive in man his divine intuitions, and to quench the thirst for wisdom of those who ask and seek and knock.

Next, we are advised in the same book to inquire of the holy ones of the earth of the secrets they hold for us, but only after complete self-purification, otherwise there will be no response. They have given us their secret wisdom time and again, but human nature is so frail that

what is given is soon forgotten, and so it needs to be replenished. Their inner world is full of peace and harmony, and they want that peace and harmony to prevail in the outer world too. Thus, it becomes necessary to disseminate their great ideas to remove the darkness of ignorance from this world and let light and happiness prevail in it.

And lastly we are asked to inquire of the inmost, the one, of the final secret it holds for us. It will always guide us to tread in the footsteps of our holy predecessors, following the path of renunciation. The voice of compassion speaks and says, Can there be bliss when all that lives continues to remain ignorant and to suffer? How can one remain at peace within oneself when the world is groaning and moaning with all kinds of ills on all planes? So the inmost is more than eager to help us; it is the human in us that has to stretch towards the divine.

The three elements of earth, air, water are wonderful expressions of the divine life. They are universal and impersonal and show forth their strength and power in their own ways. They are within us and outside us and need to be taken care of. They are not to be corrupted in any way. In *The Voice of the Silence* we are told: "Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance." The Sermon on the Mount also warns us: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

MAN is the revelation of the Infinite, and it does not become finite in him. It remains the Infinite.

—MARK RUTHERFORD

STUDIES IN MAGIC

XI. — THE EVIL EYE

It is the motive, *and the motive alone*, which makes any exercise of power become black, malignant, or white, beneficent Magic.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

LIKE ancient Thessaly or Colchis, famous for the enchantments of Circe and Medea, India has been long known for her magical skill. As Abbé Dubois remarked in his book *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, short of bringing the moon down from the height of the firmament, there was nothing which Indian magicians were incapable of achieving. Although the French missionary's observations about Indian manners, customs and ceremonies were made more than 150 years ago, and though the social, moral and intellectual changes since then have taken the people far into fresh channels of thought and action, yet the magical arts have not been completely dispensed with in these days of jet flights and atomic reactors. There seems, therefore, to be some truth in his observation that these arts have ever charmed the people of the land. He adds:

Nothing in this country happens by chance or from natural causes. Obstacles of every kind, disappointments, unlucky incidents, diseases, premature deaths, barrenness of women, miscarriages, diseases among cattle; in fine, all the scourges to which human beings are exposed are attributed to the occult and diabolical machinations of some wicked enchanter hired by an enemy. Should a Hindu, at the time he is visited by any calamity, happen to be at variance with any one of his neighbours, the latter is immediately suspected and accused of having had recourse to magic to harm him.

Everyone and everything, according to Indian belief, has its own inherent qualities, called by different names in the various languages — *Chuzhi* (Tamil), *Paygun* (Marathi), *Kalgun* (Kanarese), *Paglan* (Gujarati), etc. — which operates with or without the volition of the person. Its effects are known but tardily, for to every happening a cause is attributed after the event. Many look upon their fellowmen with suspicion, as they are always afraid of their "evil eye" and are ever anxious to take precautions. The best way, it is believed, is to avoid as much as possible the company of strangers during worship, at meals, and on

other occasions. The evil eye is the alleged transmission of a form of evil power by sight. Naturally this power of sight need not always be evil, for there is also the look that confers benefit.

As is usual in various mythologies, there is the injunction not to look back — as Orpheus was warned when he reclaimed his wife Eurydice from Hades, or as Lot's wife became a pillar of salt (*Genesis*). It is believed to be dangerous to look back at the place where the Hindu has deposited the rice oblation (*bali*) to the manes, or at the funeral *ghat* after leaving the corpse for cremation. While bringing medicinal herbs for effecting magical cures, it is forbidden to look back, if evil is to be averted.

