

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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POINTS OF THEOSOPHICAL EMPHASIS

I

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THE first commentaries of H. P. Blavatsky upon a suitable basis for the corporate endeavour of Theosophical students preceded the actual formation of the Theosophical Society by a considerable period. As a matter of actual record, she began to formulate a basis for a platform which a union of students could present to the world as soon as there were a few around her who concerned themselves with the vital contributions which Theosophical principles could make in the nineteenth century—those few who had more interest in Philosophy and Raja-Yoga than in mediumistic phenomena. But the proposed basis for union was not simply the study of Philosophy or of Raja-Yoga by these students; it was agreement to work for the formation of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood—a nucleus of those who had determined to overcome the environmental conditionings of any past sectarian teachings and to stand before the world as proponents of the belief that a study of the essence of all great religions would be uniquely rewarding as a step towards harmony between sects and peoples long divided.

This was, then, Madame Blavatsky's first "Point of Emphasis" in launching Theosophical endeavour in the last century—the central point. It was very apparently upon this platform that she wished the Theosophical Society then to stand and to be first judged in the eyes of the world. Many of her articles both in *The Theosophist* and later

in *Lucifer* were consistently oriented so as to focus attention upon the comparative study of religions. Whenever she assailed the complacency of those semi-orthodox Christians who would listen, by evidence of the worthiness of Eastern creeds and traditions, she was labouring to demonstrate the social importance of such study as a means of uprooting the exclusiveness of conventional religion. She talked in terms of synthesis and unity, where people were used to the acceptance of only militant diversity. And again, she brought to the violent conflict between nineteenth-century Religion and Science the hope of a meeting and complementing of basic ideals and objectives.

H.P.B. saw from the beginning that for the century 1875-1975 the conflicts of humanity could be resolved by a proper orientation of the group-minds—of scientists, theologians, philosophers, and social reformers. Therefore the second and third objects, as fundamental aids to the first—the formation of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. These three Objects outline the work to be done by all who desire to serve the Theosophical Movement she inaugurated.

Unfortunately for clarity in the Theosophical Movement, the persistent interest of the majority of T.S. members in the development of psychic powers made it difficult for the general public to remember just what the *first* object of the T.S. was, and the relation to that object of the programme of comparative study of religions, philosophies and sciences, which was designed only to implement that object. Had the minds of the original T.S. members been in full accord in believing that the *popularization* of the First Object was *the* important "point of emphasis" for 1875-1885, it would perhaps have been possible for H.P.B. subsequently to demonstrate, both to T.S. members and to the world, that no single point of emphasis would ever characterize a truly Theosophical organization—that the *Movement* will inevitably *move* from one point of emphasis to another, just as soon as the former objective is sufficiently realized to enable other "non-theosophists" to retain it and see what *they* can do with it, always within the Three Great Objects. While spreading the *idea* of the First Object came first in H.P.B.'s mind, so that the whole world might receive an immediate beneficial impact from the platform of the Society, yet the ways and means of fulfilling that high promise involving a balanced attention to the other Objects and vigilant observance of significant shifts of the mind-of-the-race "points of

emphasis," must have been the work she strongly wished to get on with. This, so that the *first* point of emphasis—the *idea* of a Universal Brotherhood—would be prevented from becoming in time but a vague shibboleth.

If this suggested analysis is correct, the implication would be that the only way in which any "line laid down" in the Theosophical Movement by any Teacher may be preserved is by pressing onward in the light of the implications suggested by that "line." Repetition without creation is disastrous, and one of the ways in which even sincere disciples have vitiated the teachings of the great ones of all time. For the heart of any teaching or "line laid down" must be creative, non-representable by any static form.

In the light of Theosophical principles themselves, it would seem clear that any Theosophical organization is primarily designed to hold before the world basic concepts which can be immediately useful in the creation of a better society at large—that is, a social condition allowing more community devotion to the needs of Soul. So exoteric Theosophical endeavour is primarily "social work," and as with all social work, in contradistinction to religious proselytism, there is always a need to adapt the energies to the immediate situation. There must always be some particular point or points of emphasis, differing from time to time—even though they flow always from the same *principles*—which represent the growing tip of Theosophical progress—the most uniquely rewarding applications of Theosophical principles in a specific historical situation. And such points of emphasis do change with the time and place, as any student of H.P.B., Judge and Robert Crosbie will be well aware.

Such a presentation as is now being developed raises, of course, a considerable number of natural doubts and questions. How, for instance, can it be said that Theosophists might ever have done with the same emphasis upon Universal Brotherhood given by H.P.B., and ready to pass on to "some other" application of Theosophical principles? It is not a matter of forgetting anything in the ethical purview of Theosophy in order to discover some new expediency in reaching the public, but a matter of realizing that a new *manasic* stimulation, the proper use of the touchstone, *may* bring about a welcome avalanche of delayed ethical consciousness either in individual men or in the whole of a society, whereas reiteration of sentiments which have

already served their ideational usefulness for the present may indicate a slackening of creative effort and a forgetting of the *dynamic* aspect of the Theosophical Movement. The "new," of course, must be philosophically and psychologically consistent with the old—yet it may also be a growth from the old, and it may not sound *exactly* like the old.

What has happened to the idea of Universal Brotherhood in our time? It has finally come to be universally adopted, universally diluted and universally trivialized. The responsibility of Theosophical students for this sad development is worth much pondering. Particularly susceptible to examination by them is that aspect of the Brotherhood Idea which involves the union of science and religion; here, specifically, it may be seen that the duty of the Theosophist is always to proceed beyond the line of apparent agreement to the line of disagreement—the line of battle—and thus towards a higher agreement.

The "union of religion and science" is worse than useless if it is engineered by men who simply desire an emotionally satisfying compromise. Unless the idea of a God who has finite attributes of power, to whom irrational supplications may be addressed, is replaced in "the new synthesis" by a positive concept of man's *own* reincarnating potential, that which has been the best in science (a Grecian-like belief in Man as a near God) will have been left out of the new synthesis and it will be no synthesis at all. Similarly, if the "synthesis" is simply to be a study of religions within the context of materialist assumptions, a referring of all creeds and teachings to an origin in geographic or economic circumstance, the synthesis is purely illusory. And it is often the unpopular task of the Theosophist to point out precisely these things. For no rewarding *Theosophical* study can be undertaken if any of the dogmas of the nineteenth century of religion or science are retained. It was necessary to protect the idea of religious-scientific synthesis from exploitation in the days following the establishment of the T.S.—by a determination on the part of Theosophists themselves *never to be guilty of oversimplification*.

Today, in every country of the world, we hear from both theologians and scientists that we must have a "scientific religion" and a "religious science." These were wonderful words in 1875, words of inspiration, the words of genuine pioneers, yet today they are usually words of expediency. Men of the church often pride themselves on their

scientific acumen, and men of science are fond of indicating their perception of a need for ethical faith—so that when the bombs fall, they can say that they previously told the truth about the sad state of humanity, but that no one would listen. In retrospect, we might say that the great need has been, after the initial spreading of the *idea* of religio-scientific synthesis, for specific correlations which would insure that the "synthesis" would proceed along rational rather than sentimental or expedient lines. Today the very men whose temperaments would have led them to abhor the unpopular in 1875 are the ones who make a popular—and dangerous—hodgepodge of religion and science.

The Theosophist who pioneers a concept, such as that of a non-sectarian and interracial brotherhood, has undertaken a grave responsibility, precisely because, as Theosophical Teachers have always warned, vague sentiments are a potent danger. He who pioneers a concept must apparently be prepared to devote himself to the implementation of that goal through constant and consistent application of Theosophical principles. Unless he will carry himself and the concept so far, he may find that he has but stirred up a quasi-spiritual force in the public at large—one which can be used by unscrupulous manipulators of society, and will probably be destined to spread the remainder of itself uselessly on the hot sands of social confusion, instead of remaining in a needed reservoir until the trees are firmly planted which need its irrigation. It is all too easy to dissipate the timid ethical promptings of men by giving them a superficial aim which shortly reveals its inadequacy. One can cry "Eureka, I have found it!" only so many times, before people become tired of being promised the way, the truth and the light when there is no light, and simply turn over in bed and resume sleep.

