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# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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

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सत्यत् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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### SPIRITUAL ARCHERY

If one really wishes to be master of an art, technical knowledge of it is not enough. One has to transcend technique so that the art becomes an "artless art," growing out of unconsciousness.

--EUGEN HERRIGEL

ARCHERY may be regarded as a powerful symbol of attaining the goal of self-realization through perfect concentration. Most heroes described in the epics were good archers, too, with their special bows. The *kind* of bow used is important in hitting the target. Gandiva was the special bow of Arjuna given to him by God Varuna. It was an incredibly powerful bow which gave its user sure victory in battle. So also, Ulysses had his special bow. It is said that only Ulysses could draw his own bow, using which he could shoot the arrow that would pass through twelve rings. In fact, it is by that feat which no one else could duplicate, that his wife Penelope recognized him, when after many years of wanderings, he returned home. There is a mention in the *Ramayana*, of the bow of Lord Shiva, which was in the possession of King Janaka, Sita's father. The one who was able to lift Siva's bow and string it, would be able to wed Sita. This *Bow of Siva* is the symbol of Siva's Wisdom which alone when wielded gives rise to pure love, embracing the whole world. These three different bows are divine

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weapons and could be strung and wielded by the owner or a person with special skill or qualification—a certain inner level of development.

The quality of the bow makes a great difference in the results attained by the archer. A bow of strong texture and with a good spring to it will help to send the arrow with sufficient force. In a sense, every person is his own bow and in order to reach the goal, his personal nature must meet the spiritual requirements. Just as the bow alters with weather and other conditions, so too our personal nature changes from life to life, acquiring physical, mental, emotional and moral purity so as to become a worthy instrument for the divinity within.

Those who truly seek wisdom, are archers trying to hit the mark. It is spiritual archery. In pursuit of truth, a firm position must be taken up, if the object in view is ever to be attained. Just as the string of the bow must be always strung tight to be able to hit the target, so also in spiritual archery, there must be fixed determination to always strive for the goal. *The Dhammapada* says: "If anything is to be done, let a man attack it unflinchingly. A lax ascetic scatters more and more the dust of his passions." Often, when there is a lapse in the discipline we say that the next time we will not waver *so much*. But that shows that we expect to waver at least a little. If we *expect* to waver, we *will* waver. It would be better to expect to hit the mark, instead of expecting to miss it. The reason, explains Mr. Crosbie, is that the psychological position taken and the quality of energy aroused in these two cases would be different. "We should cease doubting our power to accomplish. If we doubt, it will be like trying to shoot an arrow with a loose bow-string—no force, and no certainty of direction." When the bow-string is pulled taut, and then let go, the arrow goes where pointed. Every vow or resolve made to lead the higher life must be based on solid foundation, built upon four pillars—absolute sincerity, unflinching determination, unselfishness of purpose, and *moral power*.

If the eye wanders from the target, the arrow will fly wide or fall short of its goal. In reaching the spiritual goal, our mind and heart must not be permitted to wander, "for the path is narrow and the wanderings of a day

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may cause us years of effort to find the road again," says Mr. Judge. It must be the common experience of all the student-aspirants that at the early stages of our discipline, if there is a break in the discipline—because of illness or especially when we are on a vacation—picking up the thread again requires enormous effort. By "wandering," we set up a tendency, which repeats itself cyclically.

It is easy to "wander off in by-lanes of alternative systems of philosophies that might promise short-cut to self-realization or a quick solution to our problems. It is easy to be led astray, lured by the dazzle of psychic development and psychic powers. One who pursues psychic development without purifying the moral nature, walks the broad and easy path, which ultimately leads to destruction. Pursuit of psychic development is dangerous and the untrained and impure dabbler is ultimately ruined in his psychic and moral health. When such a person realizes the mistake and begins his search for truth and wishes to lead the true spiritual life, he might find it extremely difficult. His difficulty is compounded because pursuit of psychic powers and consequent involvement with subtle but lower, material forces of nature (elementals), tends to strengthen his lower, personal nature. Even though he may be able to control desires of the flesh—abstaining from meat-eating or wine drinking—and might even make great intellectual progress, he has to fight a difficult battle to surmount pride, jealousy, and other desires of the mind. Hence, Mr. Crosbie says that opportunity to understand and apply Theosophy comes under Karma to the very few, not because it is withheld from anyone, but because the mind is not open to considering new truths. This comes from neglect or misuse of opportunities in former lives. Thus, it is the height of unwisdom to neglect such an opportunity to study Theosophy, especially in those cases where it is brought home to us without effort. "Difficult it is to get to hear the True Law," says the Buddha.

In some cases it is also possible to forget the mission and give oneself to the easy and immoral life of vices and pleasures. Only a person with a *strong nature* could sink very low and using that same strength could rise to

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proportionately greater heights. But this is not the highest path. "The highest path is that which goes with little variation, but few are strong enough to keep up the never-ceasing strain," writes Mr. Judge. Such strength comes from many ages of service to humanity. On the other hand, it is not surprising that often there comes a time when the aspirant loses desire for the inner life, for progress and for service. One may, for instance, experience positive aversion for everything to do with Theosophy. But then, it would be good to give ourselves a *deliberate* break and gradually pick up the discipline by doing ten minutes' Theosophical work or study every day. At the end of six or seven weeks, we will know what to add to that practice, says Mr. Judge.

Archery involves perfect concentration—one-pointedness. Why was Arjuna a wonderful Archer? When a bird's eye had to be hit, others said that they could see the body or the head of the bird, while only Arjuna said that he could see only the eye of the bird. How do we acquire this perfect concentration? In India, when teachings were passed on orally, one had to be a *perfect listener*. Arjuna is described as a patient, humble and resolute listener. However, it is not enough to be attentive only while studying, but that concentration must be applied to every duty and action in life. Our whole day should be an exercise in concentration. Do each day's work as though your life depended upon it. Try to eliminate all idle, purposeless activities. A boy, who went to study under a Zen master, was asked, how he had left his shoes outside the room— facing east, west, north or how? When the boy failed to answer he was sent back as not being ready for the training.

We are required to make all our desires lean to and centre upon the acquirement of spiritual knowledge. Children, when they come home from school, after finishing their homework, run to their base, and their base is the playground. Make spiritual knowledge such a base, so that when there is nothing pressing or urgent on our mind, our thoughts naturally turn to spiritual themes. We have not yet reached that state. Often it is life that brings us to a state, where we face pain and calamities and we then begin

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to ask questions. And when we find our answers in the spiritual knowledge we naturally turn to it with all our heart.