Evidently because the worshipper is afraid of the "evil eye" he does his *puja* alone, lest his merit (*punya*) may be lost by the sight of his fellowmen; and congregational worship is, therefore, a rare feature among the Hindus. Even gods are affected by the evil eye. During the decoration of the temple deity, *abhisheka* and food offerings, *purdah* is observed lest the evil eye of any of the devotees affect the sanctity of the occasion.

Horseshoes, needles, lemon fruits, etc., are regarded as prophylactics against the evil eye. One will notice the head of a cow or a buffalo or their horns as decorations in the drawing-rooms of several Hindu houses; but they are really protections against the evil eye. So are horses and cattle protected from the evil eye by putting a garland of cowrie shells or bells around their necks. For a similar reason, the bride and bridegroom are shielded, not only from each other but from the general public view up to a certain point in the ritual, lest some evil eye should harm them. The bridegroom comes riding to the bride's house, a ritual called *Barat*, with his face covered by a tasselled veil of flowers. The Muslims, too, are not free from such customs, for the Prophet has said, according to tradition: "Evil eye carries a man to the grave and a camel to the kettle-pot." Some of the measures taken to avoid the ill effects of the evil eye are: to steal a piece of the skirt or *dhoti* of the evil-eyed person and to burn it; to take a bit of earth from beneath his feet and put it in the fire with the words: "Fie upon his eye." Or, again, parings of his nails or clippings of his hair are to be likewise treated.

Not only persons but houses, objects, temples, etc., can also be the victims of the evil eye; and to divert the evil glance an ugly design, or a pumpkin painted with the figure of a man's face, or a scarecrow, is

hung up near by. Likewise, the cheeks, forehead and nose of a handsome child, or of a bridal couple, are marked with *kumkum* or *bindi* to draw away the attention of the evil eye. Chillies and salt are waved three times round the victim of the evil eye at eventide and thrown in the fire. Lemons pierced with needles are kept in the house as a protection against this dreaded evil. If a child cries at evening time, it is thought to be the result of the evil eye, and the mother waves vertically over the child the shoe of the left foot and dashes it to the ground. A coconut is broken against a wall or at the cross roads as a measure of protection against such evils. It is noteworthy that such customs are widely prevalent in other countries, too, for E. Westermarck in *Ritual and Belief in Morocco* observes that it is quite common to stretch out the hand in the face of the person possessing the evil power, and he adds:

The gesture with the five outstretched fingers is used against the evil eye in Algeria, Tunis, Syria, and Palestine, among the Sennaarese and the Kababish in Sudan, and in modern Greece . . . and it is accompanied with the phrase "Five in your eye," etc. . . . The ancient Romans seem to have used a similar gesture, accompanied with the words, "*Ecce tibi dono quinque.*"

Many more are the customs to avert the evil eye. Who has not seen dots drawn with lime, turmeric or red earth on the threshold and on the top and sides of the door-frame as also on the wheels of carts, on the head of a yoke, on the iron safe of shopkeepers, on account books, on public buses, etc. — all with the same motive? Such is the origin of *Rangoli* drawn with rice flour or white or coloured powder on the floor in front of houses, which no housewife fails to do the first thing in the morning. J. Abbott gives in his memorable book on Indian customs, *The Keys of Power*, more than a hundred such designs and patterns adopted in the daily affairs of life and intended to frustrate the evil eye. Dolls hung upside down, whether in houses or in motor cars, are all serving the same purpose.

Many phases of primitive thought lie concealed in the conservative, unchanging life of India, which all stem from the animistic nature of the Hindu religion. From the olden times, the common people in this country have believed in a vast multitude of spirits, of whom many are harmful. Only the few in all ages have recognized the operation of Law everywhere, in the unvarying order of nature and in "the ordered music of the marching orbs" — a "Law which moves to righteousness, "which none at last can turn aside or stay; but the many, wandering

in the dark, still have notions of chance, caprice, luck and accident and go about propitiating countless swarms of gods and spirits, for—

Peril still lurks in the little that is known,
Still more in the much more that is unknown.
All that man plans is thwarted—
Is it a demon, ghost, or god?
Is it the tree, water, or hill?

