

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

Vol. 11, No. 4

August 17, 2019

### A Magazine Devoted to The Living of the Higher Life

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### “OTHER-DEPENDENCE IS MISERY”

THE TWO interrelated phrases, “Self-dependence is bliss,” and “Other-dependence is misery,” come from Manu, the Lawgiver of ancient India. In *The Laws of Manu* we read: “Everything that depends on others (gives) pain, everything that depends on oneself (gives) pleasure” (IV, 160). There are three key questions to be answered to understand the subject. What is dependence? What is included in the term “other”? Why and how other-dependence can become misery and how to overcome it?

Dependence is defined as the state of being dependent on some thing or a person for support, which often means to be unable to do without that person or thing. Dependency is *not* always a weakness. When dependency is kept balanced with independence it becomes healthy dependency. *Undue* dependence upon others is unhealthy, and that is implied by the phrase “other-dependence.” We can easily see that none of us can live in a complete vacuum. Interdependence is the law of life.

The process of growing up is moving from dependence to interdependence. We are born in the first place, because some woman carried us for nine months in her womb and nourished us. A child abandoned after birth would cry and cry and finally die. Children who are fed but not cuddled, *i.e.*, given love and warmth, are also known to die. There is no such thing as a self-made man. Right from our childhood there has been contribution of many people in

making us what we are. For our basic needs we are dependent on countless people, as also on kingdoms below man. We observe this dependence and interdependence in lower kingdoms of nature, described as *symbiosis*. However, *parasitism* is the form of symbiosis in which one is dependent and is benefitted at the expense of another. Interdependency can easily degenerate into *undue* dependency if we passively receive without giving. We may tend to lean on another to the extent of draining him of his physical or psychic energy. It not only puts unnecessary burden upon others, but it also prevents us from developing our own capacities, mental, moral and physical, as fully as we could and should. It may easily make us selfish and self-centred, leading to atrophy of our power of judgement and free choice. Theosophy teaches that human progress is through individual effort, self-induced and self-devised, it is evident that as long as we lean on others more than we need to, we are not only not progressing, but at times, may even be retrogressing.

The “other” could be people, things or places. We depend upon powerful people. There are some with whom breaking laws of the land or dodging some norms of society is normal, because they depend upon people in high places with power, or people with strength. But we see that sometimes they are caught in a situation, where no one and nothing can aid them. They are cornered. “Other-dependence” brings them long-term misery, in terms of punishment from the state, or loss of reputation, or isolation.

The “Other” can be knowledge or skill of a person. In our days, working women are heavily dependent on maid-servants and cooks, who make unreasonable demands for loans and frequent raise in the salary, by almost black-mailing them with the threats to leave the job. In offices, they say, “Knowledge is power.” A person with knowledge of certain field becomes indispensable for the company, which is ready to satisfy the whims and demands of such a person. A person with certain skill can also wield power, and at times, organizations get overly dependent on such people due to fear of not finding substitutes for them.

That “other” could be a person with qualities we lack. We depend upon that person to make our decisions by analysing the situation. There are people who are emotional by nature and are not able to see things clearly, which in turn makes them vulnerable, anxious and afraid. They tend to lean on those who may be rational or intuitive. We must learn to make our own decisions, knowing full well that we may be mistaken, and with the readiness to learn from our mistakes. Intuition can be developed only by giving it an exercise, and then following it through mistakes.

Often, we are ready to surrender principles under pressure for the sake of peace or out of fear of disapproval of others, including friends and relatives. “Do not listen to friends when the Friend inside you says, ‘Do this,’” wrote Gandhiji. Nothing can make us act against our conscience, if we are prepared to take the consequences, whatever they may be. We ought to listen to others’ point of view and give in when that does not call for sacrificing of any principle.

In the ultimate analysis, for those who want to grow spiritually, there is no alternative to making choices. It is by exercising the sovereign power of choice that we learn how *not to make mistakes*. We crave for freedom of choice, but many people go through life, without doing their own thinking or making their own choices. They are happy if someone else will tell them, what to do and what not to do, in matters moral or otherwise. It is not suggested that others should not be consulted while making any choice, especially moral, but after taking input the final decision must be ours.

That “other” can be a thing, such as a washing machine, television, mobile phone, smart phone, computer, Internet, or any of the many gadgets. In the past few years, we have witnessed how *unduly* “dependent” we have become on these gadgets, so that if any of these were to break or go out of order for a while, we feel as if we have ceased to exist. To be dependent on a particular place for the purpose of study or meditation is also “other-dependence.” The need to get away, periodically, from the noise and chaos of the city, to a quiet place, for inner peace and psychic balance, shows dependence

on “place.” Mr. Crosbie gives sage advice on such dependence upon the externals, which every spiritual aspirant will do well to ponder over. Thus, “Surely it is not a good thing for progress to depend upon externals for balance. Thinking so only perpetuates the dependence, and cannot bring that inner strength and perception which is so necessary. . . . From all this a nervous tension is produced which is corrosive and destructive, occupies the mind with one’s fancied needs, and reacts injuriously on the body. True strength lies *within* and can only be aroused and used by ceasing to think that anything in particular of an external nature is *necessary* for us. . . .” (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 125). True asceticism is a protection against the seductions of comfort.

When there is dependence on “other” person, place or thing, not just from the utility standpoint, but by attachment, then it is the most difficult form of dependence to overcome. It calls for cultivation of detachment. The dependency created by *attachment* or desire, is very strong, and is comparable to dependence on drugs and alcohol. We know that substance abuse and dependence, which goes by the name of *addiction*, is most difficult to cure. It is true that a natural desire like hunger goes away when we have eaten food. It comes in cycles, and therefore, recurs after few hours. But we become slaves to our desires when the mind intervenes. For instance, when we put ice-cream on our tongue, the tongue reports that it is cold and sweet, but it is the mind that intervenes and says, “I like it, I want more of it.” In time, we become slaves to our palate.

Says *The Voice of the Silence*, “The unwary Soul that fails to grapple with the mocking demon of illusion, will return to earth the slave of Mara.” Interestingly, when we begin with small pleasures, they lure us for repetition, and for some time we derive pleasure. But after a while they stop providing the pleasure or thrill that they did initially. Every such pleasure is called the “mocking demon of illusion,” because it first creates the illusion of giving you joy, but actually it is cheating you, as after some time you neither enjoy that thing, nor are you able to altogether leave it. The person who falls

prey to it is said to have become a “slave of Mara.” It is good to bear in mind that there is no accidental escape from such slavery. For such psychological problems time is no cure. The thing to do is to tackle the problem *consciously* and not leave to chance.

We cannot appreciate life by remaining at the periphery or know about the depths of the ocean by sitting at the shore and only wetting our feet, for the fear of being drowned. The universe exists for the experience and emancipation of the soul. We are expected to blend the capacities of a stoic and a voluptuary. “He must be capable of testing and valuing to its most delicate fraction every joy existence has to give; and he must be capable of denying himself all pleasures, and that without suffering from the denial,” says *Light on the Path*. In other words, we should be able to enjoy pleasures and yet not be *dependent* on them. “We must be able to use things when we need them and then relinquish them without regret when they have outlived their usefulness. We must be able to appreciate and enjoy the places where we tarry, and yet pass on without anguish when we are called elsewhere,” writes Peace Pilgrim.