Of course, the members of the Society in 1875 could not insure that only pure study and basic thinking would follow their plea for religio-scientific synthesis, or that all men would see that to have peace among all nations and peoples they must learn to live peace even harder than they cried for it. They could only spread the idea of synthetic study abroad and await the course of events, while setting the example among their own scanty number of consistency in practical work toward the basic reorientation they called for. But as soon as their ideal began to be sullied by oversimplifications and

purely expedient popularizations, they needed to fight like tigers against corruption, instead of taking the *sound* of agreement for agreement itself.

We cannot hope to move smoothly toward international fraternity by repeating the slogan of One World. Not in a world which is well-nigh suffocated by the *ersatz* perfume of Leagues of Nations, Atlantic Charters and United Nations. Once an ideal "point of emphasis" for the Theosophical Movement, the One World Idea must be saved, from the death which will inevitably follow its purely sentimental expression, by Theosophists who will attack all justifications of "defensive armaments"—that blind and inconsistent doctrine which upholds the right of one man or one nation to continue following the philosophy of physical survival as the supreme end until all "the other people" or "the other nations" have *first* renounced that philosophy.

The "point of emphasis" has indeed changed. For expediency keeps intruding itself upon us in the name of "unity of all free peoples"; and honest independence of thought, the root of all true freedom, must often accept a role termed "obstructionist" or dissident.

What of the needed "points of emphasis" for the present and the future?

(To be concluded)

THE world moves in cycles, which proceed under the impetus of two mutually antagonistic and destroying Forces, the one striving to move Humanity onward, toward Spirit, the other forcing Mankind to gravitate downward, into the very abysses of matter. It remains with men to help either the one or the other. Thus, also, it is our present task, as Theosophists, to help in one or the other direction. We are in the very midst of the Egyptian darkness of *Kali-yuga*, the "Black Age."

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE RELIGION OF THE SOUL

JUST as there are two natures in man, the carnal and the divine; just as there are two minds in man, the lower and the higher, just as there are two selves in man, the proud, *ahankaric* personal self and the altruistic individual self, the channel of the Universal Self or Atman; just as there are two powers or *shaktis* of that Divine Self, the Lord, *Mulaprakriti* and *Daiviprakriti*, so are there for each man two religions, one pertaining to his body and senses, the other to his soul.

One is born into a Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim family, and these religions are adopted without question, without search, without devotion, without knowledge. The other religion is that of the thoughts we generate and the character we build, of the feelings we send out of love or hate, and of the motive that lies at the base of all our actions. Therefore, there are mean or noble men and women, hypocritical or true devotees, in every religion, in every temple, church, synagogue, or mosque, in every caste, community, nation. In this knowledge lies the reason why religions have become disuniting factors, causes of strife, instead of what they should be—a unifying power, as the very word "religion" implies.

The Sanskrit word *dharma* is the best equivalent and enables us to understand the true significance of religion. The power of *dharma* to bind is great. What a different society humanity would be if the formal conception of *dharma* or religion were given up and the true conception adopted! Instead of a caste of born Brahmanas, suppose we had the caste of those who possess tranquillity, purity, self-mastery, patience, rectitude, learning, spiritual discernment—the qualities of a true Brahmana enumerated in the Eighteenth Discourse of the *Gita*. Suppose all those possessing these qualities were classed as belonging to One Religion because of their *inner dharma*, and suppose they were all united in their knowledge and by their knowledge—where then would be the strife between the Hindu and the non-Hindu, the Catholic and the Protestant, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and the Heathen, the Muslim and the Infidel? And so with the other castes. The respective duties of the four castes are "determined by the qualities which predominate in the disposition of each," says the *Gita*. Time was in this ancient land of India when caste was a real institution that helped and elevated the people, while

it bound them in a harmonious brotherhood. Today, ignorance and selfishness have debased that once noble institution, and its right restoration is one of the main problems of the day. For, where would be religious rivalries if religious leaders ate and drank, prayed and worshipped, and above all preached and lived according to the Religion of the Soul? Everywhere in the world, irreligion flourishes in the shape of formal religions or creeds.

One of the main tasks of Theosophy was to proclaim, as H.P.B. did:

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

Having proclaimed it, she laboured for it, first by showing that there exists the false element in every religion—unique claims, separative tendencies, exclusiveness. Wherever, in the form of a rite or ritual, in the shape of a teaching or instruction, or in any other way, man separates himself from his fellow-men, there irreligion is. What divides truth-seeking men, truth-speaking men, truth-living men, cannot be *dharma*, religion; it is *adharma*, irreligion or unrighteousness.

This division came about through *avidya*, ignorance of what religion really meant. And so H.P.B. began tracing the errors to their roots and showed how every religion at its base was gloriously inspiring and serviceable, but how in its superstructure each was overlaid with falsehood and superstition, with pride and priestcraft. Religions grow like flowers in a garden, on shrubs surrounded by weeds, eaten by worms, famishing for water, yet they grow; and H.P.B. picked the flowers—the lily of Christianity and the lotus of Buddhism, the yellow marigold, favourite of Sarasvati, the sweet jasmine loved by the Saints of Islam, and the fragrant rose of old Iran, and she tied them all with the string of Theosophy and made a wonderful, fragrant and inspiring spiritual nosegay. It remains with individuals to benefit by it, to enjoy its beauty, to inhale its fragrance, to be inspired by its very presence. And so H.P.B. taught that to know and live the true Religion, one must take oneself in hand, must perceive the difference between the conventional religion of one's birth and the true Religion of the Soul, the Soul that each of us is.

One should avoid the two extremes—neither reject the religion of one's birth nor fall prey to its superstitions, to its priestcraft, to the great ignorance that surrounds it. What is required is study and not blind belief; questioning of religious philosophies and not succumbing to the glamour of ritualism and mumbo jumbo. The revolt of science is indicative of the swing of the pendulum away from the degradation to which priestcraft had brought religion. Vigorous enquiry into religious lore, virile questioning of religious traditions, will alone save us, but that search must be guided by knowledge, otherwise we shall find nothing of value.

So first we must make a comparative study of the various religious philosophies, and then seek within for the real Religion of the Soul. The Soul is four-faced—*Chatur-Mukha*. Because man is made in the "image of God," man has four powers or aspects of consciousness, like his great progenitor, Prajapati, or Brahma. As conscious souls we have the power to think, to feel, to act and to will. The Religion of the Soul, that which makes the Soul perfect, consists in developing to perfection these four aspects or powers of self-consciousness. Correspondingly, there are four Paths to Perfection, four great Initiations, and so on; and these realities of the inner worlds reflect themselves in the truth of the fourfold Path open to us all.

The *Gita*, the scripture *par excellence* of the Religion of the Soul, describes four paths, and they are related to these four aspects of the human Soul or self-consciousness. The Path of Knowledge (*Jnana*) perfects the power to think; the Path of Devotion (*Bhakti*) perfects the power to feel; the Path of Action (*Karma*) perfects the power to act; the Path of Practice or Exercise (*Abhyasa*) perfects the power to will. It is not that we have to follow these paths one after the other; each one of us must acquire knowledge, must unfold devotion, must perform duties, must persist and persevere in study, in meditation, in sacrifice.

Path of Knowledge—Jnana Marga: It is the path of higher knowledge, Brahma-Vidya, Theo-Sophia, Wisdom-Religion. This higher knowledge or Universal Religion teaches us about the nature of the Soul that man is. We are in essence divine, though we may not know of our divinity. The Christ in us, the Krishna in us, the Noor of Allah in us, the Fire of Ahura Mazda in us, cannot but be divine. We know good from bad, light from darkness, by the divinity which

transcends all pairs, including that of birth and death. Each of us is divine and immortal.

The Wisdom-Religion also teaches: "Become that which thou art." What is necessary for that "becoming" is the knowledge that the Immortal Divinity in us needs us as channels. The false "I," the *Ahankaric* "I," is rigid and thinks of itself as separate from other "I's." H.P.B. taught that one of the necessary qualifications for chelaship was "an intuitional perception of one's being the vehicle of the manifested Avalokitesvara or Divine Atman (Spirit)." The Real Ego is the Supreme Spirit, the Lord, who is the spectator, the admonisher, the sustainer, the enjoyer, as the *Gita* points out.