The good and great gods abide in their own place and are too transcendental to interfere in man's daily chores; but the malevolent deities seem to be in a constant state of jealous and mischievous activity. Hence, while the former are too exalted to be troubled or bribed, the tutelary godlings need to be approached for help, the demons to be propitiated to prevent things going wrong. Every object of nature which attracts man's attention is invested with life and its potencies, so that not only animals and plants but all things are endowed with a spirit. Turn wherever he may or do whatever he would, everything falls into this personifying line of thought; for *Shakti* or power pervades everything, assuming a separate entity in individual things in which it becomes a transmissible personality. As Abbott remarks in *Keys of Power*:

It pervades thoughts and ideas; embodied in thoughts it may be the power of benediction; it is developed by the common will of many; gratitude transmits it as does a curse. It is a power which acts both for good and for evil. Its good effects are *barkat*, its bad effects are *anisht*. It is a dangerous element and cannot be lightly treated, but from one point of view the whole of man's endeavours in magic and in religious ritual are concentrated on getting control of this power, using it for his own benefit and accumulating a fund of it as a potential source of all forms of blessing.

There are phenomena which man can neither explain by natural causes nor ascribe to superhuman beings. They are all believed to be the action of invisible spirits and powers which are working through mysterious processes. If these "spirits" penetrate an object, the latter becomes a fetish; but if the power of "spirits" is transmitted to an object by man, it then becomes a talisman.

The souls of natural objects, of the sky, earth, vegetation, elements, etc., often tend to assume a special importance to some minds, as they seem to assume distinct forms from their visible garb. The genii so conceived may leave their domain occasionally and even intervene in a

number of human affairs, which may have no connection with their original function. Sometimes they even tend to encroach upon the sphere of the dead. The majority of such genii are regarded as malevolent and ill-ordered, but occasionally they are beneficent too. Hence they inspire a mingled sense of fear and affection which are the dual aspects of nature. By a recourse to flattery, they can be cajoled to the benevolent side, and can become allies with man in his conflict with the hostile forces of Nature. Hence man's indulgence down the ages in propitiatory acts of sacrifice, prayer, homage, etc., in his relations with the higher ranks of divine powers, and also in acts of conjuration, evocation, incantation, exorcism, etc., employed with the lower ranks.

Thus magic becomes associated with spiritism, and all magical processes are intended to subjugate these elemental powers. The world becomes a domain abandoned to the caprice of arbitrary and malevolent wills, and instead of Law reigning, there is the reign of Terror. Many cannot shake off the influence of these fantasies, as there is no urge to search out their roots. Everything in a cosmos ruled by forces or powers, dark or bright, creates its own inherent qualities. The fallacious reasoning of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* ("after a certain thing, therefore because of it") is quite common and in such a frame of mind, omens, stellar influences and magical powers begin to hold sway in the conduct of daily affairs. Even shadows and reflections seem to influence man's fortune. Sir James Frazer suggests that noon was chosen by the Greeks as the hour for sacrificing to the shadowless dead, because of man's diminished shadow at that time. Likewise the Hindu makes his oblations of water (*Pitrtarpana*) to the manes at noon and the *Sraddha*, too, is performed very near that time. Of evil-working shadows, Abbott gives in his *Keys of Power* hundreds of examples. One of the reasons why the innermost shrine of any Hindu temple is without any window is stated to be the need for the protection of the *Shakti* of the image from inauspicious shadows. In performing a magic rite the man must choose the hour before dawn, to avoid shadows.

So is the case with reflections in a mirror, water or any shining surface. There is the belief that seeing one's own reflection causes evil; and any evil that besets one may be projected into his reflection, and then cast away, or worse than all, transferred to others.