In archery, the marksman has to fundamentally aim at himself and may even succeed in hitting himself, writes Herrigel in his book, *Zen in the art of Archery*. The *Mundaka Upanishad*, too, speaks of this highest form of spiritual archery. It teaches the highest knowledge, the knowledge of the Brahman, and points out that such knowledge cannot be obtained by worship, sacrifices, offerings to the Gods, penances, breath control exercises, or development of psychic senses. However, these practices are undertaken by some people as stepping-stones to a higher life. But in performance of such works errors take place. *Mundaka*, means "shaving," and it cuts off the errors of the mind and other non-essentials, like a razor. It is the razor that cuts the knot of ignorance. The Upanishad asks us to take the bow and place on it the arrow sharpened with meditation. After fixing the arrow and drawing the bow, *i.e.*, having withdrawn mind and senses from the external objects and bending or concentrating them on the mark, we are asked to hit the mark (target) which is Brahman, with mind meditating on the Brahman. OM is the bow, the Self (*Atman*) is the arrow, Brahman is called the target. *Atman* is inseparable from *Paramatman*, like the sunbeam is inseparable from sunlight. IT is the Eternal Spectator, the witness of all states of consciousness. Like the sun enters the water, *Atman* enters the body, *i.e.*, only showers Its radiance on the inner man. When we are able to transcend the self-identifying attachment to not only family and loved ones, but also to physical form, ideas, desires, emotions, etc., we succeed in merging the personal "I" into Individual "I." But even when we cease to identify ourselves with the personality, so long as there remains even a subtle sense of separateness, union with the divine is not possible. When the universe grows "I," and there is the realization that "I am verily that Brahman" we may say that the arrow has merged into and is one with the mark. It is described as *Samadhi* state, when the higher spiritual

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consciousness of the Initiate is entirely absorbed in the ONE ESSENCE, which is *Atman*. *The Voice of the Silence* describes it by saying, "Where is thy Individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean." Thus, *Samadhi* is the state in which the ascetic loses consciousness of every individuality, including his own. He becomes the ALL. Forgetfulness of personal self and sincere altruism become *sine qua non* conditions for success in spiritual archery. As Herrigel puts it, we must hold the drawn bow-string like the little child holding the proffered finger. It grips it so firmly that one marvels at the strength of the tiny fist. When it lets the finger go, there is not the slightest jerk, because the child turns from one thing to another completely unself-consciously. So, too, it is very essential in spiritual archery to be impersonal. "Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air."

We need to aim the arrow slightly higher than the target to allow for the trajectory or the curved path followed by the arrow due to gravitational pull. So, too, let us have higher mental and spiritual aim taking into consideration the gravitational pull exercised by our personal desires and ambition, and limitations of our bodily, mental and moral constitution. Our wrong habits, hereditary defects and sense indulgence do not allow us to do as much as we might aspire to.

What is true in physical archery is also true in spiritual archery: "Steep is the way to mastery. Often nothing keeps the pupil on the move but his faith in his teacher whose mastery is now beginning to dawn on him. He is a living example of the inner work, and he convinces by his mere presence," writes Herrigel. Faith in the Masters, the Perfected Ones, spurs us on to "hit the mark"!

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## OUR FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

Take then as much as merit hath in store for thee, O thou of patient heart. Be of good cheer and rest content with fate. Such is thy Karma, the Karma of the cycle of thy births, the destiny of those who, in their pain and sorrow, are born along with thee, rejoice and weep from life to life, chained to thy previous actions.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

HOW rarely do we think that we, in the past, have "chained" our enemy to our self! He cannot avoid taking birth at the same time as we do and coming into contact with us once again, if not in the next life then in a succeeding one. Therefore, Mr. Judge asks us to make friends, not enemies, for future births.

How shall we win over our enemies and turn them into friends? First, by dwelling upon the thought that there are *no* enemies; no one can be our enemy. Even in the fight in life between the good and the evil, virtues can be gained and courage developed. Humility, compassion, unselfishness and the like often arise out of suffering and sorrow, and we grow in stature. Therefore we see, quite simply and logically, that enemies, trials and rebuffs are our teachers. A kind, too kind, mother who spoils her child with "kindness" is more an enemy of the child than one who trains the child in right living, right habits, right discipline, even though all this might appear galling to the child at his stage. So, our so-called friend is often in reality our enemy, and the reverse is equally true.

We have to learn that the first thought that springs to our mind with regard to the one who brings us trouble should be one of gratitude. The second thought should be one of regret that we have made it possible for him to be "an agent of evil." Next, we must automatically ask how we can repay our debt to him. We have "chained" him to our self through past actions; we must now begin to "chain" him by developing in ourselves the "truer realization of the SELF." For that SELF is in him as it is in us. We have to search for it in him, seek out what is good in him and strengthen it. If we

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find this impossible then let us strongly refuse to engage in any and every *emotion* regarding him, and concentrate on what we can learn through what he has done to us. If even this is not possible to us at present, then we must *resolutely put him out of our mind*, which means that we must refuse to let any thought or picture of him or his actions enter the mind. Mr. Judge says we must put no one out of our *heart*. Emphatically true, but there is a stage when we must not let our *thought* dwell on such an one. We can think of him again later when our emotions are less involved.

All of us are a mixture of good and evil. The evil will go in the course of evolution, but the good will remain. We have therefore to try to find the good points in the evil man and strengthen them if we can.

But, whatever the evil done by him, *we* created the channel between him and ourselves. *We* gave him the opportunity to err.

Continue the same line of thinking and see that others give *us* the opportunity to err in a similar manner. They are tempters, linked to us by a certain degree of consubstantiality. If there were no consubstantiality between two persons, they would not clash.

There is no hope for us unless we look upon life, and the smallest as the greatest happening, as of our own making, and see that those through whom good or bad comes to us are *agents* only.

Our own vices must become our teachers; our own virtues need to be watched carefully lest they become our enemies. Pride and humility are opposites. Who am I to vent my anger on another, or reproach him!

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NOBODY has things just as he would like them. The thing to do is to make a success with what material I have. It is a sheer waste of time and soul-power to imagine what I would do if things were different. They are not different.

—DR. FRANK CRANE

## GROWTH THROUGH SELF-EFFORT

MISERY haunts us, from the hour of birth to the hour of death, with a positive and unbroken pertinacity. And yet, very few of us wake up from the jolts of painful experiences to inquire into the meaning and purpose of life. Who am I? Where have I come from and whither do I go? "We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal." That which lives and thinks in us, which survives the tabernacle, is the ETERNAL PILGRIM, the "real man," the immortal principle in us.

To understand the nature of the pilgrim and the pilgrimage, we must have the true concept of evolution. Man is certainly no special creation. He is the product of Nature's gradual, perfective work, like any other living unit on this Earth, as far as his body is concerned. But the "real man" is the "divine spark," called Monad or *Jivatma*, issued from the "Central Fire." In its evolutionary march, after passing through mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, this Monad enters the human kingdom. There is first descent of spirit into matter, or involution, followed by evolution. Evolution in the lower kingdoms is by natural impulse, but having reached the human stage, further progress is by self-induced and self-devised ways and means, checked by Karma. In the course of evolution, man became a thinking and self-conscious being with free will, when his mind was lighted up (activated) by the divine beings called *Manasaputras*, who had perfected themselves in prior periods of evolution. Man can use his free will to become a saint or satan; a god or devil. Tigers and doves do not enjoy this freedom—a tiger cannot be meek nor a dove ferocious. Using this free will man has to regain his divinity or return back to the source, like the pilgrim bound for Kashi or Mecca, ultimately returns home. Theosophy considers humanity as an emanation from divinity on its return path thereto. The universe is "for the experience and emancipation of the soul, for the purpose of raising the entire mass of manifested matter up to the stature, nature, and dignity of conscious god-hood."