Knowledge of these facts cannot come to us as an experience by the reading of books, by study only. Reading and study are necessary; without them there is no real inner life, there is no beginning in soul life, there cannot be the perception of the Religion of the Soul. But when we have seen these facts with our mind's eye, we shall need to realize them with our heart perception. Knowledge is like the sacred Hardwar—the Door to the Heart.

The Path of Devotion—Bhakti Marga: All ordinary people who call themselves religious, feel for their creed, for their god or gods, but without knowledge all this is mere emotionalism; it is belief and not faith. Faith follows knowledge. The marks of real *Bhakti* or devotion are calmness, tranquillity, peace, the power to bless. Knowledge is of the head; devotion is of the heart.

Another fact that we must learn to live the life of the Religion of the Soul is the fact about the Masters, the true Gurus. Beware of false gurus. Those who teach for money, who promise powers for lucre or obedience, are false gurus and must be rejected. The marks of the true Guru are, first, Wisdom; by it the Guru adjusts the mind of the chela. The Guru does not teach as the schoolmaster teaches; the true Guru teaches universal laws, impersonal truths, and thus enables his pupil to reorient himself. The Guru is but an impersonal channel of the Wisdom. Compassion is another mark of the true Guru. The chela may desert the Guru, may break his pledge and his discipline, but the true Master is Compassion incarnate. Like the mother who loves her son though he be a criminal, the Guru always loves the pupil; it is the chela who by his error, his sin, casts the Guru out of his heart. Still another mark of the Guru is Sacrifice. He sacrifices himself for the

sake of the chela, gives up his *Nirvana* and renounces his *Mukti*, Liberation, for the sake of Orphan Humanity. Each one of us must meditate in the heart on the Guru who is wise, who is compassionate, who is the perfect servant of the Race. Thus, and thus alone, will *Bhakti*, Devotion, come to birth; and as we find the Guru in our heart, through him will be revealed the Secret Truth, will be unveiled the Mighty Light, for in his Heart the Song of Krishna will be heard and the Dance of Shiva will be seen. Without great *Jnanis*, without true Gurus, there can be no treading of the Path of Devotion. And so H.P.B. taught of the existence of Masters as Living Men.

The Path of Action—Karma Marga: It is when knowledge and devotion combine that we act wisely, without erring. We blunder and sin because we act without knowledge, without devotion. When we know and are devoted to the One Impartite Self, we see all men and all women as luminous stars held together in a mighty Harmony by the One Law, the One Life, which is Deity.

For treading this Path of Action, we need to know that we ourselves, and none else, are responsible for our environment, our outlook, and our character; and that the Law of Brotherhood is the Law of Life. All creatures, all events, are but symbols and we have to learn to decipher and to appreciate these symbols. In doing deeds, we must remember that we are but pure channels of the powers or *shaktis* of Nature. "The disciple must learn to do every act with the Divine in view, and the Divine in everything," says Mr. Judge; and he adds, "It is seeing Krishna in everything, and everything in him." Thus the bondage of Karma falls away.

The Path of Practice or Exercise—Abhyasa Marga: The individual must awake, must arouse himself as a soul. He must educate his own senses, his own mind, his own emotions, and let the culture of his own soul shine forth. He must take himself in hand and discipline himself—by studied endeavour and tireless effort. Keeping the Divine in view all the time requires constant practice. Without practice, without exercise, there is no possibility of stilling the restless and fickle mind and of climbing up the ladder. For countless ages the mind has been turned outwards and has been given a free rein to attach itself to objects of desire, and it is not to be expected that it will be possible to wrench it away from them at once. Long bent by forces of desire, it must first be detached from them and then, by constant

practice, by an effort of the will, united with that which is higher than itself.

This practice is not a matter of an hour, or even of several hours, of daily meditation. Throughout the day (and, in a sense, throughout the hours of sleep as well) constant effort must be made to retain in the consciousness as much as possible of the detachment and insight that were achieved during the meditation period. Throughout the day the disciple must hold on firmly to whatever degree of realization he was able to gain in those calm hours, for a short period of uncontrolled thought, an hour of despondency, or even five minutes of anger, will undo all that he has accomplished, and like the web of Penelope, what was woven in the morning will be unravelled by next day.

Such is the Religion of the Soul. Pondering these ideas, we can repair to the region of the Heart, the Hall of Wisdom, "the Hall which lies beyond, wherein all shadows are unknown, and where the light of truth shines with unfading glory." It is in that Hall alone that one may seek and contact the true Guru, He who "leads the disciple, through the Knowledge given to him, to his spiritual or second birth."

ON this plane of ours the spirit focalizes itself in all human beings who choose to permit it to do so, and the refusal to permit it is the cause of ignorance, of sin, of all sorrow and suffering. In all ages some have come to this high state, have grown to be as gods, are partakers actively in the work of nature, and go on from century to century widening their consciousness and increasing the scope of their government in nature. This is the destiny of all beings, and hence at the outset Theosophy postulates this perfectibility of the race, removes the idea of innate unregenerable wickedness, and offers a purpose and an aim for life which is consonant with the longings of the soul and with its real nature, tending at the same time to destroy pessimism with its companion, despair.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE ARMY OF AHURA MAZDA

In these days of so-called progress and civilization when the *light* of knowledge claims to have replaced almost everywhere the *darkness* of ignorance, how many more volunteers do we see added to the army of Ahura Mazda, the Principle of Good and Divine Light? Alas, the recruits of Angra Mainyu, the Mazdean Satan, outnumber these, daily more and more.

—H.P.B. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*)

MODERN society seems almost to delight in the suffering of its members. The bureaucracy that devises more complex ideas to control and subjugate fellow human beings is the product of a totally materialistic viewpoint. To suggest to the governments of the world that all actions should be motivated by loving-kindness would in many cases be met with a cold diplomatic reply that such a course is untenable. They are suggesting that it is better to follow a path of unsympathetic adherence to rules that are spawned from an inability to appreciate the divine nature of man, than to try to prevent their brothers and sisters from falling deeper into despair and misery. A man may be harassed until he is driven into the madhouse or commits suicide, and still the world will say that it was his own fault; if he had only conformed to the rules, then he would have suffered no harm. But these laws are designed for the hard-hearted and are alien to the soul of the sensitive man or woman. So those whose hearts are gently disposed must pay lip service to the belligerent agent of a decaying civilization! The agent of those in "high" positions who carries out their orders, often hides behind the idea that he is "only doing his job," but it is often the case that he carries out his task with great relish. The great Russian writer and thinker, Leo Tolstoy, wrote:

Amongst various nations, even before the Christian teaching, there was expressed and proclaimed a supreme religious law, common to all mankind and consisting in this, that men for their welfare should live not each for himself, but each for the good of all, for mutual service (Buddha, Isaiah, Confucius, Laotze, the Stoics). The law was proclaimed, and those who knew it could not but see all its truth and beneficence. But custom founded not upon mutual service but on violence had penetrated to such an extent into all institutions and habits that whilst people recognized the beneficence of the law of mutual service they continued to live

according to the laws of violence, justifying this by the necessity of threats and retribution. It seemed to them that without threats, and without returning evil for evil, social life was impossible. Certain people for the establishment of order and the correction of men took upon themselves the duty of applying laws, and while they commanded, others obeyed. But the rulers were inevitably depraved by the power they used. Then being themselves depraved, instead of correcting men they transmitted to them their own depravity. Meanwhile those who obeyed were depraved by participation in the coercive actions of the rulers by the imitation of the rulers and by servile submission. (From "The End of the Age: An Essay on the Approaching Revolution")

Nowadays the most widely used form of coercion is the guilt feeling. This has become the curse of modern civilization. In past times, various vices have been predominant, *e.g.*, lust, greed, jealousy and violence, but now it seems to be the guilt feeling that is leading the way. It is ingrained in our very being. We feel guilty about the state of the world, or about our failure to live up to our own expectations or the expectations of others. Governments try to make us give up certain antisocial habits by cultivating our feelings of guilt. This may work to a certain extent, but is it wise? What we are subject to is not a feeling that helps us to realize in our hearts the solidarity of mankind, but one that alienates us from others and leaves us feeling inadequate. We should be taught to love our fellow men, but in doing so we should not demean or hate ourselves, for are we not part of humanity? If we feel ourselves inadequate, then we are erecting barriers and adding fuel to the "great dire heresy of separateness." If we are to become volunteers in the army of Ahura Mazda, then we should have faith in the Light and dispel all shadows that separate us from others in thought and feeling. What we all need are the "gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions." We need the direct experience of Truth to guide us on our way, but we can only arrive at this experience as a result of right living and following the genuine spiritual path. There are so many organizations and individuals claiming to show us this path that it is not surprising that there are many among us lost in a labyrinth of confused thought. We need the courage to compare these claims. A tree is known by its fruits, and the noble souls who have followed the Universal Path set out in the works of H.P.B. and the Masters are

living proof of the validity of this Path.