In all these customs and rituals one may see the height of human selfishness, the grossest of sins, whereby one seeks or gives suffering disease or misery to one's neighbour; and there is not the slightest twinge

of conscience felt in inflicting such cruelty on others. How, then, can one hope or expect the world to assume a benevolent form or to reveal an untrammelled vision of supreme beauty, so long as the personal ego has not been transcended and man has not unrolled "the stone of matter from the door of his own inner sanctuary"? Did not Jacob Boehme, the shoe-maker mystic of Silesia, after his divine beatific vision, when he was walking in the green fields close to his village, behold the whole of Nature ablaze with so glorious a light that the tender blades of grass were resplendent with a divine loveliness and beauty which he had never seen before?

By many means the mind of man tries to cheat the gods who are ever on the prowl to catch him on the wrong foot. He is ever aware of the presence of these invisible forces, powers, *shakti*, whose favour he is in need of and whose frown drives him to devise newer forms of propitiation. Because man is a free agent he is likely to commit an act of *hubris*, in the Aeschylean sense, and thus expose himself to the divine vengeance. As in the Greek drama, the gods intervene, after man's initial "transgression," and smite him with blindness or infatuation, in consequence of which he plunges more and more deeply into sin, until at last he is destroyed. Ridden by fear and anxiety, modern man is suffering from neurosis which is only aggravated by the mad rush and noise of urban life.

Anthropologists say that as new anxieties fill the public mind, new cults arise to adjust the imbalance. The older ones do not satisfy modern needs, for the village gods cannot fit into modern towns any more than the old customs which are out of tune with new ways. All cults, old or new, can at best only allay anxieties but cannot remove them root and branch. Even as individuals have their problems, society too suffers from neuroses, which it frequently seeks to purge by finding new scapegoats on which to lay its faults. The dis-ease of society is never solved, but only finds escape in newer superstitions and taboos. The only way to get out of this vicious circle, whether it be the individual or the society which suffers from this recurrent neurosis, is obviously education, which leads to enlightenment as to the process by which superstition develops, and understanding of the soil in which it flourishes.

However many superstitions may have gathered round it, the power of the eye is a fact, related as it is to magnetism. The ancients taught that the astral light -- *Akasha* — is projected from the eyes, the most occult of all our outer organs, as also from the thumb and the palms

of the hands. The pure life-giving Light, or magnetic fluid, was called "Od," while "Ob" was the name given to "the messenger of death used by the sorcerers, the nefarious evil fluid." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 76 fn.)

H. P. Blavatsky explained in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 144) that the magnetic fluid might equally be employed for a good or an evil purpose. If for a good one, it is magic; if for an evil one, it is called sorcery. "The *jettatura*, or evil eye," she wrote, "is nothing but the direction of this invisible fluid, charged with malicious will and hatred, from one person to another, and sent out with the intention of harming him."

Also the plastic power of imagination not under its possessor's control may work involuntarily and thus be unintentionally turned to bad uses. Without deliberately willing evil to an enemy, we may, by dwelling in thought upon his possible discomfiture or his meeting disaster, precipitate these on him, so far as his Karma permits.

Writing in *Lucifer* for December 1888, Madame Blavatsky defines the power of the "evil eye" in terms that should give pause to many who congratulate themselves, perhaps justly, on being free of any trace of malevolence. For it is, she writes,

simply a great plastic power of thought, so great as to produce a current impregnated with the potentiality of every kind of misfortune and accident, which inoculates, or attaches itself to any person who comes within it. A *jettatore* (one with the evil eye) need not be even imaginative, or have evil intentions or wishes. He may be simply a person who is naturally fond of witnessing or reading about sensational scenes, such as murder, executions, accidents, etc., etc. He may be not even thinking of any of these at the moment his eye meets his future victim. But the currents have been produced and exist in his visual ray ready to spring into activity the instant they find suitable soil, like a seed fallen by the way and ready to sprout at the first opportunity.

One whose nature is perfectly pure, whose conscience is clear and who is animated by a sincere desire to help humanity, such an one has nothing to fear from either a malignant glance or a spoken curse.