Man is not born in sin, nor has he descended from apes or risen to culture and progress from savagery. Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, "Thou art born with the divine destiny." Thus, no man is ordinary, being divine in

his essential nature. "Verily that body, so desecrated by Materialism and man himself, is the temple of the Holy Grail, the *Adytum* of the grandest, nay, of all, the mysteries of nature in our solar universe," writes H.R.B.

There might be "natural-born" poets and mathematicians, but a natural-born adept is something practically impossible. Buddhahood or perfection cannot be conferred as gift. Prayer, says Theosophy, kills self-reliance. We would never pay a labourer a full day's wage if *we* did most of his work for him, while he sitting under a tree, prayed to us to do so. "This idea of passing one's whole life in moral idleness, and having one's hardest work and duty done by another—whether God or man—is most revolting to us, as it is most degrading to human dignity" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 72). In fact, strenuous effort is necessary to reach the goal of adeptship. *Through the Gates of Gold* puts it thus:

That the initial effort is a heavy one is evident, and it is clearly a question of strength, as well as of willing activity. But there is no way of acquiring this strength, or of using it when acquired, except by the exercise of the will. It is vain to expect to be born into great possessions. In the kingdom of life there is no heredity except from the man's own past. He has to accumulate that which is his.

Where, then, do we look for guidance and help? The answer is, to our "Higher Self (Divine nature) and to our Karma. To get the guidance of this inner monitor, we have to first of all assume "the firm position out of regard for the end in view." It is true that the spiritual scriptures and good company help us, but ultimately we have to learn to turn within. *The Dhammapada* says, "You yourself must strive; Buddhas are but sign-posts."

As thinking, free-willed beings, we have to try consciously and deliberately. No one can do this for us. As Mr. Judge says, "No one can really help you. No one can open your doors. You locked them up, and only you can open them." In real life sometimes, when a child locks himself up in a room, accidentally, he has to be guided and instructed to

himself up in a room, accidentally, he has to be guided and instructed to open the door. But it is the child who has to take the steps, and do as directed. *Light on the Path* says, "A man who desires to live must eat his food himself: this is the simple law of nature—which applies also to the higher life."

In *Light on the Path* we are told, "Desire only that which is within you. Desire only that which is beyond you." In reality we do not have an independent existence. H.R.B. says that in reality, there is no such thing as "separateness." So, by giving up our false idea of separateness and freedom we should cultivate brotherly feeling towards the whole of humanity. There must be surrendering of the personal will to the Divine Will.

This process of self-development begins by the training of the mind, because mind is the sole instrument for spiritual progress. *The Voice of the Silence* admonishes, "The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer." For the light of the inner divinity to shine forth, we need to control, conquer and purify the lower, wandering mind. The breadth and depth of mind could be acquired by reading the scriptures and by acquiring Universal Ideas. Purification of mind is achieved by practising the transcendental virtues like *Dana* (charity), *Kshanti* (patience), etc. To make our mind free from worldly desires we have to learn to discern the real from the false, the ever fleeting from the everlasting. By practice (*abhyasa*) and detachment (*vairagya*) we can control our wandering mind. But as Mr. Crosbie says, "Personality is the last foe to be conquered." To conquer this false idea of "I" or to kill the snake of the self is indeed a very difficult task. Yet, the panacea for all ills is, to work for humanity ceaselessly and without expectation of any reward. To achieve this we need not do any special work, it is enough if we do our daily duties with pure motive and without expectation of any reward. As Mr. Judge says, "It is our duty to help all, and we must begin on those nearest to us, for to run abroad to souls we might possibly help we again forsake our present duty."

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Conquest of the lower, animal self is a difficult and gradual process. H.P.B. gives us very precious advice: "Try to realize that progress is made step by step, and each step gained by *heroic* effort. Withdrawal means despair or timidity.. ..Conquered passions, like slain tigers, can no longer turn and rend you.. ..Be hopeful then, not despairing. With *each* morning's awakening try to live through the day in harmony with the Higher Self."

The fight against our weaknesses and personal desires must be kept up. There will be times when we may despair like Arjuna. But there are these encouraging words: "Try' is the battle-cry taught by the teacher to each pupil. Naught else is *expected* of you. *One who does his best does all that can be asked.*" Let us not despair of our failures and difficulties. Our real failure is the failure to try again. No effort is wasted but is sure to bear fruit, at some future time. Let us not be anxious. As a good gardener does not dig up the soil every day to check up the growth of the planted seeds, but has faith in nature, so we must have faith in the Law of Karma and in ourselves. We have to grow as the flower grows, eagerly but unconsciously, and shed the fragrance of our good deeds on others around us. After several lives of ceaseless toil, one may reach *Nirvana*—the state of supreme peace and bliss. To enter *Nirvana* is to take the Path of Liberation, and obliterate all concern for human suffering. It is the path of glorious and exalted selfishness. "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?" To renounce the peace and bliss of *Nirvana* in order to help "Orphan Humanity" is the highest path, the Path of Renunciation.

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THE best way to cheer yourself is to try to cheer somebody else up.

—MARK TWAIN

## LEARNING TO BURN—AN ALLEGORY

Out of the furnace of man's life and its black smoke, winged flames arise, flames purified, that soaring onward, 'neath the Karmic eye, weave in the end the fabric glorified of the three vestures of the Path. These vestures are: Nirmanakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Dharmakaya, robe Sublime.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

LIGHT is worshipped by everyone. But, how many look at the log of burning wood and not the fire? How many thank the globe called "Sun" which itself burns to give us light?

Getting "light" and feeling "the warmth of a light" is wonderful, but what of burning to *give* light? When one burns to give light, it is not the same burning as in jealousy or anger, which eats the being from within. It is similar to what we understand from Jesus and His life—carrying our cross.

Truths found externally, in books or from teachers, are like matchsticks. They create a spark, when they strike the heart. It is the being who has to nurture this spark into a flame and make it expand. Just as a piece of wood burns so that the fire can grow, we too, have to let the wood within burn so that the flame can grow.

Many of us come and go as wet pieces of wood. Some are ready for the strike but do not look for matchsticks. A few are searching but only keep looking for variety in matchsticks. Only a handful try to utilize them. How does one utilize a matchstick?

First of all, we need to recognize a matchstick as different from any ordinary stick. The test is that it should strike upon the inner person and create friction. On the evolutionary ladder there are different matchsticks for different levels, all serving but one purpose.

Once a matchstick is recognized, do not get dependent on it. Friction does create warmth, but it is not the *warmth* that we are seeking. Just because they are available in plenty does not mean we keep *using* them; we have to *utilize* them. It is only when we let the spark grow within us, will we give *respect* to that friction and *purpose* to that matchstick.

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Then comes the nurturing of the spark. After the matchstick has fulfilled its purpose, it is time to fulfil ours. Nurturing requires nourishment, but before that there is need for protection. Hold on to that spark. The moment we let go of the spark, in search of another matchstick, that small spark dies. It is *recognizing* the spark that protects it. It then grows into a small flame which needs to be fanned and fed. Fanning is nothing but adding thoughts of a higher vibration to it. And to feed it is not about giving fuel, but giving space for it to grow. The more it grows the more space it needs and for that the existing wood will have to burn.