Perhaps, the worst kind of “other-dependence,” which has paralyzed us morally and spiritually, is over-dependence on gods. The moment some tragedy strikes—loss of loved one, financial loss, serious illness, etc.—we take recourse to prayers, rituals and ceremonies to propitiate gods and goddesses. In spite of being aware that we are reaping the effects of the causes we had sown earlier, we see students, parents, young boys and girls, visiting temples to barter with gods. Some offer a silver leg as a barter to get their own leg cured or set right. There may be reports of successes, but unfortunately, the statistics do not include the failures. Everything must happen within the ambit of the great Law of Karma. Then, where do students of Theosophy look for help? The answer given is, to their *Karma* and to their Higher Self—the God within. H.P.B explains that Higher Self and Karma are one and the same.

Theosophy teaches that under karma, each one of us brings with him his inner capacity and also his outer environment. By giving a

right response to what fate brings to us, by accepting and learning the right lesson, when we cannot change it in spite of our efforts, we can change our fate. We are bound to succeed in our effort, if our desire is not for soul-growth, but to bring happiness and enlightenment to others, by inward resignation to the Law.

Psychology concerns itself especially with emotional dependency. Often emotional dependency is confused with love. It is very natural for us to be emotionally attached to some people around us. But if we begin to feel that we cannot be happy without a certain person, family member or a friend, then we can be sure that we have crossed the line into emotional dependency. We seem to tell that person, “You make me happy,” instead of saying, “You and I met, and happiness arose,” and being aware that such happiness can arise on meeting others also. In Psychology, a number of suggestions are made to claim back one’s emotional independence, beginning with identifying and facing the underlying fear of losing that person; building one’s self-esteem; learning to give other people rather than being only a receiver, and by spending some time alone and introspecting.

It is true that sooner or later we must learn to be on our own, and stop being other-possessed. But it must happen naturally and gradually. We may begin by learning to be self-dependent while we are surrounded by our loved-ones—in terms of doing one’s own things and also learning to curb the impulse of sharing “every little thing” with another. Every day we must observe silence for a few minutes and set apart half-an-hour for meditation. Most of all we need to cultivate companionship with that silent Spectator within that is described in the *Gita* as “the Comforter, the Lord, the Witness, the resting-place, the asylum and the Friend.” In the process of spiritual development, help and guidance comes from the inner planes of being and to avail of it we must stop inner and outer chatter. “Man was born alone, must stand alone, die alone—so he must needs be strong,” writes Mr. Judge.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT THE MONKEY’S PAW

“THE MONKEY’S PAW” is a short story by W. W. Jacobs. It has been considered to be one of the best supernatural short stories ever written, and has been popular with generations of readers. It was published in Jacobs’ short story collection *The Lady of the Barge*, in 1902. In this story three wishes are granted to the owner of the mummified monkey’s paw, a magical talisman, but the wishes come with an enormous price for interfering with fate.

The story revolves around a couple, Mr. and Mrs. White, and their son, Herbert. The story begins with Herbert White and his father playing chess, while Mrs. White sits knitting by the fire. It appears from their conversation that they are expecting a visitor. The visitor, Sergeant-Major Morris, a friend of Mr. White, who served with British Army in India, soon arrives. He first narrates exciting stories of his time in India. Mr. White remembers the strange tale of a monkey’s paw that Morris had recently told him. He almost reluctantly shows the magical mummified monkey’s paw to the family and explains that a fakir, a mystic miracle worker, had put a spell on the paw. “He wanted to show that fate ruled people’s lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow. He put a spell on it so that three separate men could each have three wishes from it,” said the sergeant-major. But he cautions that while the wishes are always granted, “I warn you of the consequences.” It becomes clear that the wishes come with a catch: whoever makes the wish must pay a great price. Thus, for instance, he himself already had his three wishes, but seemed to have had horrific experiences with the paw. Another man had used his third wish to ask for death. The sergeant-major had thought of selling the paw, but was aware that the buyer would first wish to have the proof of its effects, and that might mean causing more trouble. He throws the paw in the fire, but Mr. White quickly retrieves it. The sergeant-major warns him to stay away from the paw, but Mr. White is curious and ends

up buying the paw from him. Again, the sergeant-major warns, “If you must wish, wish for something sensible.”

After the sergeant-major leaves, the Whites decide to put the paw to the test. At his son Herbert’s suggestion, Mr. White flippantly wishes for two hundred pounds, which will enable him to make the final mortgage payment for his house, even though he believes that he has everything he wants. When he makes the wish, he feels the paw move in his hand. Herbert scoffs that his father is not likely to ever see the money. He remains alone in the room for a while, imagining pictures in the fire. Finally, he sees a strange monkey-like face in the flames, and feels frightened. He accidentally touches the monkey’s paw which alarms him further. In this rather unsettled mood, he retires to bed. When his son and wife mocked saying that it is absurd to believe that wishes could be granted, Mr. White says, “Morris said the things happened so naturally that you might if you so wished attribute it to *coincidence*.” And that is how he really got his two hundred pounds.

The next day his son Herbert leaves for work at a local factory. Later that day, word comes to the White home that Herbert has been killed in a terrible machinery accident. Although the employer denies responsibility for the incident, the firm has decided to make a goodwill payment to the family of the deceased. The payment of two hundred pounds exactly matches the amount Herbert had suggested his father should wish for.

Ten days after their son’s death and a week after the funeral, Mrs. White, mad with grief, insists her husband use the paw to wish Herbert back to life. Mr. White is utterly horrified at the thought of summoning their son back from the grave, especially because he was mangled beyond recognition in the accident. An hour or so later—the cemetery being two miles away—there is a knock at the door. As Mrs. White fumbles at the locks in a desperate attempt to open the door, Mr. White, terrified of “the thing outside,” retrieves the paw and makes his third wish. We are not told exactly what the wish is, but when he makes it, the knocking stops abruptly. Mrs.

White opens the door to find that no one is there. She wails in disappointment and misery.

“The Monkey’s Paw” is considered to be a symbol of desire and greed because of its unrestricted power to grant every wish. It is this power which seems to tempt even unselfish people to make a wish, though they may have everything they need. The author seems to remind the readers of the old adage, “Be careful what you wish for, (because) it just might come true.”

We do not need talisman, our thoughts have power, and on the basis of like attracts like, we attract to ourselves things we intensely desire or intensely dislike or fear. In a *Psychology Today* Post, Denise Fournier, a psychotherapist and adjunct professor at Nova Southeastern University, writes that as we focus on obtaining what we want, often we do not have clear idea of the many implications associated with getting it. For instance, a lady who looked forward to retirement, hoping to relax, pursue her hobbies, and travel to see places, discovered within eight months of her retirement that she was thoroughly miserable. The reason being, she had not envisaged that by the time she retired she would lose her parents, and she would not have the necessary zest or stamina to pursue any hobby or do travelling. The author makes an important philosophical point that it is necessary to be mindful of what we wish for because we tend to believe that we will be happier, once we acquire what we desire. But our wants are unlimited and besides, *happiness is an attitude of mind*. There is nothing wrong with wishing, wanting or dreaming about getting things, but let us not be too busy thinking about what we want instead of appreciating what we have. Happiness must be cultivated internally, writes Fournier.

The story of King Midas is an excellent example of “be careful what you wish for.” King Midas was a very rich but greedy king. He always craved for more. A magician granted him power that anything he touched would turn into gold. He turned grass, tables, chairs, flowers, including his food into gold. He was dismayed but he was too greedy. The next day his daughter hugged him and was

turned into a gold statue. He loved his daughter, and wanted her back, so he asked the magician to help him and take back the power.