(*To be concluded*)

AN ASTRAL PROPHET

[The following article was first published by H.P.B. in *Lucifer*, June 1890.—EDS.]

EVERY educated Englishman has heard the name of General Yermoloff, one of the great military heroes of this age; and if at all familiar with the history of the Caucasian wars, he must be acquainted with the exploits of one of the chief conquerors of the land of those impregnable fastnesses where Shamil and his predecessors have defied for years the skill and strategy of the Russian armies.

Be it as it may, the strange event herein narrated by the Caucasian hero himself, may interest students of psychology. That which follows is a *verbatim* translation from V. Potto's Russian work "The War in Caucasus." In Volume II, chapter *The Period of Yermoloff* (pp. 829-30-31 and 832), one reads these lines:

Silently and imperceptibly glided away at Moscow the last days allotted to the hero. On April the 19th, 1861, he died in his 85th year, seated in his favourite arm-chair, with one hand on the table, the other on his knee; but a few minutes before, in accordance with an old habit of his, he was tapping the floor with his foot.

It is impossible to better express the feelings of Russia at the news of this death than by quoting the obituary notice from the (Russian) *Daily Caucasus*, which did not say a word more than was deserved.

On April the 12th, at 11.45 a.m., at Moscow, the Artillery General, famous throughout Russia — Alexey Petrovitch Yermoloff, breathed his last. Every Russian knows the name; it is allied with the most brilliant records of our national glory: Valutino, Borodino, Kulm, Paris, and the Caucasus, will be ever transmitting the name of the hero — the pride and ornament of the Russian army and nation. We will not enumerate the services of Yermoloff. His name and titles are: a true son of Russia, in the full significance of the term.

It is a curious fact that his death did not escape its own legend, one of a strange and mystical character. This is what a friend who knew Yermoloff well, writes of him:

Once, when leaving Moscow, I called on Yermoloff to say good-bye, and found myself unable to conceal my emotion at parting.

"Fear not," he said to me, "we will yet meet; I shall not die before

your return." This was eighteen months before his death.

"In life and death God alone is the Master!" I observed.

"And I tell you most positively that my death will not occur in a year, but a few months later," he answered. "Come with me" — and he led me into his study; where, getting out of a locked chest a written sheet of paper, he placed it before me, and asked — "whose handwriting is this?" "Yours," I said. "Read it then." I complied.

It was a kind of memorandum, a record of dates, since the year when Yermoloff was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, showing, as in a programme, every significant event that was to happen in his life, so full of such events. He followed me in my reading, and when I was at the last paragraph, he covered the last line with his hand. "This you need not read," he said. "On this line, the year, the month, and the day of my death are given. All that you have read was written by me beforehand, and has come to pass to the smallest details, and this is how I came to write it:

"When I was yet a young Lieutenant-Colonel I was sent on some business to a small district town. My lodging consisted of two rooms — one for the servants, the other for my personal use. There was no access into the latter but through the former. Once, late at night, as I sat writing at my desk, I fell into a reverie, when suddenly on lifting my eyes I saw standing before me across the desk a stranger, a man, judging by his dress, belonging to the lower classes of society. Before I had time to ask him who he was or what he wanted, the stranger said, 'Take your pen and write.' Feeling myself under the influence of an irresistible power, I obeyed in silence. Then *he* dictated to me all that was going to happen to me during my whole life, concluding with the date and hour of my death. With the last word he vanished from the spot. A few minutes elapsed before I regained my full consciousness, when, jumping from my seat, I rushed into the adjoining room, which the stranger could not by any means avoid passing through. Opening the door, I saw my clerk writing by the light of a candle, and my orderly lying asleep on the floor across the entrance door, which door was securely locked and bolted. To my question, 'Who was it who has just been here?' — the astonished clerk answered, 'No one.' To this day I have never told this to anyone. I knew beforehand that while some would suspect me of having invented the whole thing, others would see in me a man subject to hallucinations. But for myself, personally, the whole thing is *a most undeniable fact*, an objective and palpable fact,

the proof of which is in this very written document.”