Then comes the art of burning. The old tenant has to leave before the new one can reside. But how does one make the old tenant willing to give up his abode? Smaller the flame, lesser the wood that has to burn; as it grows, more wood has to burn. It is in the fanning that the wood is made to realize its "Duty" towards the fire. And when it realizes, it humbly surrenders itself and willingly burns. The external, ever-changing circumstances become the fuel for the burning wood. Larger the flame, greater the burning, stronger the circumstances. But do not stop the fanning.

The wood has to burn,  
For the Light to live.  
So be that wood,  
And light you shall give.

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WE can get rid of our hindrances only by following the Path They (Masters) have indicated. And They have said that every thought, every desire, every effort in this direction counts. It is not a question of our goodness nor our badness, but our desire and effort to follow the highest Path possible for us.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## OCCULT CHEMISTRY

IN the early years of the Theosophical Movement, messages were received from the Masters of Wisdom through the agency of H.R.B. Hardly one out of a hundred "occult" letters were actually written down by the Masters. These letters *were precipitated* with the help of the Chelas or disciples—Chelas acting as *amanuenses*. What is precipitation? When the substance held in fluid disengages itself from the fluid, from the intimate union with the fluid and falls to the bottom of the receptacle, it is termed "precipitation," in chemistry. In the same way, it is possible for a person to precipitate the message without actually lifting a pen or pencil. How does he do it? To precipitate a message, the person first clearly makes a picture of the message in his mind. The entire sentence as it should appear is clearly imagined. Thus, the imagination makes a picture of every letter in every word of every line. Having made that picture (matrix) it is held by the will and the imagination acting together for such a length of time as is needed to permit the carbon or any other substance to strain through this matrix and appear upon the paper, wood or any other surface. As has been admitted by modern science, all metals, substances, pigments and materials exist in the air held in suspension. Once the matter is deposited on the selected surface, the mass of matter is cut off from its attraction to the source. H.R.B. demonstrated such precipitation to Mr. Judge. She looked fixedly at a certain smooth piece of wood and slowly on it came out letters which at last made a long sentence. Letters could actually be seen forming before one's eyes, as matter condensed and packed itself on the surface. They were exactly like her handwriting, though here, she had first made the image in her brain. In the middle of the sentence, one letter was blurred, because at that point she had allowed her imagination to wander. "Thus, imagination raised to its highest limit, desire combined with unwavering will, and the knowledge of occult chemistry of Nature is involved in such precipitation."

The same knowledge and faculties are employed in the phenomenon of disintegration and reintegration of objects. When one metal ring could be made to pass through the other, one of the rings seems

phenomenon of disintegration and reintegration of objects. When one metal ring could be made to pass through the other, one of the rings seems to melt away at the point of contact. A ring could be made to appear inside the closed drawer, without touching it. This could be done by either disintegrating the ring and then causing it to pass into the drawer, *or* disintegrating the drawer for sufficient space of time. Always, the intervening obstacle is made *fluidic* or *diffused*. Similarly, using trained will and imagination, a person can disintegrate an object and send it along astral currents to another place, and then reintegrate it back to its original form and appearance at that spot. If by mechanical, chemical and electrical processes, molecules could be kept apart or pressed together, the same could be achieved by the powers of mind and will. There is the force called cohesion, by means of which masses of matter are held together within limits of form. Minerals go to pieces very slowly, as compared to living masses such as vegetables, animals and human beings. The normal rate of disintegration of minerals is very slow. But using will, this normal rate of disintegration could be altered. The force of repulsion could be introduced to oppose the force of cohesion or attraction so that the molecules are kept apart and held in that position by the trained will. When repulsion is slackened, the molecules rush together and the body regains its former appearance. Among other things, what is required in these phenomena is the training of the mind to see into the occult cosmos behind the veil of matter. The same is essential in the occult science of alchemy that is generally accepted to deal with transmutation of base metal like Lead, into Gold. Alchemy, in Arabic *UL-Khemi* is, as the name suggests, the chemistry of nature. There is a suggestion that on the highest plane there is homogeneous matter called Mulaprakriti or Primordial Matter, and everything has come as a result of alchemical process from that one homogeneous substratum, described as the garment of the deity. Thus:

The alchemist postulates as his first principle the existence of a certain Universal Solvent [Alkahest] by which all composite bodies are resolved into the homogeneous substance from

which they are evolved, which substance he calls pure gold, or *summa materia*. This solvent, also called *menstruum universale*, possesses the power of removing all the seeds of disease from the human body, of renewing youth and prolonging life. Such is the *lapis philosophorum* (philosopher's stone). (*Theosophical Glossary*)

Philosopher's stone and elixir of life are not just allegorical (applicable at spiritual level) but physical realities. The elixir of life can prolong life and renew youth. If the circulation of fluids in man is stopped, it can result in stagnation and death. If the alchemists had discovered some chemical compound that can keep these channels of circulation in the body unclogged, it should prevent decay and death. There are mineral springs, bathing in which is supposed to cure disease and restore physical vigour. Why should there not be chemicals in the bowels of the earth that can restore youth and prolong life? Jennings asserts that the elixir was produced out of the secret chemical laboratories of nature by some adepts. (*Isis*, 1,503)

There is alchemy going on in the bowels of the earth, bringing about transmutation of base metals into gold. H.P.B, points out that once science agrees that the elements known to science existed in the beginning in the igneous mass, it is possible to posit that there must exist a solvent which can once again reduce them back to that original form. Some of the scientists, such as Prof. Crookes, accepted the possibility of reducing the elements to their first state, and even to their first and primordial element. The difficulty arises because modern chemistry is familiar only with gross matter and is ignorant of "real matter," or SUBSTANCE. Occult Science teaches that there is one and only ONE ELEMENT, and various elements and sub-elements are but modifications and aspects of it. Modern Chemistry is only aware of chemical elements. But there are terrestrial and cosmic elements. Modern chemistry erroneously regarded these chemical elements to be simple bodies. Prof. Crookes came very close to the occult position when he pointed out that what were regarded by modern chemistry as elements, and therefore, considered to be simple and

homogeneous bodies, were actually complex bodies made up of two or more constituents. For instance, he showed that Yttrium, which was considered to be simple, homogeneous element, when subjected to some method of fractionation, was found to contain five different constituents, each having different properties. Similarly when Didymium, which was for long thought to be a simple element, was subjected to fractionation, it got resolved into Praseodymium and Neodymium, each with dissimilar properties. Is it not possible that Praseodymium and Neodymium could be further resolved into simpler bodies? Where, then, is the actual ultimate element? The very idea of an element, as something absolutely primary and ultimate, seems to be growing less and less distinct, observed Prof. Crookes. (*S.D.*, I, 140-41 fn. and p. 625)

Such observations pointed out the existence of some homogeneous source and the possibility of reducing the elements to their primal form. Hence, Prof. Crookes pointed out that commonly accepted elements of Chemistry are not simple and that they have evolved from simple matters, or perhaps from one sole kind of matter. In other words, he posited a homogeneous matter, which he called *protyle*, from which all the elements are derived. Prof. Crookes' suggestion of a primordial substratum (*protyle*) laid the foundation of METACHEMISTRY, *i.e.*, complete philosophy of physics and chemistry that could take the place of mere hypothesis and empiricism. "The Protyle of Prof. Crookes is probably used to denote homogeneous matter on the most material plane of all," *i.e.*, our plane. "Such matter is homogeneous only for those who are on the same plane of perception; so that if the Protyle of modern science is ever discovered, it will be homogeneous only to us," writes H.P.B. (*Transactions*, p. 6)

The article, "What is Matter and What is Force?" (*The Theosophist*, September 1882), mentions Professor Crooke's discovery of the "radiant matter," or "the fourth state of matter," by refining the gases to a condition so ethereal, as to reach a state of matter that could be described as "ultra-gaseous," exhibiting an entirely novel set of properties. Several great men of science admitted the existence of such matter. They accepted the possibility

on the analogy that just as there are sound and light vibrations, to which our ears and eyes are insensible, so there could be matter beyond the gaseous state.