At the base of it all is a very profound fact that concealed within every wish or desire there is pain. We are unhappy if the wish is not fulfilled. But even if it is fulfilled, and we get what we wanted, it may not be what we had expected it to be, and that in turn results in disappointment and sorrow. Even if we get what we wished for, sooner or later we will have to part with it. It is also true that we do not know what is “good” for us, in a deeper sense, *i.e.*, something which will make for our growth. Plato says, “Meditation is silent and *unuttered* prayer... Remain silent in the presence of the *divine ones*, till they remove the clouds from thy eyes and enable thee to see by the light which issues from themselves, not what appears as good to thee, but what is *intrinsically* good.” Buddhism teaches that there is always *potential suffering* attached to everything in this world. The very thing that was source of pleasure becomes a source of pain. There is concealed suffering.

The second point that is made in the story is to leave fate alone as all things happen for a reason and under Karma. We have free will to change our fate, by natural means, but not by using the supernatural or other-worldly means, as that might result in punishment far greater than the pain any “natural” losses may cause. When we try to avert the “unwanted,” or to forcibly obtain something which is not ours under Karma, then either it is taken away, teaching us a bitter lesson, or that very thing becomes a cause of disaster, or we make our karma more complex, to work it out in some other life. Talisman or not, when prayers or ceremonies are resorted to, to dodge karma, it comes back to us in some other life, in some other form, with tenfold greater power.

There are various allusions in the story that the Whites doubted and had no respect for magic and magical forces. The calamity and disasters can be partly attributed to this attitude. The game of chess is interpreted by some to symbolize life. The risks and mistakes that Mr. White makes while playing chess, parallel the

risks and mistakes he makes while wishing on the monkey’s paw. From the description given by the sergeant-major it was amply clear that the paw seemed to have been specifically designed to hurt the people who wish on it. But the Whites, doubting the magical powers of the paw, and thinking, what harm would there be in wishing on it, make a wish just for fun.

Science and our so-called “enlightened” civilization have always derided magic and regarded it as a mere superstition. Magic, as a science is the knowledge of the hidden aspects of man and nature, by which omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit can be acquired while in the body, and by which one is able to have control over nature’s forces. When this knowledge is used for beneficent purposes, it is White Magic, but when misused, it becomes sorcery or Black Magic. The term “talisman” is derived from the Arabic *tilism* or *tilsam*, meaning a “magic image.” It is “an object, whether in stone, metal, or sacred wood; often a piece of parchment filled with characters and images traced under certain planetary influences in magical formulæ, given by one versed in occult sciences to one unversed, either with the object of preserving him from evil, or for the accomplishment of certain desires” (*The Theosophical Glossary*). In *Isis Unveiled* (I, 462) H.P.B. defines talisman to be a worthless bit of metal, a scrap of paper, imbued by the influence of the human will, with a potency for good or ill.

The author makes an allusion to the *Arabian Nights* stories, and it is easy to see that this story compares very well with Aladdin’s magic lamp. A person had to merely rub the lamp and a Djinn would appear, ready to do any task he was asked. While Aladdin possessed the magic lamp, he came to much grief and hardships because a wicked magician wanted to possess that lamp. The story ends by saying that the clever princess broke the lamp into little pieces. Some she burned, some she buried and the rest she cast into the sea. She did this because she feared human envy, wickedness and the desire for power, for they can often be stronger than goodness.

## THE MARRIAGE IDEAL

### I

THE WORD marriage comes from the Latin root *mariatore*, meaning to provide with husband or wife. It simply means facilitating through an institutional arrangement to formally bind into wedlock a man and a woman who wish to live together as husband and wife duly abiding by the provisions of the civil code of the land, and by the religious or moral obligations of the culture to which they belong.

There are also meanings other than this attached to the word. It may not have any conjugal connotation. When people holding similar views but differing in perception, or holding even different views or ideologies but finding a common ground, get together on the intellectual plane to further a common cause, such a collaboration is called marriage of minds or ideas. It is one of the objects of the Theosophical Movement to bring about a blending of old Eastern wisdom of hoary antiquity, with the energetic, innovative, enterprising spirit of the young new West, so that each will supplement what the other lacks, which should result in future in the production of a higher type of humanity. It is metaphorically referred to as the marriage of the East and the West.

There is, again the same sex marriages which is an issue hotly debated at the present time. Looked upon with disfavour by conservative society, same sex marriages, however, are now come to be legitimized in many countries, and the partners thereof given the same legal status and rights as those of the conventional marriages of opposite sexes.

There are again various types of conventional marriages, such as, by mutual consent of man and woman, arranged marriages, child marriages, forced marriages, secular marriages, etc. In the Ordinances of Manu, eight kinds of marriages are spoken of in the order of merit from the standpoint of Karma and the Karmic consequences of each type. Much misunderstood and maligned by the protagonists of modernity, of secular liberalism and progress,

so-called, Manu ought nevertheless to be studied *in the light of Theosophy* to discover the far-sightedness, Wisdom and elevated morality implicit in his ordinances on the institution of marriage and householder's life. An attempt is made in this article on marriage ideal from the standpoint of Theosophical Wisdom.

Modern anthropologists generally are of the opinion that the institution of marriage existed from very early times in the anthropological history. Theosophy however teaches that sanctity and sacredness of marriage tie was instilled by precept and by example, by higher and exalted beings who watched over the childhood of humanity and sowed seeds of civilization, when man had become a thinking being, in the far distant past, and that it remains to this day as an indelible innate idea in the human race.

A study of the sacred books of the oldest peoples and their customs as regards the institution of marriage show that marriage had been considered from antiquity as a secular affair but ensouled with religious duties and moral obligations. For instance, in the Zoroastrian tradition marriage is considered as a pious duty, a religious sacrament, and holy union of the couple marrying, based on the virtues of trust, sharing, devotion, fidelity, and sacrifice. The couples are advised to secure the life of good thoughts, mutual love in righteousness, and have companionship of Ahura Mazda for guidance in good life. A similar exalted status of the institution of marriage is seen in Vedic marriage, in which the couple make seven sacred vows to be faithful to each other, to be mutually helping and assisting each other, honouring members of extended family, raising children, consulting each other in all the affairs of life, adhering always to virtues of righteousness—Dharma. In the Jewish tradition marriage is viewed as a contractual bond commanded by God in which man and woman come together to create a relationship of mutual help in a bond of love in which God is directly involved, and they are charged with raising children. When read in the light of Theosophy, the apparent crudity of the verses in the *Book of Genesis* are resolved revealing the same ideas found in other

traditions.

Much of the spirit of the deeply religious dimension of marriage is eroded at the present time in the wake of pervading materialism and, eclipsing spiritual perception. The importance of it is nonetheless seen in the fact that the restoration of the sanctity of the institution of marriage and family is fundamental to all social reform and evolution of civilization of a nobler kind. On the other hand, corruption of the institution of marriage and family is the principal cause of decline and decay of nations.

It is a question of perception of the true and the real in life behind the veil of appearances, and an innate moral sense. Such insight is natural to the human heart. When this prevails, the nobler and more spiritual part of man rules the lower aspect, raising man to godliness. But it may, and does very often, become corrupted by inculcation of partial truths, or even outright false ideas, through wrong education; in which case, man declines following the dictates of lower passions, and civilization touches the nadir of its cyclic progress.

Such is the general condition at the present time, when material progress and self-gratification are considered the highest good and worthy objects of life. The formal marriage ceremony is now reduced to an empty ritual shorn of spiritual significance and a mere license for unbridled carnal gratification. Contraception is openly advocated and encouraged in the name of checking over-population, and, what is worse, feign to free men and women from moral responsibility which nature's laws attach to the abuse of procreative function in mere sensual gratification—a “legal liberation from any moral obligation.” Women, suppressed and exploited for centuries by the dominant patriarchal milieu, are offering organized resistance in world-wide movements for liberation and equality. Free love and single parenting are now fashionable trends and icons of modernity, liberalism and progress. It would indeed be liberation of men and women from what is regarded as the yoke of marriage if humans were just physiological creatures—human-animals, at best—and no more. But one must pause and reflect if the assumption has any

basis in truth.