The last date found on the latter proved, after the death of the General, to be the correct one. He died on the very day and hour of the year recorded in his own handwriting.

Yermoloff is buried at Orel. An inextinguishable lamp, made of a fragment of a bomb-shell, burns before his tomb. On the cast-iron of the shell these words are wrought by an unskilled hand, “The Caucasian soldiers who served on the Goonib.”¹ The ever-burning lamp is established through the zeal and grateful love of the lower ranks of the Caucasian Army, who collected among themselves from their poor pittance (copeck by copeck, verily!) the needed sum. And this simple monument is more valued and admired than would be the richest mausoleum. There is no other monument to Yermoloff in Russia. But the proud and lofty rocks of the Caucasus are the imperishable pedestal on which every true Russian will always behold the majestic image of General Yermoloff, surrounded by the aureole of an everlasting glory.

And now for a few words about the nature of the apparition.

No doubt every word of General Yermoloff's concise and clear narrative is true to a dot. He was pre-eminently a matter-of-fact, sincere and clear-headed man, with not the slightest taint of mysticism about him, a true soldier, honourable, and straightforward. Moreover, this episode of his life was testified to by his elder son, known to the present writer and her family personally for many years during our residence at Tiflis. All this is a good warrant for the genuineness of the phenomenon, testified to furthermore by the written document left by the General, bearing the correct and precise date of his death. And now what about the mysterious visitor? Spiritualists will, of course, see in it a disembodied Entity, a “materialized Spirit.” It will be claimed that a *human Spirit* alone could prophesy a whole series of events and see so clearly in Futurity. So we say, too. But having agreed on that point, we diverge in all the rest; *i.e.*, while Spiritualists would say that the apparition was that of a Spirit distinct from and independent of the Higher Ego of the General, we maintain precisely the reverse, and say it was that Ego. Let us argue dispassionately.

Where is the *raison d'être*, the *rationale* of such apparition of prophecy; and why should you or I, for instance, once dead, appear to a perfect stranger for the pleasure of informing him of that which was to

happen to him? Had the General recognized in the visitor some dear relative, his own father, mother, brother, or bosom friend, and received from him some beneficent warning, slight proof as it would have been, there would still be something in it to hang such theory upon. But it was nothing of the kind: simply "a stranger, a man, judging by his dress, belonging to the lower classes of society." If so, why should the soul of a poor disembodied tradesman, or a labourer, trouble itself to appear to a mere stranger? And if the "Spirit" only *assumed* such appearance, then why this disguise and masquerading, such *post-mortem* mystification, at all? If such visits are made of a "Spirit's free will; if such revelations can occur at the sweet pleasure of a disembodied Entity, and independently of any established law of intercourse between the two worlds — what can be the reason alleged for that particular "Spirit" playing at soothsaying Cassandra with the General? None whatever. To insist upon it, is simply to add one more absurd and repulsive feature to the theory of "Spirit-visitation," and to throw an additional element of ridicule on the sacredness of death. The *materializing* of an *immaterial* Spirit — a divine Breath — by the Spiritualists, is on a par with the anthropomorphizing of the Absolute, by the Theologians. It is these two claims which have dug an almost impassable abyss between the Theosophist-Occultists and the Spiritualists on the one hand, and the Theosophists and the Church Christians on the other.

And now this is how a Theosophist-Occultist would explain the vision, in accordance with esoteric philosophy. He would premise by reminding the reader that the Higher Consciousness in us, with its *sui generis* laws and conditions of manifestation, is still almost entirely *terra incognita* for all (Spiritualists included) and the men of Science pre-eminently. Then he would remind the reader of one of the fundamental teachings of Occultism. He would say that besides the attribute of divine omniscience in its own nature and sphere of action there exists in Eternity for the *individual* immortal Ego neither *Past* nor *Future*, but only one everlasting PRESENT. Now, once this doctrine is admitted, or simply postulated, it becomes only natural that the whole life, from birth to death, of the Personality which that Ego informs, should be as plainly visible to the Higher Ego as it is invisible to, and concealed from, the limited vision of its temporary and mortal Form. Hence, this is what must have happened according to the Occult Philosophy.