This fourth state of matter was named plasma by an American chemist, Irving Langmuir in 1928. Plasma is a gas in which atoms have been stripped of electrons, *i.e.*, ionized. Plasma has magnetic and electric fields that move around unpredictably, altering their environment. But as the environment changes, there is corresponding change in plasma and thus there is continuous play of action and reaction. It is usually hot, but it can also be cold. "Ninety nine percent of the universe is made of it. The Earth is surrounded by it. The *aurora borealis* is a lovely example of it. So is lightning," wrote Joel Achenbach (*National Geographic*, February 2006). Plasma is already being used for multiple purposes. Thin beams of highly accelerated plasma are likely to be used in rockets; cold plasma is essential to many industrial operations. Mounir Laroussi, a physicist at old Dominion University, has developed a sort of pencil that shoots out a small stream of cold plasma. It can sterilize equipments that would be damaged by heat. It can be used to disinfect flesh wound without damaging neighbouring cells and it is said to make the fibres in the disposable diapers more absorbent.

A Master of Wisdom points out that the three states of matter— solid, liquid and gaseous—are but so many stages in an unbroken chain of physical continuity. Beyond the fourth state of matter, there are fifth, sixth and even *seventh* conditions of matter, as well as seven senses in man. It is not impossible that in time, these higher states of matter and higher dimensions of space will be discovered and nature will be found to be sevenfold. The nature of the sun and its various phenomena pertain to the sixth state of matter.

## TRUE BASIS FOR MORALITY

Strive with thy thoughts unclean before they overpower thee.  
Use them as they will thee, for if thou sparest them and they  
take root and grow, know well, these thoughts will overpower  
and kill thee.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

BOTH science and reason have been the bane of 20th-century thought. Faulty processes of reasoning from particulars to universals have helped in the downfall of ideals. Since the spirit and soul of man cannot come under microscope and scalpel, their presence is doubted and oftentimes denied. Indulgence, so long as it causes no visible or violent upheaval, has become permissible. Society no more stigmatizes the departure from time-honoured rules. The thief, the racketeer, the trader of souls is welcome company, and the *elite* have in consequence become corrupt. A lie is not only tolerable under certain circumstances, it is permissible and even laudable as where nations break treaties and violate pledges. Thus, rights come to be trampled under foot, gratitude is considered a handicap born of sentimentality, and at each turn virtue is made to beg pardon of vice. Yet, a show of piety and virtue is not abandoned. It is still found to be a valuable cloak to hide the ugliness within.

A falling away from the paths of rectitude occurs when man feels that somehow he can get away with it, and that vice and sin do not necessarily bring their own chastisement. If, despite all that religion and morals say, a tyrant and a killer enjoys high status, enjoys life and dies a normal death without nemesis overtaking him, why cannot such an instance be multiplied a thousand fold? Why can this instance not be held up as proof positive that there is no such thing as a moral law that has within it the power to enforce its decrees? When large masses of men come to lose faith in the spiritual and the divine, it behoves those who know even a little of the Wisdom-Religion to engage in its constant and steady propagation lest a sore-beset soul in its anguish point its finger at them and accuse them of failing in their duty to warn.

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Since the correct method of proceeding in any study is to understand the theorem first and then apply it to corollaries and problems, it is always right to proceed from general principles to particulars and only thereafter and with the full knowledge gained, to complete the circle and go back to principles. When the study of man is taken up, we cannot view him as a unit separate from other men or from any aspect of nature. We have to know him in his beginnings and acquaint ourselves with the powers that reside in one or the other aspect of his complex make-up.

Morals are laws which govern the behaviour of man in regard to one or another aspect of himself as also with other men and the kingdoms above and below him. However, before a study of these laws can be entered upon, the student of life has to trace man from his early beginnings and then, taking his various aspects for study, see how best he can conform himself in his relation to the whole.

Man is but an incarnation, partial or fragmentary, of a being of Light that has yet to gather its harvest on earth in order to reach immortality. Being too far removed from matter, this Being can only send its reflection or shadow in the capsule of the animal-man. It is this dweller within the body which, being left to itself for the whole course of an incarnation, forgets its source and origin, acquires a false sense of T'-ness, and weeps and laughs by turns. This "I" of an existence with which all men are familiar is, as said, a reflection or a ray from the divine being who is its "Father." At death, it returns to its source, carrying back a rich or a poor harvest. During moments when it is freed of the millstone of matter, this lesser "I" basks in the warmth and closeness of its Father. During those moments it enjoys bliss, for divinity wraps it around to the extent that its uprightness permits. In moments when this T' forgets its divine origin, it remains a mere animal of desires with a hundred times the power of the animal, for it can draw upon the forces which reside in it and which it derives from the fact that the reflection of its Father carries, albeit in miniature, the potency of that Father.

What is the mission of this incarnated and, for the moment, the

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separated ray? It has a purpose and a programme to fulfil. Like any ambassador or viceroy of a distant king, he is an agent bound by the policies of his sovereign, yet free at the same time to choose such avenues as he finds suitable to express and implement those policies. Every act, word and thought that departs from the policy is reprehensible to the king and therefore cannot be brought before his august presence. These departures at best represent the personal reactions of the earthly ambassador and must be jettisoned and left as the flotsam of an incarnation. It therefore follows that in order to enrich his king the ambassador must at the close of his ambassadorship carry only that which is pleasant and acceptable to his Lord and Master.

It often happens that the ambassador gets enamoured of the sights and sounds of the kingdom to which he is sent. He neglects his briefing, reduces the volume of communication with his King to a trickle, and, forgetting the purpose and programme of his stay, entangles himself in pursuits alien to the king's wishes. When it is time for him to return, he cannot carry with him the fruits of his divagations. He may return, empty-handed and will not be able to account for himself, in which case his sojourn has to be counted as a failure.

Once that the earnestness of life is understood, the questing soul has to find a new anchorage for his faith. For him the question is: Where is the stable, unshakable bed-rock; where the ultimate in Truth? To answer this, he has to reach out to fundamentals and verities which remain basic in both time and space. He has to assure himself that, if from the One Flame all the minor lights emanated, each differentiated point of light carries the essence of the One and rebecomes that One on the day of its reunion.