Some people complain that the language used in old Theosophical books is antiquated and they seek a newer form, but few are willing or able to attempt such a task. Efforts in the past have often proved disastrous and the teachings have been coloured by the ideas of some individual or sect. It is true that had H.P.B. written her works in the late 20th century instead of the 19th, she would have expressed them somewhat differently and couched them in the language of modern times; but the teachings themselves would have been exactly the same, *because Truth does not alter*, only the interpretation we give to it varies from person to person and from time to time. No one since H.P.B. has shown himself or herself capable of reaching the profound levels that she did. When someone does, that person will surely show us, as H.P.B. did, that the best teacher is *within* each one of us.

If we wish to progress spiritually, then we have to go to the teachings of H.P.B. and the Masters time and time again, for there we will find not only metaphysical facts and ethical instruction, but also countless words of consolation and inspiration—all the training we need, in fact, to become soldiers in "the army of Ahura Mazda," soldiers in the sense of warrior-souls engaged in the greatest of all wars, the war between the higher and the lower self within each one of us. A soldier is a "man of distinguished valour," and this is what we need most to fight the inner fight. Those who practise and preach the way of the Spirit despite the scorn and ridicule of the world can be said to be soldiers in this army of Light. In her *Five Messages to the American Theosophists*, H.P.B. writes:

Cavalry—men and horses—can be trained to ride almost as one man in an attack upon the terrestrial plane; shall we not fight and win the battle of the Soul struggling in the spirit of the Higher Self to win our divine heritage?

This is much more worthy of our efforts than the obscenity of war on the physical plane which makes widows and destroys families, often for the most obscure of reasons. Once again man is made to feel guilty if he does not fight for his country. Perhaps one may feel that there are occasions when he needs to take up arms to fight some great evil, but even such a war should not be glorified and should only help us to work towards an end to all such terrible conflicts. If man centred

all his efforts on winning his "divine heritage," then the world would be a much different place. The Masters were also clear on this point and have told us:

"The Kingdom of Heaven is obtained by force," say the Christian mystics. It is but with armed hand, and ready to either conquer or perish that the modern mystic can hope to achieve his object.

So we should concentrate all our energies on spiritual progress. That way we shall transcend all the petty differences that escalate into wars, and we shall realize our Oneness with our fellow human beings. Realizing this, we cannot possibly take up arms against them. We shall want only to develop true love and compassion. These are the weapons needed by the soldiers in the army of Ahura Mazda.

We need to have the courage of our convictions. Truly, as H.P.B. points out in the quotation that heads this article, "Alas, the recruits of Angra Mainyu, the Mazdean Satan, outnumber these [volunteers in the army of Ahura Mazda] daily more and more." Driven by intense selfishness, people inflict terrible sufferings on one another and seem to become almost daily more insensitive to the pain of others. This is a state of affairs that is adding more and more to the negative karmic effects that are plaguing humanity at the moment. The army of "the Principle of Good and Divine Light" must try to promote brotherly and sisterly love, compassion and morality on all levels and must believe that it is possible to bring about a spiritual and moral regeneration on this earth. If each member of this army can strive to forget his or her personality and become "a mere beneficent force in nature," and if all these volunteers can work as one, then no force on earth can stay the progress of true Spirituality, and Truth and Goodness will surely win the day. In the *Dhammapada*, Gautama Buddha is recorded as saying:

Better than a man who conquers in battles a thousand times a thousand men is he who conquers himself. He indeed is the mightiest of warriors.

Finally, we should perhaps ask ourselves the question posed at the end of this quotation from a Master of Wisdom:

You were told, however, that the path to Occult Sciences has to be trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; that every

new step in it leading to the final goal, is surrounded by pitfalls and cruel thorns; that the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and *conquer* the thousand and one furies who keep watch over its adamantine gates and entrance—furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy and finally Temptation—especially the latter; and that he who would see beyond had to first destroy this living wall; that he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never failing determination and yet be meek and gentle, humble and have shut out from his heart every human passion, that leads to evil. Are you all this?

MAN's false conceptions of life are what prevent him from knowing the truth, and it is evident that the first step towards true perception lies in throwing aside the prejudices and predilections he has lived by. And there is always help. Never have we been left alone. Always there are beings greater in evolution than we, who return to this field of physical existence to help us, to wake us up to a perception of our natures. Such has been the mission of all Divine Incarnations down the ages. Those beings have come and lived among us, have become "in all things like unto us," as was said of Jesus, in order that the human words They spoke should be words we would understand. They meet us on the basis of our ideas and try to clarify them and set them in a true course. They can do nothing to stop what we have done and what we want to do; They cannot interfere; but They can help us to see the right direction, if we are so willed; They can give help when we turn to that direction which They indicate—that Path which They themselves followed so many ages ago. Always They try to help us, even when we are proceeding along wrong lines and bringing upon ourselves the suffering such wrong lines entail—even then They try to direct the results into a better channel. They hold back the awful Karma that would shake the world, and let the effects come so gradually that we can stand and bear them. That is part of the protective power of the spiritual nature, and it operates in every direction.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

KAMA—LOWER AND HIGHER

When desire is for the purely abstract—when it has lost all trace or tinge of "self"—then it has become pure.

The first step towards this purity is to kill out the desire for the things of matter, since these can only be enjoyed by the separated personality.

The second is to cease from desiring for oneself even such abstractions as power, knowledge, love, happiness, or fame; for they are but selfishness after all.

Life itself teaches these lessons; for all such objects of desire are found Dead Sea fruit in the moment of attainment. This much we learn from experience. Intuitive perception seizes on the *positive* truth that satisfaction is attainable only in the infinite; the will makes that conviction an actual fact of consciousness, till at last all desire is centred on the Eternal.

—U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7, p. 13

THE *Rig-Veda* speaks of the cause of the manifestation of the Kosmos, of the reawakening of the sleeping Life or Consciousness, in these words:

Desire first arose in THAT, which was the primal germ of mind; and which Sages, searching with their understanding, have discovered to be the bond which connects beings and BEING.

Desire then in its widest application is a divine, universal, motor power. It is the first feeling that stirred the creative One Force, as soon as it emanated as a ray from the Absolute. In this sense it is divine, therefore omnipresent and impersonal. This desire for a sentient life has brought into existence all forms of life, from an atom to a sun: it is the force which causes us to be reborn again and again. It energizes man to cleave to earthly existence, and as such is known as *Tanha*—the will to live. From the ocean of cosmic Kama or Desire man draws some of it and appropriates it, and it becomes the middle constituent of his sevenfold nature. But he uses it for personal, selfish ends, thus transforming it, carnalizing it, so that it functions only on the lower, animal plane. It is man who drags low the God of Love and makes of him the Devil of Lust—the tempter and ensnarer. The all-seeing Eros becomes the blind Cupid.

The Secret Doctrine makes a pointed reference to this personalized

Kama in the following important passage:

It is not molecularly constituted matter—least of all the human body (*sthulasarira*)—that is the grossest of all our "principles," but verily the *middle* principle, the real animal centre; whereas our body is but its shell, the irresponsible factor and medium through which the beast in us acts all its life. Every intellectual theosophist will understand my real meaning.