The friend is told by General Yermoloff that while writing *late in the night* he had suddenly fallen into a *reverie*, when he suddenly per-

ceived upon lifting the eyes a stranger standing before him. Now that reverie was most likely a sudden doze, brought on by fatigue and overwork, during which a mechanical action of purely somnambular character took place. The *Personality* becoming suddenly alive to the Presence of its Higher SELF, the human sleeping automaton fell under the sway of the Individuality, and forthwith the hand that had been occupied with writing for several hours before resumed mechanically its task. Upon awakening the *Personality* thought that the document before him had been written at the dictation of a visitor whose voice he had heard, whereas, in truth, he had been simply recording the innermost thoughts — or shall we say knowledge — of his own divine “Ego,” a prophetic, because all-knowing, Spirit. The “voice” of the latter was simply the translation by the physical memory, at the instant of awakening, of the mental knowledge concerning the life of the mortal man reflected on the lower by the *Higher* consciousness. All the other details recorded by the memory are as amenable to a natural explanation.

Thus, the stranger clothed in the raiments of a poor little tradesman or labourer, who was speaking to him *outside of himself*, belongs, as well as the “voice,” to that class of well-known phenomena familiar to us as the *association of ideas* and *reminiscences* in our dreams. The pictures and scenes we see in sleep, the events we live through for hours, days, sometimes for years in our dreams, all this takes less time, in reality, than is occupied by a flash of lightning during the instant of awakening and the return to full consciousness. Of such instances of the power and rapidity of fancy, physiology gives numerous examples. We rebel against the materialistic deductions of modern science, but no one can controvert its facts, patiently and carefully recorded throughout long years of experiments and observations by its specialists, and these support our argument. General Yermoloff had passed several days previously holding an inquest in a small town, in which official business he had probably examined dozens of men of the poorer classes; and this explains his fancy — vivid as reality itself — suggesting to his imagination the vision of a small tradesman.

Let us turn to the experiences and explanations of a long series of philosophers and Initiates, thoroughly acquainted with the mysteries of the *Inner Self*, before we father upon “departed spirits” actions, motives for which could never be explained upon any reasonable grounds.

—H.P.B.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Indian "gurus," "yogis," "swamis" and "new mystics" of all sorts are now cashing in on the quest for spiritual peace in the United States. Study courses in various cults are conducted in American clubs and colleges and the "gurus'" teachings spread via slick magazines. M. V. Kamath, in his report from Washington appearing in *Times Weekly*, July 22, writes:

Gurus come in all shapes and sizes like Dior's gowns, sell for the same outrageous price and for that selfsame reason seem to be popular. And they have an instant audience waiting for them. Some have made quite a killing, finance-wise. . . . In the quest for spiritual peace, money, obviously, is no consideration.

What accounts for this popularity? The void in the United States must be large enough for these "gurus" to blow in. From the latter part of the last century, America has shown interest in eastern mysticism and philosophy and there has been an honourable tradition of western intellectuals incorporating certain eastern elements in their writings.

What is common to the membership of the new cults is the character of the members. Mr. Kamath writes:

Almost to a man (and woman) they are dropouts from society, kids brought up on drugs and wanting to be cleansed and crying out for a leader. . . .

I spent four hours at a DLM [Divine Light Mission] ashram in Washington and interviewed nearly twenty-four of the inmates and it was the same story of young people rebelling against their parents and their homes, against their environment, their schools and their churches, taking to drugs and illicit sex and finding none of it satisfactory. And so they came to Guru Maharaj Ji and to Yogi Bhajan and to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and all the rest. One is reminded of a passage from Eliot:

Men's curiosity searches past and future
And clings to that dimension,
But to apprehend
The point of intersection of the timeless
With time, is an occupation for the saint —
No occupation either, but something given
And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,
Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender.