If the true nature of man as eternal pilgrim-soul, with a divine origin, journeying through material life in a series of cycles of reincarnation governed by Karma, the end of which is universal divine perfection, is understood, then such misconceptions and abuses as now prevails, as regards connubial life, would disappear, and a new light would dawn upon mankind. Spiritual knowledge reveals the significance of the institution of marriage and the householder's life as a necessary and indispensable stage in the grand scheme of the evolution of man. It must be distinctly understood that the *Real Man*, the Eternal Pilgrim-Soul, the “Upper Adam,” is neither male nor female; the *Real Man* is sexless; but his periodical shadow on earth in every incarnation, the body, the “Adam of dust,” is differentiated into male and female sexes for the duration of each earth life—male body in some incarnation and female in others, depending on the Karmic affinity of the soul for either. Why is this so? Because, everything and every phenomenon on earth follows the archetypal pattern in heaven.

The duality of generative male and female sexes on earth shadows forth the sublime correlation of creative forces on the Cosmic plane (*S.D.*, II, 458). One in essence, dual in manifestation, ever conjoined, yet acting in opposite ways, Spirit and Matter, transform ideal universe, which is One, into differentiated concrete manifestation of many pervaded by duality. It is by the mutual interaction of the contrast of *Purusha* and *Prakriti* that the visible universe is born out of invisible Idea in the Universal Mind. The whole purpose of coming into existence of the many out of the One is the return of each differentiated unit to its original primordial universal unity of the One by assimilation of experiences of manifold existences on all planes through countless reincarnations and metempsychosis checked by Karma, culminating in conscious Divinity. This grand cosmic drama of involution of spirit into matter to be wedded to the latter, and the evolution of Spirit back to its primordial unity, purity and universality aided by Nature under immutable Law is allegorized

in ancient philosophy as marriage of Heaven and Earth.

“It is only by the attractive force of the contrasts that the two opposites—Spirit and Matter—can be cemented on Earth, and, smelted in the fire of self-conscious experience and suffering, find themselves wedded in Eternity.” (*S.D.*, II, 103)

Spirit sans matter is impotent bare subjectivity, and no consciousness would ensue; matter destitute of spirit, on the other hand, is chaos, an empty abstraction, and no order would emerge. Union of these two opposites produces harmonious and progressive order ending in the realization of the transcendental unity of both as One—marriage of Heaven and Earth. This is allegorized in Sankhya philosophy as Purusha as lame who cannot walk, and Prakriti as blind who cannot see; and to accomplish the object common to both, Purusha mounts on the shoulders of Prakriti and directs her towards the destined goal beckoning them, and Prakriti carries Purusha as directed to accomplish the grand end. The roles, played by these two, change in the long journey. If Prakriti binds Purusha as Nature’s illusion, she also liberates him in her personification of Divine wisdom. In other words, Sakti as divine Nature, *Buddhi* considered as an active principle in man, becomes the guide and revealer of “the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom,” to the purified vision of Purusha, who is aspiring for emancipation, and shows him the way to final liberation.

“What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is similar to that which is below to accomplish the wonders of one thing.” (*Isis*, I, 507)

It is in the light of understanding of ancient Theosophical Wisdom alone that the otherwise unfathomable mystery of Being and creation can ever be resolved. It is in that light that we have to understand the true relationship between man and woman and the mystique and the sanctity of marriage, which will be dealt with in the next issue.

(*To be concluded*)

#### EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS STUDY, APPLICATION AND PROMULGATION—IV

OUR STUDENTS may not be succeeding 100 per cent in living Theosophically, but are they not sincerely trying? The Esoteric Philosophy does enable us to give practical guidance to individuals and they are taken care of as they arise. We are not looking out for men of great learning, but for men of strong hearts. Only a few take advantage of U.L.T. activities, true; but see what has been accomplished! There *are* individual U.L.T.ers who are endeavouring to reshape their characters, hearts, minds and lives, by the only right way—self-induction; what is perhaps lacking is a sense of unity and solidarity, not only felt and accepted but also expressed and demonstrated. That is the rub.

Among all workers for the servers of Theosophy the requirement is twofold—(1) right Theosophic education and (2) solidarity among themselves. If you, as well as others, in fact all, realize that Theosophy is a *definite* system of Knowledge, precise and accurate, a little examination will clearly show you why it is that we religiously stick to certain few books and exclude others. Solidarity among co-students and co-workers is highly essential. Generally, it has not been practised in the past and hence the innumerable failures. It becomes one’s duty to assimilate the Teachings, as well as the co-students and co-servers, *in the right way*.

The real drawback is lack of real deep unity among the labourers in the field. One has to go on with faith in the Wisdom and Love of the Blessed Ones. How numerous are the obstacles They have to remove! Each person opines he knows, finds faults in others and with what is being done. If each minded his own business and did his or her best and sustained a friendly, though vigilant, attitude our work would prove itself. Our real strength is in our Philosophy and in our faith and devotion to the great Holy Ones. We are not geniuses but are capable of becoming true geniuses using this twofold strength. There is too much egotism, too much talk and failure to

“make of pride and self-regard bondmaidens to devotion.”

As to love and trust among students—it is rare everywhere. The term “brother-pupils” implies two factors: brotherliness and pupilage. One without the other cannot work. See that passage in *The Voice of the Silence* about disciples and the strings of the *vina*, echoing the Master-Guru. Music is not composed of chords only but is also the harmony of discords. There are five fingers on one hand; each finger is different in shape, power and function, but the wrist is there.

As you say, lack of unity and solidarity among student-servers is strange and yet it is not. Human egotism means, does it not, that the ego-element is enveloped by pride. By analogy, the lower *Manas* separating itself from its parent, the higher *Manas*, enters into a new incarnation. It is a ray of the higher and yet the moment it is enveloped by the old *skandhas* it becomes different. It is no more the same. Thus, it is the material *skandhaic* or *tanhaic* substance which makes for *Ahankara*, the “I”-making tendency. Egotism, conceit, pride and its brood, love for possessions (represented by money) and the urge to creativeness (represented by sex)—these are the causes for disunity, discord, disharmony. It is not difficult to comprehend this, but most difficult to apply the remedy. The dire heresy of separateness is the south pole of the divine unity of *Atma* which is the north pole—substance and essence, metaphysically; evil and good, morally. Does one love oneself more than the One Self? To detach ourselves from the lower and to attach that lower self to the Higher Triad is the whole story. Two or three people can create havoc with their pride and conceit. This discord-disunity in the lower is a reflection of the Harmony made by the seven Rays or seven Lodges or seven Hierarchies. That Harmony exists at the Centre, but in lower spheres it remains to be established. So, primarily in this as in so many other matters, the work is upon ourselves—each one of us.

With this task is also intimately connected the perception of the harmony between the metaphysical and the ethical and the arising

*spontaneously* of the knowledge within. The Inner Ego is made up of the substance of knowledge, as *The Voice of the Silence* says.

It is not only a saddening but a ghastly experience to see friends betraying our confidence, shattering our hopes for them and above all injuring themselves, throwing away opportunities, etc. True, men and women come and go, but the River of Wisdom continues to run—there are cycles when it merely trickles and cycles when it flows full and fast. Our Theosophical failures do not see their own spiritual adversity, as the poor do not really know the deep import of their economic poverty. See H.P.B.’s article, “Let Every Man Prove His Own Work.” You are not only perceiving the causes of defection and failure but are also hitting upon the right remedy— “To appear as nothing in the eyes of men.”