That there is not only a lower aspect of Kama or desire but also a higher aspect is often overlooked. The highest aspirations for universal benefit as well as the lowest of our passions, all arise from the principle of Kama. It has been called the "balance principle" of sevenfold man, because it may be directed up or down, according as the "Self of Spirit" or the "Self of Matter" operates the alternating current of this power. When we are asked to kill out desire, it is the low or centripetal aspect of Kama which is meant; while its higher aspect, the desire to know, to grow, for service's sake, is that which impels to progress. The desire to do well or ill are both aspects of the same motive-principle. Desire then is the connecting link between the animal below and the God above.

Desire in its lower aspect spells selfishness. It is the root of all evil; it leads man into devious channels of thought and action and causes his degradation. According to the Buddha, it is the cause of sorrow—"What grief springs of itself and springs not of Desire?" Yet this is the power that moves man today. Gratification of the lower appetites is often esteemed the highest good in our civilization, which connives at passions, envies, angers, hates, love of self and lust of life. Modern man knows no peace, no content. As Bernard Shaw has put it: "There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire. The other is to get it." Even the satisfaction of one's desires does not bring happiness, for immediately comes to birth a new brood, deadlier than the first. The inward strife, which begets discords and wars in the world outside, can be stilled only when desires are purified and purged of all trace or tinge of selfishness. The man of the world is fast-bound by the hundred cords of desire; until and unless he frees himself from this Kamic octopus, he cannot tread the path of true progress, leading to the goal of happiness. For all those of us who desire personal possessions—gain and power, glory and wealth—there is a profound lesson contained in the old story of the king who

was to be cured of all his ills by sleeping in the shirt of a happy man; but when the one happy man in his kingdom was found, he was a beggar, without care, without anxiety—and shirtless. The king could never find happiness like the carefree beggar who had no possessions.

Theosophy, as well as all ethical systems, demands that man, having conscience and will, shall control this principle of Kama and not be carried away by it. It is *self-control*, not *extirpation*, of the feelings that is called for. The cutting out of the human heart of every human feeling is indeed an impossibility, as the feelings are an integral part of the constitution of man. That is why "We cannot rise unless self first asserts itself in the desire to do better," for, "The good man who at last becomes even a sage had at one time in his many lives to arouse the desire for the company of holy men and to keep his desire for progress alive in order to continue on his way." Once keep in view the highest possible ideal, desire and strive ardently to live up to it, and all lower desires must die out and fade away. These need no pandering; on the other hand, higher desires and aspirations deserve all possible aid and encouragement in bringing them to fruition.

Shiva, the Great Yogi, reduced the lower aspect of Kama to ashes by the power of his third Eye. The allegory says that while the Great Ascetic was engaged in *Tapas*, Meditation, this Kama stirred within him and thoughts of wife and connubial life arose in his mind. Then from his third Eye Shiva streamed forth Fire which consumed Kama and thus reduced it once again to its primeval spiritual form. The example set by the patron saint of all yogis has to be followed. The aspirant to the Higher Life has to handle his own personalized Kama—fight its vicious aspect, impersonalize its good aspect, and reduce it within himself to its primeval spiritual form.

Those who are fast-fixed in desires cannot acquire true knowledge. Our minds perverted by wrong feelings bring us wrong understanding and make us indulge in wrong practices. Until the mind is freed, at least to some extent, from the thralldom of personal desires, the real "I" or the higher Manasic Ego cannot function, using the personality as a direct channel or vehicle. We have to free ourselves even from desires and feelings which are not evil in themselves but still are personal. A hard task, indeed, for selfishness has subtle ways of expressing itself. Even unselfishness of feelings has to be analysed: Is

one unselfish only with the person one loves or desires to please, or with the motive of parading it, or even for the satisfaction of one's own self?

Control, purification and impersonalizing of the desire or feeling nature is only part of the discipline required for living the Higher Life. Kama is also defined as Volition. In our lower personal and carnal nature this volition expresses itself as obstinacy which is mistaken for "strong will." Volition in its higher aspect is Spiritual Will—the Will to learn and *act out* that which is true and good, to put our good intentions and correct perceptions into practice, to direct our lives on the basis of the Esoteric Philosophy and of our own divine intuitions and innate ideas. This Will has to be activated by pure ideation; thus we come to possess that Higher Feeling by which we perceive accurately and understand the truth of things.

Desire, both in its lower and in its higher aspect, is a creative force, forming the man himself and his surroundings. But while lower desire creates blindly and unconsciously, higher desire or Will creates intelligently. Man today makes himself in the image of his animal passions; he has to create himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his Will. His task then is twofold: to purify his baser desires by knowledge and effort, and, parallel with this, to awaken the Will, to strengthen it by use and, by conquest of the animal in him, to make it absolute ruler within him. Then does passion become Compassion.

THE noise of the moment scoffs at the music of the Eternal.

I cast my own shadow upon my path, because I have a lamp that has not been lighted.

That which ends in exhaustion is death, but the perfect ending is in the endless.

Kicks only raise dust and not crops from the earth.

Man is worse than an animal when he is an animal.

The false can never grow into truth by growing in power.

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE MIDDLE PATH

A CORRECT conception of what constitutes true asceticism is of importance to the student-practitioner of Theosophy. The need for this is felt especially in India where every monk who wears the ochre robe is held in high esteem, irrespective of his spiritual attainments. The illusions and delusions that are prevalent on the subject are really surprising, considering the categorical teachings found in texts like the *Gita* and *The Voice of the Silence*.

Who is a true ascetic? Is he one who wears the ochre-coloured robe? Is he one who has irresponsibly fled from his family duties to become a parasite on society? Is he one who chants *mantras* and tells his beads in a public place, thereby attracting large crowds of men and women? Discerning people will immediately realize that we are only too familiar with the foregoing types and many more and that the true ascetic cannot be any of these.

Sri Krishna declares in the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

He who remains inert, restraining the senses and organs, yet pondering with his heart upon objects of sense, is called a false pietist of bewildered soul. But he who having subdued all his passions performeth with his active faculties all the duties of life, unconcerned as to their result, is to be esteemed. (III, 6-7)

It is one of the pet illusions of the people of India that to practise asceticism severe mortification of the flesh and living in selfish isolation are necessary. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Let us harken to *The Voice of the Silence*:

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

Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites thee to thy "silent Self." (p. 32)

The *Gita* also condemns severe false asceticism:

Those who practise severe self-mortification not enjoined in the Scriptures are full of hypocrisy and pride, longing for what is past and desiring more to come. They, full of delusion, torture the

powers and faculties which are in the body, and me also, who am in the recesses of the innermost heart; know that they are of an infernal tendency. (XVII, 5-6)

Another common obsession is that the practice of asceticism requires severing all family ties. Let us note that *Sannyasa* is the last stage of *Ashrama Dharma*. We have to garner knowledge as *Brahmacharis*; fight as *Kshatriyas* our battles of life, enjoying successes and suffering reverses in *Grihasthashrama*; sit down as *Vaishyas* to strike the balance of our life or to assimilate as *Vanaprasthas* the lessons learnt in the previous two *Ashramas*, in order to be the better able to serve and teach others in the *Sannyasa Ashrama*. A true *Sannyasi* is a Teacher, but in a very real sense he is also a *Sudra*, a servant of humanity. To quote the author of the article "Living the Higher Life":

...I should venture to state my conviction that...on a careful consideration of the subject, the great importance attached to household life (*Grihastha ashrama*) in that [Aryan] philosophy, would be fully borne out. To my mind no ascetics, no teachers of mankind, however eminent and full of the highest knowledge, are really such good and practical benefactors of humanity as Valluvar, of ancient times, who incarnated on earth for the express purpose, among others, of setting an example of an ideal household life to mortals who were prematurely and madly rushing against the rocks of renunciation, and of proving the possibility of leading such a life in any age however degenerated; or as Rama, who, even after having become an *avatar-purusha*, came down amidst mortals and led a household life. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 34*)

This does not mean that at no stage of our spiritual growth is renunciation necessary. Towards the very end only, when one is trying to become a practical Occultist, he will have to be ready to "sacrifice *all, himself first of all*, to gain his end."

Asceticism is not an end in itself, but a means to the end, which is the realization of our Higher Self. Asceticism is a way of life, the predominating characteristic of which is living in accordance with Divine Discipline.