That's right. Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender. Which, probably, are all that, in the end, really matter for DLM's *premis* and for the Hare Krishna chanters.

The word "guru" has become in our age one of the most degraded. There are false gurus — fakes, frauds, charlatans and claimants; those who teach for money, those who boast of their powers, those who claim to lead and order others to follow — all such are false gurus. When a claimant says: "I know the Way; follow me" — Theosophy says: "Beware!" The Path to the Gurus of Light is obscured by false teachers, by false knowledge, by false aspiration, even though these teachers, knowledge and aspiration may sometimes have some good in them. The very first mark of the Real Guru is that He gives, and the receiver knows it not; He opens the eye to Vision and yet Himself remains invisible; He speaks not and yet the disciple's ears hear. In one's own heart, and there alone, is He to be found. The True Guru is the most sacred of Ideals and it has been sadly degraded.

The World Vegetarian Congress, held recently in Stockholm, Sweden, and the increasing number of vegetarian food restaurants and health stores denote interest in vegetarianism in the west. This dietary choice is a vindication of its nutritional value, observes Jyotsna Sheth in *Times Weekly*, August 12. Under the title "Vegetarianism Gains Ground," she writes:

That meat diet alone confers strength is one of those conventional beliefs that seems to have grown and spread without scientific basis. Studies recently carried out in India on different food habits, show that hill tribes with excellent physiques subsist on a diet chiefly consisting of milk, wheat and fruits. Among the Europeans, the Spartans, perhaps the most hardy of the Greeks, are said to have preferred vegetarian food for its disciplining influence on the body. . . .

Vegetarianism, while associated with a religious sentiment in certain communities in India, never wholly became a part of Hinduism, as is often mistakenly believed. In its strictest sense, it requires that food be obtained without causing visible injury or death to other sentient forms of life. This restricts the dietary choice in the main to cereals, pulses, milk, milk products, vegetables and fruits.

But can this have sufficient nutritive value? Yes, maintain food

experts. *A well-planned vegetarian menu can satisfy all the requirements of the human body and even possess certain definite advantages over flesh foods.* Vegetarian food remains free from the poisons and bacteria of diseased animals. . . . It is also non-toxic and non-stimulant.

Meat has a tendency to decompose quickly. The formation of promains (corpse poison) begins almost immediately after the slaughter of an animal. Flesh food is easily affected by parasites, often leading to virulent and inflammatory disorders.

In a tropical country like ours, because of limited preservation facilities, vegetarian food is definitely safer and comparatively cheaper (even making allowances for milk or cheese), than a mixed diet of meat and vegetables. . . .

The word vegetarianism comes from the Latin "vegetus" meaning quick, fresh, lively, lusty and sound. . . . Symbolically, it represents an attitude towards life that continues to attract thinkers and reformers, and its growing international popularity with the common man is a vindication of its nutritional merit.

The 29th Congress of Orientalists held in Paris recently did a good job of overhauling the outmoded concept of orientalism (*The Times of India*, August 3). Until now, the term expressed a "eurocentrist" vision of the universe. The discipline of oriental studies was meant to "complete, or add to, the general culture of Europe."

In future the term "orientalism" will be replaced by such terms as "Asiatic studies" or "Asiatic human sciences." The change is more than semantic. The idea behind it is that the new orientalism should strive to bring together Asian studies and the natural sciences. History, for example, could reveal to specialists of botany, climatology and anthropology earlier states of the natural milieu and of the human condition thanks to the contributions of archaeology, epigraphy and even literature.

The practical application of history, as one French indologist explained, will be particularly important for Asia at a time when modern plans for exploiting nature are often drawn up by experts in virtual ignorance of local ecology. Indeed every cultural subject that Asian studies are brought to examine automatically puts into question all the human sciences at the same time.