About workers: what makes a worker a true one? Fire and knowledge. In some there is the fire of devotion and of altruism, but there is lack of knowledge and a streak of *tamas*. In others there is knowledge, a fund of information, but they lack fire, ardency, a feeling for wisdom and for humanity. Then there is the third factor— character. If you will take care of your psychic nature and begin to apply the four basic rules of *Light on the Path*, or the instruction in the first five pages of *The Voice of the Silence*, in two or three years’ time you will not only have outer silence but also the inner silence of calmness which is active peace. Ambition and pride have made short work of many. Go on as you have been going on the rest will follow as the dawn after the night.

If half a dozen workers, possessing different qualities, were to *unite*, the labour of love would produce fine results. What one has, the other has not; but unity is lacking. The closing section of *The Key to Theosophy* is most useful; what is needed is selflessness, earnestness, devotion, knowledge, unbiased judgment. Once again one person may not be found possessing all these qualities, but five possessing one each would be an excellent substitute, provided there were unity and brotherliness. Talk and gossip make short work of people.

(To be continued)

## VITRUVIUS AND VITRUVIAN MAN

WHO was Vitruvius? What is Vitruvian man? In what way is Vitruvius related to Vitruvian man? Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, commonly known as Vitruvius, was a Roman architect and engineer during the first century B.C., during the reign of Augustus. He is the only ancient writer on the art of architecture whose works have come down to us. Little is known of Vitruvius' life except what can be gathered from his own writings. He is the author of the celebrated treatise *De architectura* ("On Architecture"), a handbook for Roman architects. *De architectura* is divided into ten books. The treatise covers almost every aspect of architecture. These books deal with city planning and architecture in general, public buildings such as theatres and baths, flooring, painting, etc. In these books he has explained the theory of architectural order of pillars, as also, shapes and types of temples. Some of these books also deal with technical things, such as, thermal springs, sundials and various technical tools useful for construction, showing a curious mix of architecture and mechanical engineering. Most of what Pliny, a Roman philosopher, says about methods of wall painting, the preparation of the wall and other practical details of building is taken almost word for word, from Vitruvius, though without acknowledging the source.

He had a deep-rooted desire to maintain and foster the classical tradition in the construction of his temples and civic structures. His architectural treatises were of little relevance during the middle ages, but in the fifteenth century, architects and humanists alike, showed interest in classical architecture. He believed that an architect should focus on three central themes when preparing a design for a building: *firmitas* (structural stability), *utilitas* (appropriate spatial accommodation), and *venustas* (beauty or attractive appearance).

Beauty refers to the visual satisfaction that architecture should provide, and which is derived from harmonious proportions that are comparable to those that exist in music. In other words, beauty in architecture is considered to be based on harmonious proportions, mathematically conceived. The great mathematician, Pythagoras,

taught that the Cosmos was produced, not through or by number, but geometrically—that is, following the proportions of numbers.

According to Vitruvius, architecture is an imitation of nature, because he believed that we can learn about the timeless notion of beauty from nature, as nature's designs were based on universal laws of proportion and symmetry. *The Secret Doctrine* asserts that early humanity got its first notions of all the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge, from the Wise and exalted beings, who were guides and teachers of early humanity. It is they who laid the first foundation stone of early civilization. H.P.B. draws our attention to works on architecture by Vitruvius Pollio, in which all the rules of proportion mentioned are those that were taught in ancient times at the time of *initiation*. There is the deep esoteric significance hidden in every rule and law of proportion. This divine knowledge of sculpture, architecture, agriculture, etc., possessed by the third Root Race humanity, was passed on from one generation to another, and then to Egypt and Greece. "It is owing to the divine perfection of those architectural proportions that the Ancients could build those wonders of all the subsequent ages, their Fanes, Pyramids, Cave-Temples, Cromlechs, Cairns, Altars, proving they had the powers of machinery and a knowledge of mechanics to which modern skill is like a child's play, and which that skill refers to itself as the 'works of hundred-handed giants.' (See '*Book of God,*' *Kenealy*)...It is Vitruvius who gave to posterity the rules of construction of the Grecian temples erected to the immortal gods; and the ten books of Marcus Vitruvius Pollio on Architecture, of one, in short, *who was an initiate*, can only be studied esoterically...Modern architects may not altogether have neglected those rules, but they have superadded enough empirical innovations to destroy those just proportions." (*S.D.*, I, 208-9 fn.)

In the *Symposium*—one of the dialogues—Socrates himself is being instructed by Diotima, a mystic. They agree that man advances from, let us say, admiring the beauty of a handsome youth or a beautiful girl, to admiring the idea of a shape in the abstract, to

admiring the beauty of conduct, to admiring the beauty of principles, until we approach the ultimate principle of all principles—BEAUTY. Thus the Greek tradition had already thought what an English poet wrote many centuries later: “Euclid alone saw beauty bare,” *i.e.*, that the highest experience of beauty is mathematical.

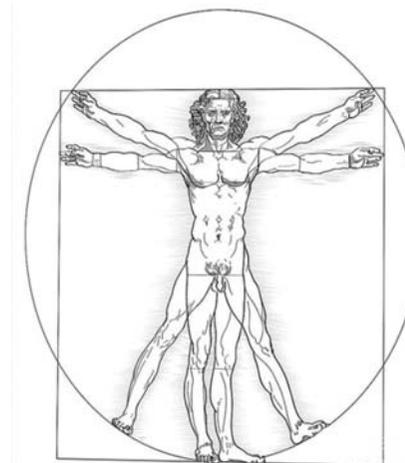
In the cosmology of Pythagoras, the five elements of nature, correspond to five geometric forms known as THE PLATONIC SOLIDS. The Greeks believed that number lies at the root of the manifested universe. Three of the five Platonic solids are based on the most primitive of Nature’s forms, *i.e.*, the triangle. Thus, according to the cosmology of Pythagoras, the element Fire corresponds to Tetrahedron (made up of four equilateral triangles); Air to Octahedron (eight equilateral triangles); Water to Icosahedron (twenty equilateral triangles); Earth to Cube (six squares) and Ether to Dodecahedron (twelve pentagons). The Neo-Platonist, Proclus, wrote: “The equilateral triangle is the proximate cause of the three elements, ‘fire,’ ‘air,’ and ‘water,’ but the square is annexed to the earth.” Plato says that by beauty of shapes he means “straight lines and circles, and shapes, plain or solid, made from them by lathe, ruler and square. These are not, like other things, beautiful relatively, but always and absolutely....If arithmetic, mensuration and the weighing of things, be taken away from any art, that which remains will not be much.” Vitruvius believed with Plato and the Neo-Platonists that geometrical figures express progressive stages in the manifestation of Cosmos. (*Theosophy*, January 1953)

Vitruvius found a harmony between the proportions of the human body and those of the architecture. The proportions of the human body were profoundly respected by the Greek artists of the classic age. Vitruvius claims that Architectural symmetry was obtained by the Greeks through the human figure, as they held that each separate part of the body was a simple fraction of the body as a whole. Thus, for instance, in Book III, Chapter 1, Vitruvius writes that “the human body is so designed by nature that the face, from the chin to the top of the forehead and the lowest roots of the hair, is a tenth part of the

whole height; the open hand from the wrist to the tip of the middle finger is just the same; the head from the chin to the crown is an eighth,” and so on. He points out that the outstretched arms were always as wide as the body was tall. Other parts of the body also have their own symmetrical proportions.