This divine discipline...is not to be attained by the man who eateth more than enough or too little, nor by him who hath a habit of sleeping much, nor by him who is given to overwatching. (*Gita*,

VI, 16)

This is the Doctrine of the Middle Path—there are no extremes in it. We are to have a "true conception of the relation of the body, or physical sheath, to the inner, the true man...blind, unintelligent asceticism is mere folly."

The essence of this Divine Discipline is the successful destruction of those three "gates of hell" spoken of in the *Gita*—"desire, anger, covetousness, which destroy the soul." (XVI, 21)

Read also the pregnant words of *The Voice of the Silence* on the subject of lust:

Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satiated, for this is an abomination inspired by Mara. It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart. (p. 18)

True asceticism is practised to curb the wrong tendencies and propensities of body, speech and mind. This is how the *Gita* describes it:

Honoring the gods, the brahmans, the teachers, and the wise, purity, rectitude, chastity, and harmlessness are called mortification of the body. Gentle speech which causes no anxiety, which is truthful and friendly, and diligence in the reading of the Scriptures, are said to be austerities of speech. Serenity of mind, mildness of temper, silence, self-restraint, absolute straightforwardness of conduct, are called mortification of the mind. This threefold mortification or austerity practised with supreme faith and by those who long not for a reward is of the *sattva* quality. (XVII, 14-17)

The motive that activates true asceticism is not that of becoming a *Pratyeka Buddha*—a personification of spiritual selfishness, caring nothing for the woes of mankind—but that of serving humanity.

We meet false asceticism in numerous guises. The path of real asceticism is from Soul to control of mind, and from the blending of the Mind-Soul to gain tranquillity of heart to rhythmic activity by the body to improve the lower orders of intelligences.

THE desire and pursuit of the whole is called love. —PLATO

LIGHT ON THE PATH

[P. Sreenevas Row's annotations on the closing Section of *Light on the Path*, entitled "Karma," are continued here from our last issue. They appeared originally in *The Theosophist* for October 1885.]

LITERALLY, *Karma* means an action, but practically it is understood as including both *action* and *fruition*, as will be evident from the foregoing observations. Karma, therefore, is nothing but the law of cause and effect, in virtue of which man's condition in the future is regulated by the result of the tendencies encouraged and contracted by him in the past and the present. Indeed Karma is justice, which deals out to man exactly what is due according to his own conduct, good or bad; and it must be noticed that *Yama*, who is popularly called the Lord of the dead, is so called because he regulates the actions of mankind (*Yamayata-iti-Yamah*). He is also called *Samavarti*, the one who deals with all equally without bias; and lastly he is known as *Dharmaraja*, the Lord of justice.

Hence the Law of Karma explains away all questions in respect of the inequalities of fortune and diversities of character among mankind in the world; enjoyments or sufferings of all kinds being simply the consequences of acts done by each soul of his own free will during prior existences, and which exert upon him an irresistible power, most significantly called the *Adrishta*, the unseen, because it is not seen but felt. It is remarkable that the Hermetic term equivalent to *Karma* is almost the same, *viz.*, *Adraste*, which meant a goddess to whom the administration of justice was committed, in the same way as Yama is said to be the Lord of justice in the Aryan books. Further, what is popularly understood by such words as destiny, fate and doom, is nothing else but Karma; the words corresponding to them in Sanscrit being, *Dishtam* (that which is enjoined); *Bhagadhayam* or *Bhagyam* (that which gives fortune), *Niyati* (that which is preordained), and *Vidhi* (that which is preappointed); for whenever a man performs an action, he, by virtue of the very same action, determines and destines that his future condition shall be so-and-so, *i.e.*, good or bad, according to the nature of action thus performed. Indeed, whatever man does now forms the seed for his future action, which may consequently be properly said to have been *predestined* by that action. It must be remembered that in every action of man the influence of his prior

action (Karma) constitutes an important element. For the accomplishment of every action, says Sri Krishna, we need five essentials: (1) the actor; (2) the determined will; (3) implements for committing the act, such as hands, tongue, etc.; (4) the exercise of those implements; and (5) the influence of antecedent conduct. The work which a man does with his body, speech, or mind, whether it be just or unjust, has those five essentials or factors engaged in the performance (*Bhagavad-Gita*, XVIII, 13, 14 and 15). These five essentials of Karma are divided into two groups in the *Mahabharata*, namely, (1) man's present action (including the first four of the said essentials) and (2) the result of his past action (which forms the fifth essential) (*Mahabharata*, *Anusasana Parva*, Chapter VI). And the same idea is conveyed in the *Matsya Purana* with a very clear exposition of the Law of Karma. This law seems to have been recognized by most of the ancient nations. The greatest philosophers in Greece and Rome adopted it; and the Jews knew it well, as we find from the Bible (*John*, IX, 2) where a passage occurs in these words: "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" This idea of a person suffering for the sins not only of himself but of his parents is perfectly consistent with the teachings of the Aryans. The *Rig Veda* (VII, 86, 5), and *Manu* (IV, 173) are explicit authorities on this point.

Here it is to be particularly noticed that the law of Karma, which I have thus tried to explain according to the best available authorities, necessarily implies that man is free to act as he chooses; as otherwise he will not be accountable for his action, and no result of his action would affect him. To be sure, man *is free* to act, within the circle of physical, intellectual and moral laws. He does not act independently of motive and reason; but he possesses the power of choice; he can never be made to will what he does not himself desire to will; and he can originate action within the said limitations. It is well that he is invested with such power of freedom, for it makes him feel that his happiness or misery is within his own power, giving rise to new springs of action and fresh inducements for the due exercise of his rational faculties. Indeed, if I judge human nature aright, it seems to me that man has a conviction, not acquired, but from his own natural constitution, that he has in himself an active power enabling him to do or not to do a certain thing just as he chooses; and this notion of

liberty makes him feel the force of his moral obligation to do what is right and refrain from what is wrong.

"Man," says the *Chandogya Upanishad*, "is a creature of will. According to what his will is in this life, so he will be in the next. Let him therefore keep this will and belief pure" (III, xiv, 1). The *Vishnu Purana* likewise dwells on the freedom of man's will, and shows how man is capable of being led away, for good or evil, by the mind. "Mind of man," this *Purana* says, "is the cause both of his bondage and his liberation. Its attachment to the objects of sense is the reason of his bondage, and its separation from the objects of sense is the means of his freedom. He who is capable of discriminating knowledge should, therefore, restrain his mind from all objects of sense." (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, vii, 22 and 30)

So man's struggle against his passions depends for its success upon the mind itself. "Give me that resolute mind in the conflict," says a Rishi in the *Rig Veda*. (VIII, xix, 20)

If this is so, how, it may be asked, are we to account for the popular notion that every act of man, indeed his every movement, is commanded by God, and that man has no liberty of choice to do or not to do anything, however small and insignificant? It is very difficult to trace the origin of popular notions; but, in this instance, I may say that the three following causes—among others, it may be—seem to have fostered this idea.

The first and foremost appears to be the overzealousness of certain classes of men, who consider it a great merit to acknowledge their absolute dependence on God, and to deny to themselves the least liberty of will, even so much as to raise a little finger or draw a breath without the command of God expressly given for that purpose and on that occasion. But these persons do not for a moment pause to consider how great is the mischief their theory is calculated to produce. It ascribes *arbitrary* will to God, and reduces Man, an intellectual, rational being, to something worse than a *machine*, cancelling every inducement to virtue and even promoting unmitigated evil. To avoid this incongruous result, the followers of this theory say that the ordination by God of any particular act to be done or avoided by man is not simply because God willed it, but that God's will has had reference to the merits or demerits of man acquired during his past life. But this explanation does not solve the difficulty, and leaves

open the question: "What was it that induced the meritorious or other act in the past life, in the life before that, in the one before that again, and so on indefinitely?"