When the white light is broken up into its prismatic constituents, the white is no longer perceptible and to the uninitiated can never be recalled from out of the plethora of colours. Yet, science demonstrates that these same variegated colours can be made to merge back into the white from

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which they emanated. So too in nature and man. Man belongs to a ray which itself is a sub-ray from yet another hierarchy of—shall we say—colour. This same man can raise his consciousness above the mundane and, taking the colours—not missing any—clear them of dross, and then mix them into the pure, the synthesizing white. The re-constituted white is the same, and yet not the same, as the primary white that, entering the prism, emanated the seven distinct rays or colours. It is the same white but it has now stored within it the experience of each separate colour-ray. Call that ray by the name of a prismatic colour or call it by the name of a human principle—*Kama* (desire), *Manas* (mind), *Buddhi* (discrimination), etc., and the result is the same. The separated aspects when withdrawn into the parent luminary become that luminary, but carry back into it the tribute they gathered in their sojourn as separate entities.

Man knows not this because the old Wisdom has been forgotten and the new knowledge is becoming more and more entangled in the denser forms of matter. It is for this reason that he no longer knows of colours and hierarchies, of rays and flames. He acts as does the child—dips his brush in any colour that pleases his passing fancy and produces a mixture that defies any colour definition. Can the man, by some self-devised process, precipitate each separate colour, make it primitive pure and then remerge the seven colours so that they lose their distinctive existence in the One which is also the Light and the Flame? It is not difficult to understand that if any colour retains an impurity alien to its nature, it is useless and the grand experiment must be held up till all the constituents have been made ready.

It is here that reincarnation proves most beneficent, for with a new body and brain and fresh vigour (checked by Karma) the process of purification or of precipitating the true colour can be continued without the haunting memory of past failures. Each incarnated Soul has this one purpose. All else is incidental. Each thus is a brother working in his own laboratory, yet dependent on the researches of others. Each may be a

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sub-ray of the same ray to which several belong, and unless the efforts of all—none excluded—are coordinated in harmony, the process may halt and be delayed over long incarnations till the lesson is learnt. In such a programme as this, harmony is not the mere achieving of a brotherhood of sorts. It can be attained where, even in the midst of intense personal activity, each unit lends a helping hand to the others lest the breakdown of one may retard the progress of the many.

To produce a pattern of behaviour which facilitates this, the Wise of old laid down norms of Duty or *Dharma* or Law. It is incumbent on each one that he keep his own body and mind in perfect health such as is ideal or suited to his work for the Great Cause. No glowing complexion and pleasing looks; no muscular development or exuberent energy—just the pure rhythmic vibration of mind and body that synchronize their purpose for carrying out their assigned duties for the incarnation. The body must not only be tuned to the correct pitch; it must moreover be made so responsive that it does not rebel when the Soul tries to mould it to its desires. All desires that are enjoyed at the expense of the life-energy are therefore to be avoided. They but drain away the strength and tenacity required for the lifetime's effort and must be recognized as deterrents on the path. Any thought, word, or deed, overt or covert, that hurts another or hinders or delays his work in the inner laboratory of his being becomes a sin—a hewing at one's legs and limbs, a shutting of the door against the vital contribution which it was the other's duty to offer.

As the student begins to understand the purpose of his own life, he begins to readjust the moral code and make it conform more to the pattern of his Soul's behaviour. A lie becomes reprehensible because it cheats another out of a truth, and primarily because a cause for conflict is created between parts of the one whole. Greed is the hugging to oneself of nature's bounty and therefore lessening the share of others who by Judged from the point of view of a purposeful life, many a law and convention of the day is found applicable to the particular society or era. A

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few centuries more and the law may become obsolete through disuse. The student who lives among the people of his era has to conform to their conventions and not provoke them to needless hostility. He must render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. The outer pattern of behaviour has to be adjusted to the prevailing circumstances. It is the inner attitude, the motive that governs thought and action which will determine the intrinsic worth of the experience. It is this and this alone which will help or hinder the effort to keep open the channel of communication with the higher spiritual spheres.

To bend life's activities to this purpose, special sets of laws exist— laws for which the physical brain can find no rationale. *Yagna* (sacrifice), *Dana* (charity) and *Tapas* (austerity) are rules as rigid in their application as any that deal with mundane living. Yet, they seem out of place in this age, for they are of little help either in amassing earthly things or in raising the pitch of sensual enjoyments. When even the presence of the Soul is questioned, how can people be taught the meaning of laws that pertain to planes where alone the Soul can act?

If the student of Theosophy is earnest and desires to serve the Cause, it becomes incumbent on him to preach and popularize a knowledge of these laws of the higher life. He has to demonstrate by reason and analogy the necessity for the moral code. He has to show by easy, understandable stages the purpose of life and the forces which are permissible to be used to reach the goal and the supreme consummation. The humblest can help in this as the most learned. The motive must count in this as in all things, for whatever is done in the name of the good LAW is bound to turn out right.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

[In this section we seek to answer frequently asked questions, at U.L.T. meetings or during private conversations and discussions with people who seek the answers in the light of Theosophy. Answers given in this section are by no means final. Only a line of thought is being offered by applying general principles of Theosophy.]

**Question:** What does Sita-Rama and Radha-Krishna represent? And why are they always worshipped together? **Answer:** In one sense, they represent gods and goddesses who descended from heaven and incarnated in bodies of flesh and blood for definite purposes. They are incarnations and *Avatars*. For instance, Rama is considered to be an incarnation of Vishnu, and Sita an incarnation of Laxmi. They descend to help the race in its next step forward.

Metaphysically, Sita-Rama or Radha-Krishna, represent *Purusha* and *Prakriti* or Spirit and Matter, showing that the Manifested Universe is pervaded by duality. Matter represents the female principle or female element. Just as matter is illusionary and vain so also the female element is illusionary and vain, and tending towards the *established order*. Spirit or male element is identified with change and activity. Spirit and Matter are two poles of the One Reality, like two poles of a magnet, and in IT they are synthesized. In manifestation both are absolutely necessary. Spirit without matter or matter without spirit would only be an empty abstraction. From Spirit or Cosmic Ideation, comes our consciousness; from Matter or Cosmic Substance are derived various vehicles or forms. For consciousness to become individualized or "I am I" consciousness, the vehicle of matter is necessary.

In the article, "The Future Occultist," H.R.B. hints at the deeper meaning behind the marriage of the *Rishis* and union of *Siva* and *Sakti*. They are purely allegorical accounts. *Buddhi* or Spiritual Soul in man, (in relation to the Universe, it is spoken of as *Prakriti*) is represented as "female," because it is passive and represented as the vehicle of *Atman* or Spirit. This *Atman*, when spoken of in relation to the entire Universe, is referred to as *Purusha*, and is depicted as active "male," for it is the

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CENTRE OF ENERGY, acting through and upon its female vehicle. She mentions that when the occultist has thoroughly identified himself with the seventh principle or *Atman*, he acts upon the *Buddhi*. Thus, the Mahatma, who has become one with the *Atman* (or *Purusha*), becomes practically a creator, because he has identified himself with the evolving and the manifesting energy of nature. It was in this sense that the Rishis are said to have "married." The union of *Siva* and *Sakti* represents the same allegory. *Siva* is the *Logos*, the *Vach*, manifested through *Sakti*; and the union of the two produces the phenomenal creation. Explaining further the correct relationship between Krishna and the Gopis, H.R.B. says that Krishna represents the Seventh Principle or Spirit, while the Gopis represent innumerable powers of that principle, manifested through its vehicle.