Based on the proportional theories of Vitruvius, Leonardo da Vinci, the Italian polymath, demonstrated that man’s body may be circumscribed by both the circle and the square. Vitruvian Man is a drawing made by him to illustrate this theory, which depicts a man in two superimposed positions with his arms and legs apart and inscribed in a circle and a square, as shown in the figure below. In the words of Vitruvius:

The navel is naturally placed in the centre of the human body, and, if in a man lying with his face upward, and his hands and feet extended, from his navel as the centre, a circle be described, it will touch his fingers and toes. It is not alone by a circle, that the human body is thus circumscribed, as may be seen by placing it within a square. For measuring from the feet to the crown of the head, and then across the arms fully extended, we find the latter measure equal to the former; so that lines at right angles to each other enclosing the figure, will form a square.



Leonardo da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man," the drawing of a male figure inscribed in a circle and a square, is taken to represent a divine connection between the human form and the universe. It is considered to be the geometrical representation of the ancient belief that man is a microcosm, or a miniature embodiment of the whole universe. His drawing represents the blend of mathematics and art. The original piece of work is kept in the *Gallerie dell'Accademia* in Venice, Italy.

Besides Leonardo da Vinci, there were many other artists who had worked on Vitruvius's claim that a human body could simultaneously fit into a circle and a square, to design the Vitruvian Man, but Leonardo was the only one who made precise drawing along these lines. The other artists had struggled to depict the two postures of the man using a square concentric with the circle. Leonardo separated the centre of the two postures. For the one circumscribed in the circle, the navel was the centre, while for the other posture within the square, genitals were taken as a centre.

Vithal C. Nadkarni observes that Leonardo's drawing of the Vitruvian man conceals a solution to an ancient mathematical problem called "squaring the circle." Individually, it is easy to calculate the area of a circle by multiplying the value of pi with the square of the radius. Likewise, the area of square can be obtained by taking the square of one of its sides. But how can one take a circle of certain area and construct a square with an exact same area? That is what is known as the "squaring of the circle." It appears that the ancient geometers found it impossible to construct a square with the same area as a given circle, within a finite number of steps and using only a compass and a ruler. "Da Vinci places the man with outstretched hands squarely in the centre of a circle as well as the middle of the square." He correctly surmises that the square cannot have the same centre as the circle, *i.e.*, the navel, but is somewhat lower in the anatomy.

## APHORISMS ON KARMA—SOME REFLECTIONS

## III

[The "Aphorisms on Karma" printed in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21* are preceded by the following words:

"The following, among others not yet used, were given to me by teachers, among them being H. P. Blavatsky. Some were written, others communicated in other ways. To me they were declared to be from manuscripts not now accessible to the general public. Each one was submitted for my judgement and reason; and just as they, aside from any authority, approved themselves to my reason after serious consideration of them, so I hope they will gain the approval of those my fellow workers to whom I now publish them."

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE]

APHORISM 5 says: "*Karma operates on all things and beings from the minutest conceivable atom up to Brahma. Proceeding in the three worlds of men, gods, and the elemental beings, no spot in the manifested universe is exempt from its sway.*" The universe being embodied consciousness, everything in it is conscious and intelligent. Action of any grade of intelligence produces its own kind of effect. If we regard Karma to be inherent law of *power to act*, in every being, of every grade, then we can see that this power to act is exercised by each being by the degree of intelligence acquired in its evolutionary development. There is no Karma unless there is a being to make it or feel its effects. Since the whole Universe consists of "beings" of various grades, of various degrees of awareness or consciousness, we can infer that Karma works throughout the Universe on all planes of being and states of consciousness. Therefore, everything in the manifested universe is subject to the law of Karma.

Literally, Karma means action. When karma is applied to *moral life* of man then it becomes the law of ethical causation, justice, reward and punishment, as also, the cause of birth and rebirth. Karma in the sense of reward and punishment applies to Man alone because

he is a moral being, endowed as he is with Mind or *Manas*. Every moment of his embodied life on earth, in every situation, he has to make moral choices as to how he will think and act—whether by abiding by the laws of virtue or following the easier way of giving in to the ways of selfish desires and lower passions. In the first case he experiences the Karmic effect of his actions as pleasure and happiness, and in the second, as pain and sorrow. He experiences the effects of his actions in earth life both in the post-mortem states of consciousness and in the subsequent incarnations. This is the law of ethical causation.

But this aspect of the Karmic Law does not apply to kingdoms of nature below man—the elemental, mineral, vegetable and animal world—because they are not moral beings, as they are not, as yet, endowed with Mind, in their evolutionary development. Therefore, they act according to instinct which is always in accord with the harmonious and progressive order of natural law. But in its simpler aspect karma is the law of action and reaction, ever tending and impelling creatures to a higher order of life. Physical, chemical, physiological laws of nature are subservient to Karma—the Law of laws. It is in the latter sense that karma operates on everything in the universe. It is useful to understand what constitutes “action.”

It is said that Karma is created or comes into existence by action, but it is not well enough understood that action means not only the definite conscious acts of life, but also all and each, the smallest acts, conscious or unconscious, automatic or otherwise. Therefore, it is said in the Hindu books that the sleeping body of man creates Karma—by its breathing. For, when we breathe, some lives of minute beings are extinguished, and we in order to live ourselves have to bear that small portion of Karma. (*Path*, October 1890)

We must learn to distinguish between Brahma the neuter or Absolute, and Brahma, the manifested Deity, which periodically radiates from the former, and resolves back into Absolute at the end of its cycle of existence, only to emanate again from That after a period of non-manifestation, which is equal in duration to the period

of manifestation. Here Brahma, the manifested Deity, is One Life differentiated into innumerable beings at various stages of evolution “in the three worlds of men, gods, and the elemental beings.” Birth, development, death and rebirth of Brahma in the boundless field of the Unknown Absolute is the result of the aggregate of the Karma of all beings, from the highest to the lowest, during the period of its manifestation. Hence every being up to Brahma is under the rule of Karma. Beyond Brahma is *Para-Brahm* which is beyond Karma, because IT is the Absolute LAW itself. In the words of *The Secret Doctrine*, “This Law—whether conscious or unconscious—predestines nothing and no one. It exists from and in Eternity, truly, for it is ETERNITY itself; and since no act can be co-equal with eternity, it cannot be said to act, for it is ACTION itself.” (II, 304-5)

In the same way, analogous to Macrocosm, Brahma, is the microcosm, man. Just as *Parabrahm* or the Absolute is not under the rule of Karma, but is the very Law itself, the divine Self of man or *Atman*, “one with the Absolute, as its radiation” (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 91), is never affected or operated upon by Karma. It is stated in *The Secret Doctrine*, (I, 6) that IT is *Para* (Supreme) and *Apara* (not Supreme): non-acting and acting, or the aspect subject to Karma and the aspect beyond Karma. In the same way man also in his septenary nature, is *Para* and *Apara*. His Divine Self is *Para*, his six principles, the manifesting aspects of the former, are *Apara*. Which means that man, though subject to Karma has the power to rise above Karma and become Karmaless by merging his self with his Divine Self, and become liberated, *Jivanmukta*, even while in the body. Such an One will be performing all actions in the three worlds, but, inasmuch as his actions are always in perfect unison with universal harmony, for the good of all, they are instantly burnt to ashes, as it were, in the fire of spiritual knowledge. He will be, paradoxically, acting and yet not acting, and apparently not acting, yet acting. *The Voice of the Silence*, therefore, points out to the aspiring devotee, “Both action and Inaction may find room in thee.” (p. 32)