The second ground of the theory of Divine intervention in every act of man is to be found in the fact that one of the words used to represent the result of past action (*i.e.*, Karma) in the Sanscrit books, and notably in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (XVIII, 13, etc.) and *Mahabharata* (*Anusasana*, Chapter VI), quoted above, is *DAIVAM*. This word taken literally does certainly mean *Divine* (that which relates to *Deva*=God, is *Daivam*). But this is a technical word, and, like all other technical words, has a special significance attached to it. The *Amara Kosa*, the universally recognized Sanscrit Lexicon, classes *Daivam* synonymously with five other words representing the result of past action (Karma). The *Matsya Purana*, which devotes one entire chapter to the elucidation of this subject, defines in the clearest possible language the word *Daivam* to be "the result, impression, or effect of *one's own actions* committed during his prior existence"; and this definition receives a very strong support from a series of *slokas* in the eighth chapter of the *Vayu Purana*. In numerous other Sanscrit works also, although no specific definition of the word is given, there is sufficient to establish the fact that what is meant by *Daivam* is *Karma*, and not a Divine command; *e.g.*, the *Mahabharata*, *Anusasana Parva*, Chapter VI. It must further be noticed that the Aryan books are full of passages like this: "The man who abandons all desires of flesh obtains bliss." Again, "the man who transcends the qualities of the body, becomes immortal," and so on (*Bhagavad-Gita*, II, 71 and XIV, 20). If the bonds in which the soul is entangled were laid by God on purpose, it is utterly impossible that man could extricate himself therefrom; whereas expressions like these are perfectly consistent with the hypothesis that it was man who entangled himself in the web, and therefore it is man who should extricate himself from it. In a word, each man is his own preserver or destroyer according as he follows good or evil. The reason why *Daivam* happens to be one of the technical words chosen to represent Karma seems to be to attach the greatest importance to Karma, showing that it is not merely a human artificial institution, but one of the Divine Laws which are eternal, and that its influence in ruling the destinies of man is supreme.

And the third ground for the popular belief in the Divine

interposition appears to be based on passages like this: "All are dependent on God" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, IX, 4). It is clear that such passages are intended to proclaim the Divine Supremacy, but certainly not to declare that man, endowed with organs of sense and action together with a rational faculty, is nothing but a toy, incapable of moving a finger or drawing a breath without the special command of God for that purpose. In order to maintain my position in holding this view, I quote the following verses from the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Everyone is urged to act by the qualities of Prakriti, which are inherent in him" (III, 5). "The Lord creates neither the power (*Kartutva*) nor the deeds (*Karya*) of mankind, nor the application of the fruits of action. All this happens in due course of nature" (V, 14). "Men are led astray by their reason being obscured by ignorance, but when that ignorance is destroyed by the force of reason, their Divine wisdom shines forth with the glory of the Sun" (V, 15 and 16). So that "man should raise himself by himself" (VI, 5); and he should "ponder well and act as he chooses" (XVIII, 63). Surely, if these passages do not prove the liberty of human will, I do not understand what else they mean.

And, lastly, I would quote the following hymn of the *Rig Veda*, which is very widely known to Aryan Pandits: "Two birds, associated together as friends, dwell on the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fig, while the other, abstaining from it, merely looks on" (*Rig Veda*, I, 164, 20). Here, the tree represents the body, and the fig means the fruit or result of actions. The bird that consumes the fruit is the individual soul, and the bird that is merely looking on is a symbolical manifestation of the supreme soul—surely *a looker-on is not an actor*.

In making these observations, I must not for a moment be understood as ignoring the divine supremacy. Far from it. If I hold that man is subject to the law of Karma, I hold also (in the words of *Akshyopanishad*) that *both* man and Karmic law, as well as everything else, are subject to the Divine law, which is emphatically called the *rita* in the Veda, as representing the law as well as the source of the law. The enjoyer and the objects of enjoyment are all in the Supreme; and the Supreme is in them all. (*Svetasvatara Upanishad*, I, 7)

In conclusion, I would cite the following hymn from the *Rig Veda*, which sets forth the origin and growth of sin in a way which clearly confirms the above view that man's lot depends on his own conduct:

"The cause of sin (*Anrita*) is not ourselves, but our condition (*Dhriti*). It is that which is intoxication, wrath, gambling and ignorance. There is a senior in the proximity of the junior. Even a dream is provocative to sin" (*Rig Veda*, VII, 86, 6). Let us try to understand this hymn carefully. *Rita* means law, righteousness, justice. It is asked, what is the cause of the soul acting in a way contrary to this, *i.e.*, *Anrita*? The soul answers that this cause is not itself, for soul of its own nature is pure—*Nirvana-maya* (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, 4), and that the cause is nothing else but the condition, *Dhriti*, of the soul, *i.e.*, the condition of its being connected with the body; for *Dhriti* means holding, having, or bearing. The encasement of the soul in a body with various senses creates affections and dislikes (*Bhagavad-Gita*, III, 34); and these, in their turn, give rise to two natures, the higher (spiritual) and the lower (animal), which the foregoing hymn represents as the senior and junior living together in proximity, and each inclining man towards itself. "He who attends to the inclinations of his lower or animal nature has a concern; from concern proceeds a passion; from passion, anger; and from anger is produced folly; from folly arises the loss of memory; from loss of memory, the loss of reason; and from loss of reason, the loss of all!" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, II, 62, 63). Hence the Vedic hymn just quoted cautions a man to be careful even in the smallest matters, as "even a dream is provocative to sin."

This is the Law of Karma. It is eternal in this, that it, Karma, does not vanish except by its enjoyment by the individual concerned, now or hereafter, and it is inevitable inasmuch as no one, not even the greatest of men, can escape from its influences.

Such is the force of Karma; and from this point our Text starts and proceeds to explain how Karma is eternal and infinite, when it is viewed in the abstract, with reference to the whole universe and the great body of mankind *generically*, and how it is finite, when viewed with reference to men, *individually*; how the threads constituting the Karma are so many living particles, as it were, affecting not only the party immediately concerned but others also; how the effects of Karma can be washed out by individuals, and so on. I shall divide this Section III into several clauses for the sake of convenience, and discuss the topic embraced by each clause separately.

(To be continued)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The June *Unesco Courier* comes out in "praise of tolerance," that "awkward virtue" as British philosopher Bernard Williams calls it. "No society can be safe from the temptation to practise exclusion and intolerance unless it shows constant determination and vigilance," insists Ehsan Naraghi, Iranian sociologist and historian, describing the challenge as one of accepting that "each of the five and a half billion human beings on the planet can have his or her own ideas and preferences," while admitting that "those of others are just as worthy of respect."

One who is intolerant of another's opinion without knowing it to be false, excludes without evidence a possible means to knowledge. To make up one's mind in advance without giving a fair hearing to others is an instance of intellectual intolerance, which recalls Mr. Judge's remark that "to judge or reject before examination is the province of little minds or prejudiced dogmatists," and also the injunction ascribed to Narada with which H.P.B. concludes the first volume of *Isis Unveiled*:

"Never utter these words: 'I do not know this—therefore it is false.'"

"One must study to know, know to understand, understand to judge."

Tolerance, however, does not mean giving in to people. Accepting anything and everything on the plea that our neighbour must do as he pleases would be opening wide the door and welcoming in all base compromises and injustices. We have no right to oppose and rule our neighbour, but we have no right either to let him oppress and rule over us. Let live, yes, but live also, free from any undue exterior influence. Between tolerance and a namby-pamby acceptance of everything, good, bad and indifferent, there is a gulf. Krishna was not tolerant of Duryodhana's baseness; Jesus was not tolerant when the money-changers desecrated the temple.

A better motto than the merely good one, "Tolerance for all," is the spiritual motto in conduct which H.P.B. proposed in her Fourth Message to the American Theosophists: "Peace with all who love Truth in sincerity."

Many African, European and American specialists gathered May 4 to 8 in Praia (Cape Verde) for a seminar organized as part of the celebrations commemorating the fifth centenary of the Encounter between Two Worlds, following upon Christopher Columbus's "discovery" of America. The meeting's central theme was "Africa's Role and its Consequences." The twenty-odd papers presented dealt with the African situation before 1492, the immediate and subsequent aftermath of European expansion, the slave trade, African-American relations, and Pan-Africanism. (*Unesco Sources*, June 1992)

Experts who attended the conference argued that Africa was thriving at one time. As stated by Professor Iba Der Thiam in his paper:

Africa had achieved tremendous progress in all fields. It could easily have withstood comparison with any European or Asian state of the time. Africa had created institutions, built nations, organized economies, developed trade and transportation, invented scripts, imagined currencies, perfected commercial principles, stated laws, and organized social codes.