**Question:** Do the deities/gods deserve more respect than what the masses are giving them?

**Answer:** Who are these gods or deities? The Hindu Pantheon is composed of 300 million gods and goddesses and they are described as the powers and forces that govern the universe. They are also said to reside within the microcosm or man. This is no fancy or exaggeration, because there is consciousness and intelligence in every cell and atom of the body and every atom is referred to as an emanation from some inferior god or goddess, which in turn is an emanation from a superior deity.

Our whole universe comes into manifestation in accordance with the plan or blueprint in the Universal or Divine Mind. The interpretation and execution of this plan involves seven hierarchies of Beings, designated as gods, angels, archangels, Dhyan Chohans, etc. H.R.B. gives an analogy. This hierarchy of spiritual Beings, through which the Universal Mind comes into action, is like an army, which is composed of corps, divisions, brigades, regiments, and so forth, each having its limited freedom of action and limited responsibilities. Thus, we have gods and goddesses of

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fire, air, water, wealth, wisdom and so on. There are gods who participated and sacrificed themselves in building the human frame, called "lunar pitris," and there are "solar pitris" who endowed man with the light of mind. These gods, including Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, are finite, *i.e.*, limited and conditioned by space and time. At the time of *Pralaya* (dissolution) they disappear into the One Reality or *Parabrahman*. Hence, H.P.B. points out that all these gods are entitled to the grateful reverence of Humanity, but not worship. They are embodiments of Karmic and Cosmic laws and would never contravene these laws.

One of the aims of rituals and sacrifices in olden days, known by the name of *Karma-Kanda*, was to remind us of the debt we owe to the beings of the invisible worlds, on whom we are dependent, and who in turn are dependent on us. The Indo-Iranians of old believed that the world was created and sustained by many gods and goddesses and that these divinities must be propitiated by prayers, sacrifices and offerings. "Beings are nourished by food, food is produced by rain, rain comes from sacrifice, and sacrifice is performed by action" (*Gita*, III). In *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, Mr. Judge explains that it is not as if food will not be produced if sacrifice, according to Vedic ritual, is not performed, but that *right food*, leading to bodily conditions enabling man to live up to his highest possibilities, will not be produced. It is produced only in the age where the real sacrifices are properly performed. We may conclude that if the sacrifices that thus nourish the gods are omitted, these "gods" must die out and go to other spheres. Mr. Judge comments that as these sacrifices are totally disused now, the "gods" must have long ago left this sphere.

In a sense, an offering made to these gods is only a symbol that acknowledges the role of various powers and forces of nature, in maintaining the universe. In the beginning, trees were worshipped as animated things, so that each tree was regarded as a conscious and living thing. Tree-spirits were considered to have powers—of making the rain to fall, the sun to shine, flocks and herds to multiply, and women to have smooth

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delivery. The Mundaris of Assam believe that if a tree were felled, the forest gods would display their wrath by withholding rain. Our reverence for gods manifests in our reverence for Nature, and in the good use we make of our bodies, faculties, powers, etc.

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THEN said a teacher, speak to us of Teaching. And he said:

No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge.

The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.

If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind....

The musician may sing to you of the rhythm which is in all space, but he cannot give you the ear which arrests the rhythm, nor the voice that echoes it....

For the vision of one man lends not its wings to another man.

And even as each one of you stands alone in God's knowledge, so must each one of you be alone in his knowledge of God and in his understanding of the earth.

—KAHLIL GIBRAN

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

What is the origin of our civilization? Ruth Shady Solis, an archaeologist at the National University of San Marcos, Lima, discovered an ancient city of Caral in the Supe Valley of Peru, a few years ago. This was reported in the journal *Science* in 2001. Her team found a huge compound at Caral, encompassing six large pyramids, many smaller pyramids, two circular plazas, temples, amphitheatres, residential districts, etc., showing that a full-fledged urban civilization existed at the place around 2700 B.C. It is claimed that Caral is more than 1000 years older than Machu Picchu of the Incas and the structures at Caral are hundreds of years older than the drainage system of Harappa or the pyramids of Egypt. In other words, it is claimed that the earliest known civilization in South Americas—around 2627 B.C.—was much older than the Harappa Valley towns and the pyramids of Egypt. Ruth Solis is trying to convince people that Caral was the oldest urban civilization in the world. She was in India, recently, to discuss her findings with other historians. She points out that so far, the historians have been searching for an answer to human need for civilization, in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China. Human need for civilization is generally attributed to fear of war, whereas Caral civilization seems to be based on trade in cotton and hence it is difficult for most historians to accept Caral as the "mother city," the place for the oldest urban civilization, writes Shobhan Saxena. (*Sunday Times of India*, December 16, 2007)

We are in the Fifth Subrace of the Fifth Root Race. India became and still is the home of the parent-stock of the Aryan Root Race, since one million years. India is described as "the alma-mater" or the cradle of civilization, because in these one million years India has been nourishing various civilizations in the Western lands. It is the dark-skinned Aryans from Southern India who brought ready-made civilization to Egypt. History of various races shows that the Third Race gave birth to the Fourth or Atlantean Race, which became "black with sin," and this portion of humanity gradually transformed into red- yellow (of whom the Red

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Indians and the Mongolians are descendants), and finally into brown-white, the colour of the Fifth Aryan Race (*S.D.*, II, 250,424-25). Like the civilizations of Persia, China and Egypt, American civilization, too, had its roots in the remote past of the Fourth or Atlantean Race. Geologically, the American continent is older than Europe, and it rose from the ocean bed during the palmy days of Atlantis, which began sinking millions of years ago. It is believed that in former times, America was connected with Lemuria and Atlantis.

A series of articles titled "A Land of Mystery" appeared in the early issues of the magazine, *The Theosophist*—the first issue appearing in October 1879. In these articles, H.R.B. points out that the European conceit had led to almost complete ignorance of the wonders of pre-Columbian arts and architecture in both South and North America. Many of the stupendous structures that still exist, and temples, palaces and cities of Peru and Mexico that rival Egyptian antiquities, are considered to be the work of far earlier races. H.P.B. assembled evidence to suggest an immense antiquity for such archaeological remains. She also suggests the connection between Aryans and Americans in the far past. In the same articles she points out that it stands scientifically proved, beyond any doubt or cavil, that man has lived in America at least 50,000 years ago. In H.P.B.'s times Donnelly collected a mass of evidence to prove the *Peruvian colony* to be an offshoot of the Atlanteans. (*S.D.*, II, 745)

Is sinful thinking itself a punishable transgression? Would it not be better to divert our precious resources in *constraining* evil behaviour than in devising methods of invading privacy and uncovering "thoughtcrimes"? asks Robert Weissberg, professor of Political Science—Emeritus at the University of Illinois—Urbana, writing in context of American society (*Social Science and Modern Society*, July-August 2007). It is believed that though explicit brutality that dominated in the "good old days," has now abated, flaws of racism, sexism and homophobia exist as deeply buried their business to expose such deeply buried evil. Weissberg is highly critical of the use of medical technologies and sophisticated social science to

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confirm such "hidden bad thoughts." There is increasing use of technologies like functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to scan brain activity or Implicit Association Test (IAT) designed to uncover "bias," even when the person himself knows that he is bias free. Weissberg points out that these probes into heretofore hidden protected sanctuaries are deceptively consequential. John Locke's warning that imposing religious orthodoxy is futile since only God knows our innermost beliefs may now be obsolete. "Ideological exorcists now enjoy life-time employment and given the tenacity of dark thoughts, nobody will ever be totally rehabilitated....No guarantee exists that these techniques will only be employed to punish the truly wicked. Sad to say, many—including more than a few academics—are convinced that every American is depraved, a closet homophobe, racist and sexist, and the sooner we uncover these denials, and then formulate the proper cleansing method, the closer we can come to Utopia. America will not be a pleasant place," writes Weissberg somewhat sarcastically.