Therefore, the spiritual nature of man (*Atma-Buddhi*) is never affected by Karma, because that spiritual centre of man is a neutral point. Without it, actions could not be; yet It is not the cause, nor experiencer of actions. Actions are initiated by man-being, or unit of intelligence, operating from the basis of some particular “principle” or department of his being. The action initiated, from whatever principle, high or low, the reaction will make itself felt in that same principle, the point of disturbance. It then produces a concatenation of causes and effects in the physical, mental and moral results by which the Ego becomes bound. But when actions are spiritually initiated, *i.e.*, when they are wholly unselfish, but moved by the impulse coming from the Higher Self, which is the Self of All, and made physically operative, there is no disturbance of equilibrium; rather, it is an expression of harmony from beginning to end of the action and reaction. When an action, on the contrary, is *personally* initiated and made physically operative, there is disturbance of equilibrium and the reaction reaches the personal man. (*Theosophy*, June 1929)

This truism is beautifully imparted in an allegory in the *Chhandogya Upanishad*. In a dialogue, Prajapati says that the Self (*Atman*), which is free from sin, old age, death, grief, hunger and thirst, that Self is to be searched for. The gods sent Indra while the demons sent Virochana to learn about this Self. Prajapati asked both of them to look into a vessel of water and asked them how much of the Self could they find when they looked into water? They replied that they could see their whole self, down to the nails and hair! Prajapati said that was the Self, deathless and fearless, and that was the Brahman. Virochana went away with the conviction that the body was the Self. But Indra was not satisfied. He asked Prajapati that just as the Self becomes decorated when the body is decorated, even so the Self is maimed or becomes lame when the body is maimed or becomes lame, and the Self must perish when the body perishes. In the reply to Indra’s enquiry, Prajapati continued to give higher instructions about the Self saying that the Self when *embodied*

is affected by pleasure and pain and yet pleasure and pain do not touch the bodiless Self. Indra soon realized that the Self does not become blind, lame, maimed, nor is it displeased or stricken when the body experiences all this. Nevertheless, it appears *as if* it were stricken, *as if* it were hustled, *as if* it were feeling unpleasantness, *as if* it were weeping.

It is important to understand the relationship of gods and elementals with Karma. *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that the gods or angels are *men of a superior kind*. They have already passed through the human stage, and acquired physical, intellectual and spiritual perfection. These are the beings who guide, control and animate the whole Kosmos, and are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. “None of these Beings, high or low, have either individuality or personality as separate Entities” (*S.D.*, I, 275). As a result, they have no individual Karma of their own, and also, do not offer any individual focus where karmic effects can return. And yet, all beings up to Brahma are subject to Karma, in the sense that when the hour strikes, Brahma and all the celestial beings appear, only to get resolved back into the Absolute or *Parabrahm* at the approach of the hour of dissolution.

Likewise, semi-intelligent and non-intelligent elementals are *future* men. They are inferior to men and have yet to pass through human stage. “An elemental is a centre of force, without intelligence, without moral character or tendencies, but capable of being directed in its movement by human thoughts, which may, consciously or not, give it any form, and to a certain extent intelligence (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 135). As soon as a thought leaves the brain, it combines with an elemental and forms an *entity*. This “entity” gets its character from us, depending upon the quality of the thought—good, bad or indifferent. *We create, with every thought, a demon or an angel*. These thoughts, good and bad, not only help or hinder their creator, but are impressed in an invisible register called *astral light*, forming a common pool of thoughts. Each one of us attracts from this pool, the thoughts that are consubstantial with our nature.

Elementals are the “carriers,” or “messengers” of Karma, because they are the means or instruments through which the law of Karma brings reaction for our action. The gods and elementals are agents of Karmic and Cosmic laws. These elementals seem to function under higher agents called *Chitra-gupta* or *Lipikas*, who are agents in karmic dispensation. The word *Lipi-ka* is derived from the word *lipi*, meaning “writing.” They are the Divine Beings, connected with Karma, for they are the Recorders or Scribes. They impress on the “invisible tablets of the Astral Light, ‘the great picture-gallery of eternity’ a faithful record of every act, and even thought, of man, of all that was, is, or ever will be, in the phenomenal Universe.” The Hindu *Chitra-Gupta*, reads out the account of every soul’s life from his register, called *Agra-sandhani*, which refers to Astral records. (*S.D.*, I, 104-5)

*The Secret Doctrine* (I, 122-124) mentions the Cosmic Forces of North, South, East and West, having each a distinct occult property. There are the four *Maharajas*, described as Regents or Angels, who preside each over one of the four cardinal points and the four Elements and rule over these Cosmic forces. These Beings are also connected with Karma. Karma needs physical and material agents to carry out her decrees, such as the four kinds of winds. Science admits that the four kinds of winds have evil and beneficent influences upon the health of mankind and every living thing. It is not the gods who punish men and nations. They simply execute the immutable Karmic decree which man himself evokes by his own actions. We produce the cause, which awakens the corresponding powers (elementals) in the sidereal world. These powers are magnetically attracted to those who produced the causes, by thoughts or actions. It is the man himself, who attracts calamity to himself through the individual and collective Karma. The cosmic forces on invisible plane, and winds on the material plane become agents of Karma, and bring the effects of causes sown by us.

(*To be continued*)

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Is reason the slave of passions? Daniel Kahneman, a psychologist, had discovered that the instinctive, emotional and fast thinking part of brain usually overpowers the slow, logical cognition. But David Hume goes a step further and says, “reason is, and ought to be the slave of the passions,” *i.e.*, reason should be driven by emotions. Julian Baggini argues that reason can enable us to perform utilitarian calculations to see what actions can lead to greatest happiness, but behind this reasoning is the moral sympathy, basic emotional capacity which persuades us to increase the welfare of sentient beings. Though reason can influence and modify our emotions, ultimately, it serves passions. We need “passions,” as reason alone cannot provide reason for love, art, music, philosophy or living.

Simon Jenkins argues that though according to evolutionary psychology our motives for actions are rooted in survival instincts, love and loyalties, reason is unique to human beings and takes us beyond animal responses, to assess cause and effect, and thus enables us to discipline our actions. Passion may explain glories of art, architecture, belief, imagination, as even violence, war and destruction, but reason separates reliable common sense from irrational and instinctive behaviour.

Baggini argues that Jenkin’s understanding reflects the Platonic view that passion and reason are in conflict and that passion, the unruly horse, must be kept in check by the cool power of rationality. But reason can provide a “map for action,” only if the passions give it some destination to head for. Reason is not an alternative to passion, but an accomplice of it. Jenkins argues that it is not true that reason has no role to play in determining destination, as our actions result from constant conflict between passions and assessment of their consequences, good or evil. At least in the political field, passion is the elephant and reason merely its rider, but it is this rider alone who can steer the elephant to virtuous ends.

Baggini reiterates that he is in favour of reason and believes that it is unnecessary to create a wide division between reason and

passion. Following desires alone will lead us to doom, but pure reason cannot produce aspirations or desires. Reason serves emotions, but is wiser than this master in many ways, and stops passions and desires from being stupid. Jenkins argues that no doubt, very often basic instincts and emotions drive human actions and decisions, but she does not agree with the idea that reason, which sets apart human beings, should be a servant to instinct. In fact, reason underlies the freedom to change our minds and to try to change those of others. Agreed that human emotions have power but for her reason stands on the pedestal and is not servant to emotions. (*Prospect*, May 2019)

The emotional and the intellectual people entertain for each other, mutual antagonism and contempt. Emotions are impulsive and non-reflective, while reason though reflective, by itself it tends to be cold, calculating and heartless. But both are aspects of the mind. “Mind is the name given to the sum of the states of consciousness grouped under Thought, Will and Feeling” (*S.D.*, I, 38). What distinguishes man from an animal is his power to think and choose which comes from the mind. There are three aspects of mind: (1) When involved in desires and passions, it is called *kama-manas*, making man an animal-man. (2) When mind functions on its own plane—thinking and reasoning—it is mind *per se*. (3) When mind works in conjunction with spiritual nature, it is *Buddhi-manas*, making man divine, leading to intuitive perception.