Zairian Professor Elikia M'Bokolo referred to data confirming the level of development reached in Africa in the past: mastery of iron and copper metallurgy, practice of stock breeding, development of tuber and cereal agriculture and growth of textile crafts. Researchers have started cataloguing the clues to the past.

The participants at the conference put the blame for the degradation of African civilization on the meeting of the two worlds, the slave trade, and the violence Africa suffered at the hands of Europeans. However disastrous the consequences of all this for Africa, the downward trend needs must have begun much earlier. European explorers would hardly have succeeded in exploiting Africa and its people had it not been for the primitive conditions they found on this continent, though in centuries and millennia past it was the home of civilized humanity. In the light of Theosophical teaching, there is nothing surprising in the rise and fall of civilizations; having reached their acme, nations and whole continents have been known to lag centuries behind the rest of the world in knowledge, social and economic progress, artistic skills, etc.

It is interesting also to recall what H.P.B. has written in *The Secret Doctrine* of African isolation and of the need of outside influence to

develop a high standard of civilization. She observes that "nowhere does a more extraordinary variability of racial types exist, from black to almost white, from gigantic men to dwarfish races," than in Africa,

and this only because of their forced isolation. The Africans have never left their continent for several hundred thousands of years. If tomorrow the continent of Europe were to disappear and other lands to re-emerge instead; and if the African tribes were to separate and scatter on the face of the earth, it is they who, in about a hundred thousand years hence, would form the bulk of the civilized nations. And it is the descendants of those of our highly cultured nations, who might have survived on some one island, without any means of crossing the new seas, that would fall back into a state of relative savagery. Thus the reason given for dividing humanity into *superior* and *inferior* races falls to the ground and becomes a fallacy. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 425)

In *Isis Unveiled* and elsewhere, H.P.B. furnishes enough evidence to show that ancient Indian civilization, its arts and sciences, had influenced other great nations of the past; and this is corroborated by too many scholars to doubt the fact.

In *The Times of India* for July 22, Pranab Basu observes that the "clear influence" of ancient Indian art on Italian Renaissance artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael has come to light with documented historical evidences available from various Italian museums and the Vatican library. At least two major works of Leonardo, "The Virgin (Madonna) of the Rocks" and "Leda and the Swan," were greatly influenced both in form and tone by the rock-cut sculptures in the Elephanta Caves, it now seems. "The eternal beauty and sublime air of Shiva" in the main cave of Elephanta, for instance, has now been discovered to have found expression in "The Virgin (Madonna) of the Rocks," described as Leonardo's "most sublime work."

According to archaeological documents, Leonardo appears to have got the map of Elephanta from the merchant Antonello, and he drew this map on the cover of one of his notebooks. Scholars have dated the entry of the map in Leonardo's notebook between 1508 and 1509. The maritime route between Italy and the Indian subcontinent was

already established since the early 16th century, facilitating merchants, missionaries and other travellers to reach India. According to the internationally-known Indian archaeologist, R. Sengupta, Leonardo might have heard about Elephanta from merchants who had travelled to India; and, with his acute urge for exploration, even a visit by him to the caves while he was in Milan could not be ruled out.

Interest in ancient Indian art on the part of Leonardo da Vinci and other Renaissance masters searching for new ideas can also be traced to missionaries' accounts. A recent catalogue prepared by Istituto Italiano relating to the contribution of Italian missionaries to knowledge about India is revealing in this respect. It says:

The Italian missionaries who went to India from the 14th century on, contributed a great deal to Italian knowledge of that country, from many points of view: geographic, ethnological, linguistic, historical, that of religious and philosophical thought, of science and of art.

Their accounts, the letters they sent from India, the printed books published from their writings, form an important collection of news and data which once again made Italy aware of the Indian subcontinent, above all after the long mediaeval period during which the countries of the East had become obscured by legends of fantastic monsters.

Although no parallel evolutionary development has been traced for the art of Asia and of Europe, yet there are some striking similarities. There is no definite clue, for instance, as to why the eyes of the "fine Bodhisattva of Ajanta" have an expression not unknown to the centuries-later Madonnas of Duccio. The possibility of the Italian artists having caught an impression from the imperishable records in the Astral Light cannot be ruled out, but this does not negative the theory that the human spirit expresses everywhere and in similar manner its own supreme aspiration. This identity of aspirations transcends the barriers raised by space and time and finds expression in similar forms in the field of art—that field which, it is said, answers most deeply to the intimate essence of our thoughts.

"Humankind and Nature in Tibetan Tradition" is the theme of Ven.

Karma Gelek Yuthok's article in the May-June issue of *Tibetan Bulletin*. Man and nature are inseparable from each other, the Tibetans hold (as do the Theosophists), and unless harmony between the two is maintained, the purpose of life cannot be fulfilled. Well-being of all living creatures is the end in the Buddhist view of life, and an expression of it is its concern for the physical world.

"Difficult it is to obtain birth as a human being. Difficult it is to live the life of a man," taught the Buddha (*The Dhammapada*, Verse 182). Human life is regarded as precious, the article states, not just because of its rareness, but because it is endowed with special faculties of intellect and wisdom which if made proper use of can help one to reach great heights. Human beings alone can discriminate good from bad, right from wrong, and can also feel and understand the suffering and happiness of fellow beings. The supreme and ultimate purpose of human life is to become fully enlightened, and one who has attained that goal becomes the guide and guardian of all living beings. Human beings, however, as long as they remain ignorant and imperfect, are apt to misuse knowledge, power, religion, capabilities, natural resources and almost everything else.

For instance, the development of nuclear weapons is a major misuse of knowledge; invasion of smaller nations by bigger ones is a major misuse of power; regionalism is a major misuse of principle; preaching sectarianism is a major misuse of religion; legalizing social evils is a major misuse of system; deforestation is a major misuse of natural resources; biased writing is a major misuse of capability; and production of chemical weapons is a major misuse of things.

Seeking a lifelong happiness for one's own self by causing harm and problems to fellow beings is regarded as insufficient and improper use of human life. Unlike other species, humankind bears a high capability of accomplishing good deeds as well as of causing inconceivable suffering and destruction....

Tibetans believe that the physical world is a common property of all beings who have natural access to it. Humankind has conquered the world, but there is no way it can acquire an exclusive moral right to misuse and destroy its resources without due respect and concern for other living beings with which it shares the world. The consequence of breaking natural moral laws is believed to be much graver than breaking the laws framed by man.

According to Rhea White, editor of the newly published journal, *Exceptional Human Experience*, mystical states, out-of-body experiences, UFO reports, etc., have one thing in common—they all represent the power of something outside of a person's conscious self. White, who is currently compiling a research database of unusual experiences reported by people all over the world, says:

Exceptional human experience can be extremely rewarding, enriching, and exciting....All the examples in the database are exceptional in some way, although the definition of exceptional is up to the person involved. You can even have an exceptional experience while involved in sports or painting. Something about the experience gives you a larger view of yourself and the world.

According to White, exceptional experiences are actually commonplace and have been reported in a wide variety of cultures throughout history. They are, however, still considered "exceptional" in the lives of those who have them. "I think everybody has had some kind of exceptional human experience, although they may not want to admit it—even to themselves."

The new journal covers such topics as psychic experiences, "altered states," "peak experiences" and creative inspiration, "with a focus on experiential and qualitative research rather than experimental investigations."

To learn more about the effects of alcohol on the brain, researchers at Middlesex Hospital in London studied 25 sets of identical twins where one twin was a heavy drinker and the other was not. Each twin was put through a wide variety of mental tests, from vocabulary to mathematics to inserting a number of wooden shapes into corresponding slots in a board. The drinking twins generally scored much lower on almost every mental test than their more sober siblings. Not only that, but the longer they had been drinking—some had started in their teens—the lower they scored. (*The Edell Health Letter*)

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

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ISIS UNVEILED. A photographic facsimile of the original edition of 1877.
THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.
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THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE
THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY
THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE
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LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME
THE BHAGAVAD-GITA
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THE YOGA APHORISMS OF PATANJALI
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H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES

The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the Philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles through a truer realization of the SELF, a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching,*" and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each of all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards of signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, no formalities to be complied with.