Thoughts are things. An evil thought is more potent than an evil act, as the radius of influence of a thought is larger than that of an action. Like a thistle-seed, a thought, on leaving the mind, associates itself with an elemental and becomes an entity and is then attracted to those having a consubstantial nature. When a person entertains evil or even a material sensual thought in his mind, he sends it forth to increase the evil impulse in men of vice. Translation of thought into action is a very short step. Hence, Jesus said, "He who looks on the wife of another to lust after her, has already committed adultery."

However, it is also true that no man has the right to uncover the inner motives, feelings or thoughts of another. Masters have the facility to read the mind and heart of each one of us but they never resort to it unless given the permission to do so. No man can reform another. It is far better for each person to undertake self-examination, at the end of the day, *cautious* and *conscious*, upon one's lower self in the light of the inner divine man—to examine his thoughts and feelings, words and deeds. On becoming aware

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of the weaknesses of our nature, we may resolve to replace them by practising the opposite virtue. "Not a mother, not a father, not any kindred can do much; a well-directed mind does us greater service," taught the Buddha.

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As a sort of corrective to the exaggerated patriotism and chauvinistic trends ingrained in nations, which are but the reflection of moral laxity and restricted vision in the individuals, a morally affirmative Declaration was thought out. A document called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (U.D.H.R.) was placed before the signatories of the U.N.O. and was adopted on December 10, 1948. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, the chairperson of the session, hoped that the Declaration would become "the Magna Carta for all mankind."

The former Attorney General of India, Mr. Soli Sorabjee, invites us to renew our pledge as a sovereign Nation that participated in the premises of the Declaration, and not merely celebrate it ritualistically. Fortunately there have been appropriate and further enactments to the spirit and the letter of the Declaration, viz., International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966, and the Vienna Declaration 1993.

The central theme of the Declaration is that human rights rest on human dignity. The first Preamble of the Declaration recognizes "the inherent dignity of all members of the human family" and in the fourth Preamble reaffirms its faith "in the dignity and worth of the human person." Another welcome aspect developed among recent thinkers is the broadening of the sense in the words "living in Dignity." It now includes keeping the body and soul together, while upholding one's values and maintaining the integrity of one's fundamental rights. Sorabjee writes:

But what does life with Dignity mean to our masses who are crushed by poverty and hunger? Physical torture is violence against the human person and is indefensible. But is daily deprivation of food and shelter and medical care any less

violence to the human personality? It is too often forgotten that poverty and hunger are the most potent causes of violation of basic human rights....The sordid spectacle of billionaires and trillionaires revelling in obscene opulence while the majority of mankind are struggling hard to keep body and soul together makes a mockery of the solemn rhetoric of the Declaration....It must not be forgotten that thanks to the Declaration a new sense of shared international responsibility is evident in the UN and its agencies as well as in the civil society. Moreover, defence and vindication of human rights has become an international secular religion. (*The Indian Express*, December 10, 2007)

Mere physical or earthly existence is not enough for the "dignity and worth" of mankind. Stark poverty and unabated infant mortality, for instance, are still a debasing state of human beings. Are we to stand aside fatalistically and helplessly, and watch the daily indignity of our fellow beings, by dismissing their condition in economic terms and calling it their fate? Our role is not only to sympathize with the ["secular" religious] aspirations which are always there, but so to influence human thinking on a larger scale as to bring about a day nearer the condition when not a single person dies of starvation and neglect. H.P.B. points out that in our so-called civilized countries, if a large number of people are suffering from misery, poverty and disease, it is because those at the opposite end of the social scale are leading the life of careless indifference, material luxury and selfish indulgence. That the action of one reacts on the lives of all, is a scientific fact. Hence, it is only by practising true human brotherhood in our daily lives, that the real elevation of the race can be attained.

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Religion is based on faith, and it encourages belief without evidence. Scientific knowledge, on the other hand, is based on testable hypothesis. Science assumes that nature is ordered in a rational and intelligible way, and it is believed that there must be order even in the unexplored and unseen universe. Granted that the universe is governed by

certain physical laws, the question that remains to be answered is: "But where do these laws come from? And why do they have the form that they do?" It would be unscientific to accept these laws as "given," imprinted on it right from its birth. Though until recently, the source of the laws of physics has never been questioned. The reason for the scientific enquiry now is the realization that what we long regarded as absolute and universal laws might not be truly fundamental at all, but could vary from place to place. There might be many universes, each with its own set of bylaws. "Both religion and science are founded on faith—namely, on belief in the existence of something outside the universe, like an unexplained God or an unexplained set of physical laws... It seems to me there is no hope of ever explaining why the physical universe is as it is so long as we are fixated on immutable laws that exist reasonlessly or are imposed by divine providence... The laws should have an explanation from within the universe and not involve appealing to an external agency," writes Paul Davies, Director of *Beyond*, the research centre at Arizona State University. (*The Times of India*, courtesy *New York Times Network Service*, December 21, 2007)

The key assumption in the above is that "the laws should have an explanation from within the universe and not involve appealing to an external agency." We agree that we know very little about how our universe came into existence. Yet, for investigation of such a profound nature, we must at least have a working hypothesis. What is our working hypothesis behind the astonishing reality called orderly universe that we see and experience? Theosophy postulates the existence of the "One Reality," or "Divinity," behind the manifested universe, called Parabrahm, Ain-Soph or God, which is the rootless root and causeless cause of everything in the manifested universe. Theosophy says that there exists a plan of the universe in the Divine Mind before the universe comes into being, just as thoughts exist in the mind before they are expressed as words. At the dawn of manifestation, Divine intelligences working behind the cosmos impress matter with the plan of the universe. These are perceived by us in the manifested universe as laws of nature. The One Reality is

#### IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

numberless universes. Thus establishing the fundamental and ultimate law of "cycles" or "periodicity" in the universe.

Elements of nature—earth, water, fire, air—obey their inherent laws. Kingdoms of nature—elemental, vegetable, animal—have their inherent laws. It is the working of divine intelligence, expression of divine mind in the manifested universe. However, these are not necessarily the same for every universe. Even on our earth, what we have explored and known, is mainly the physical realm. Our own earth has her six companion globes on different planes of matter and consciousness, and they have their own laws. Hindrances and limitations experienced by our physical senses are overcome when psychic senses open up the inner, invisible, astral world. To one who knows these laws, the science of clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, mind-reading, are quite natural. Trying to pin down the root cause or ultimate nature of reality requires the use of the spiritual science. Unless we admit the existence of the immortal and spiritual side of nature working behind the universe, the mystery will ever remain unsolved.

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