Neither desires and emotions nor reason alone can be of much value in making right decisions, though in areas such as Mathematics and Logic, reason alone needs to be exercised. As we reason from premises to conclusions, we can reason ourselves into a false position from a false basis of thinking. If we start with wrong premises we are bound to come to wrong conclusions, however faultless the reasoning. “Reason is the clumsy weapon of the scientists—intuition the unerring guide of the seer,” writes H.P.B.

H.P.B. points out that human beings have developed their reason, at the expense of instinct. In losing instinct, man has also lost his

intuitional powers, which are the crown of instinct. Cold, calculating intellect, without the light of wisdom, without the warmth of heart is both dangerous and destructive. Mr. Judge writes, “The latter (intellectuality) will take us all sure to hell if we let it govern only.”

Passion implies attachment and this by its nature is likely to make man biased even in application of the reason itself. Whether we want it or not, passion will continue to play a vital role in decision making—because underlying the supposed “dispassionate” reasoning is the undercurrent of passion, unknown to the man who is reasoning. Therefore, in the third chapter of the *Gita*, Shri Krishna points out that passion confounds the discrimination even that of the wise man. What we call passion or emotion, when it is lifted to the higher level and becomes impersonal and universal, it arouses intuition which is far more superior to both human emotions and intellectual reasoning. What man needs to arouse in himself is the faculty of intuition and quality of spiritual discrimination which would enable him to dispassionately (not heartlessly) discriminate, wisely and unerringly, in the interest of the whole world; till then, man uses both these as tools to fashion his future.

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What are dreams for? There are various theories concerning the significance of dreams. According to Freud dreams reveal hidden truths and wishes. Recent theories suggest that dreams help us process intense emotions, or rehearse our response to threatening situations. There are those who believe that dreams have no evolutionary function but dramatize personal concerns.

Research in the field has revealed that students in the U.S.A., South Korea and India endorse the Freudian view of dreams more than any other theory. Researchers also found that people are more likely to get anxious on dreaming about a plane crash than on hearing an official warning about a terrorist attack. The majority of dreams occur during REM sleep. We are fascinated by dreams even though they may not foretell future. A study at Canadian University revealed that apart from sex, people commonly dream about school, falling,

being chased, and arriving too late for something. According to a 1958 study, as compared to the Japanese, the Americans dream more about losing a loved one or finding money, while the Japanese are more likely to dream about trying to do something repeatedly and of being paralyzed with fear. All mammals, birds and some lizards dream, and the dreamiest of them all is platypus, with eight hours of REM sleep cycle, a day.

Even negative dreams can have positive effect, as the study concerning a French medical school entrance exam showed that those who dreamt about the exam, including bad dreams, such as, reaching late for the exam, did better than those who did not dream about it. “Bad dreams are good, as your night life prepares you for what is to come,” writes Ben Healy, a writer and former *Atlantic* deputy managing editor. (*The Atlantic*, April 2019)

Freud regarded dreams as the “royal road to the unconscious” wherein repressed wishes, particularly those associated with sex, hostility, etc. are said to be released. Theosophy teaches that dreams could be divided into seven classes. However, we must distinguish between “ordinary” and “real” dreams. The ordinary dreams include physiological dreams provoked by indigestion, or they may be caused by some idea or event impressed upon the brain during waking hours. Often ordinary dreams give us an insight into our own lower nature, and these dreams have been studied in detail and commented upon by psychoanalysts.

Real dreams are reflections of the activities of the Ego in the dreamless sleep state. In the dreamless sleep state the Ego is on its own plane, where the past and future are as present. As a result, real dreams include warning dreams, allegorical or symbolic dreams, prophetic dreams concerning some future event, as also retrospective dreams, which are dreams of events belonging to past incarnations. In dreamless sleep or the *Sushupti* state we find solution to our problems. So many artists and inventors have found solutions in a dream, of a problem which they were struggling to solve while awake. For instance, Kekule dreamt of a serpent biting its own tail

and he was able to give the closed ring structure of the Benzene molecule. Perhaps this is the reason why when troubled with some problem, particularly some moral dilemma, we are advised to sleep over it.

Unlike man who thinks, animals receive stimulus and impressions from their senses which become the basis of their dreams through automatic throwing out of these impressions by the brain. H.P.B. explains that *every being endowed with a physical brain or organs approximating thereto, must dream*. Every animal has physical senses through which it receives impressions. These senses are dulled during sleep, but memory still acts mechanically, reproducing past sensations. (*Transactions*, p. 70)

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Having something to look forward to is the magic formula to a happier, more satisfying present. Living in the present is seen as a way to peaceful life, as it helps us to eradicate past regrets and future expectations. Peace is sometimes overrated. A peaceful life or life without conflicts, desires, chaos or turbulence would become mere existence. It is by looking forward to something pleasurable or exciting in the near future that we are able to get through or overcome loneliness, depression, disappointment or any other hardships we may be facing in the present. We all use this psychological strategy from time to time. We anticipate small pleasures such as the lunch break, as we work hard in the morning, or watching our favourite television show in the evening, or an exciting weekend after slogging through the week. There is far greater and prolonged pleasure experienced in planning and looking forward to a party or a holiday than the actual event itself. The psychological term for it is “rosy prospection.” We can overcome the tedium of daily existence by planning, weekly or monthly, something we really enjoy, be it music, dancing, painting or a sport. In sum, life without desires or dreams, and nothing to look forward to can be dull and monotonous. It is good to live in the present moment, now and then, but a healthy amount of anticipation and

dreaming seems to be a necessary element of life. The trick is in anticipating little dosage of future happiness, because “trouble arises when you allow the hope to take up a large chunk of your present time. It is then that hope sets itself on the path of hopelessness,” writes Vinita Dawra Nangia. (*Times Life, Sunday Times of India*, July 21, 2019)

It is extremely difficult to live in the present. We begin our day and a year as well, with a hope, looking forward to pleasure and happiness. Hopes, fears, memories and anticipations keep the human consciousness in a non-integrated state. Our capacity to do good in the present is adversely affected when we dwell over the past, which drags us down from our present level of consciousness. The suggestion is to forget the emotional experiences attached to the past events that tend to take control of our mind and colour the present and the future. It is good to have expectations and anticipations but without getting fixated on them, because if they are not fulfilled they lead to depression. The key is to have anticipations but with sufficient detachment. Hope is a theological virtue, which, in a higher sense, seems to suggest that from wherever we are, there is a way leading to a state of unconditioned happiness.

Our tendency to constantly dwell either on the past or the future does not allow for the concentration of mind. Moreover, it is important that we concern ourselves with the present, because, the future will come from each present moment. “As we use the present moment, so we shift the future up or down for good or ill....If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future; if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future,” writes Mr. Judge.

As the Buddha rightly remarks, living in the present and loving peace is not acceptable or attractive to a worldly person, who looks for sense delights. Thus, “Delightful are the forests to the Arhat; they charm not the worldly. There the passionless find delight, for they are not allured by sense-life.” (*The Dhammapada*, verse 99)