

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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THE FUNCTION OF U.L.T. IN TODAY'S WORLD	253
YOGA OF MIND—CONTROL	258
CREATIVE ASPECT OF ACTION	263
REMEMBERING PAST LIVES	268
ACTIVATING DORMANT POWERS	274
SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE	278
IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	282

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THE FUNCTION OF U.L.T. IN TODAY'S WORLD

The heart-felt desire that others may benefit from our lives will be felt by those open—it matters little how few; they may be the means of wakening many others. It is the effort and the sacrifice that bring the ultimate results, but in our zeal it is well to consider what the Masters have done, and do year after year, age after age. They do what They can, when They can, and as They can—in accordance with cyclic law. They conserve the knowledge gained—and *wait*. Knowing this, and doing thus, there can be no room in us for doubt or discouragement. Theosophy is for those who *want* it. We are to hold, wait, and work for those few earnest souls who will grasp the plan and further the Cause....Theosophy must be held out continuously for all who will listen. That is our self-assumed work; we have our example in H.P.B. and W.Q.J.—as to means, method and manner: let us imitate them, and so do their work in their spirit.

—*The Friendly Philosopher* (pp. 363-64)

IT is only proper that students, now and then, reflect upon the function and purpose of U.L.T. [United Lodge of Theosophists]. We often find that an activity, an organization, or a movement started with very noble aims tends to degenerate in the course of time, all because—consciously or unconsciously—the workers lose sight of the aims with which the noble work had begun. A centre that aims to provide subsidized food to the poor, could turn into a full-fledged restaurant. It is not of great consequence where physical

food is concerned, but what happens if an organization or a movement which professed to provide “food” for the soul degenerates so that it no longer supplies pure “food,” or turns into a centre for teaching yoga or holding séances? It would only mean that the workers have strayed from the original purpose and aim.

The Theosophical Movement was launched with a specific purpose and at a crucial moment in human history, which a Great Master of Wisdom describes thus: “Between degrading superstition and still more degrading brutal materialism, the White Dove of Truth has hardly room whereon to rest her weary unwelcome feet. It is time that Theosophy should enter the arena.” Scientific skepticism and religious dogmatism had made Truth unwelcome. Like a wrestler entering the arena and challenging another wrestler, Theosophy challenged many fields—Science, Education, Theology, Religion, Society and its values, and Humanity at large. U.L.T. as a vehicle of the Theosophical Movement has a very vital role to play.

What kind of world do we live in? It is a world of technological advancement, full of competition and materialistic values. Today, money rules the world. “Money” is the deciding factor while choosing a study course as a student, and later a profession. Ours is the age of information technology. There is an information explosion, which must be distinguished from knowledge and wisdom. But such information availability shows that we live in a world open to receiving ideas. “In spite of the clangour and din of our present civilization, we live in a time when it is possible to openly proclaim the existence of Theosophy.”

The purpose of U.L.T. is to make known the message of Theosophy and the existence of the custodians of that knowledge—the Masters who are behind the Movement. In its broader aspect, the aim of U.L.T. is to introduce into this age of transition certain seminal ideas which can lead ultimately to nobler morality. Ideas rule the world. Ideas have always been vital in arousing public opinion and bringing about a reform—whether it was the freedom struggle or the eradication of a social evil. Theosophical ideas seek

to change the inner nature of man and have the power to transform animal man into human man, and human into divine man. Right ideas and right philosophy is the dire need of our age. We are held back by our own false ideas. Mr. Crosbie describes the situation by an illustration. In the East they catch monkeys by putting nuts in the bottom of a narrow-necked jar. The monkeys put their paw inside the jar to grab a fistful of nuts. They do not know enough to let go of the nuts and be free and so get caught. We want to be free of misery, but will not let go of the “nutty-ideas” we hold. It is very vital that we have the correct concept of life, death, suffering and God, as these help us see our earthly existence in a correct perspective. A Master of Wisdom suggests that “the struggle for life” is the real and most prolific parent of most woes and sorrows and all crimes. “Teach the people to see that life on this earth, even the happiest, is but a burden and an illusion, that it is our own Karma, the cause producing the effect, that is our own judge, our saviour in future lives, and the great struggle for life will soon lose its intensity.”

We must be ready to put forward these ideas before the world, *again and again*. As Mr. Crosbie writes, “In the swirl of engrossing events man needs reminding.” We are bound to feel disappointed when people do not respond. We may find today that there are too many engrossing events to absorb the attention of young and old alike. H.P.B. recommends putting these ideas before the educated class, whom she calls “the natural leaders of the masses,” as the masses imitate the educated class. But what do we find today? The life of the educated class revolves around career and money. The afflicted want quick solutions to their problems. The educated and the uneducated are both alike lured by the one who promises a short cut to self-realization.

What shall we do? We do the best we can without losing hope. “Learn that no efforts, not the smallest—whether in right or wrong direction—can vanish from the world of causes.” The Buddha dealt with humanity as he found it and used simple symbols of flower, elephant, etc., to convey the truths. Mr. Judge advises: “We should

do as Buddha taught his disciples, preach, practise, promulgate, and illustrate our doctrines. He spoke to the meanest of men with effect, although having a deeper doctrine for greater and more learned minds." In the *Gita*, Shri Krishna says, "In whatever way men approach me, in that way do I assist them." It is never easy to reach out to people. H.P.B. too had to deal with religious fanatics, scientists and spiritualists of her time. Her unwavering faith in the Masters and firm determination helped her go on in the face of all trials and opposition. Mr. Judge writes: "Her aim was to elevate the race. Her method was to deal with the mind of the century as she found it, by trying to lead it on step by step; to seek out and educate a few who, appreciating the majesty of the Secret Science and devoted to the 'great orphan humanity,' could carry on her work with zeal and wisdom..." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 264)

Mr. Judge suggests—through a beautiful allegory—that we are expected to do something more than mere promulgation. The allegory shows a pupil—having completed the work of promulgation—approaching the Master. The Master tells him that there are many to teach intellectual conceptions of the truth. The truth is not of the intellect, but of the heart. The pupil is shown a vision in which clouds obstruct the light from reaching the vegetation on earth. The clouds represent the human intellect and the light stands for the Truth. However, here and there, light had penetrated to the earth through the rifts made in these clouds. These rifts were made by a little vortex of vibrations arising from the human heart. The Master said to the pupil:

Is it best, then, to pour out more Light upon the clouds, or to establish a vortex of heart force? The latter thou must accomplish unseen and unnoticed, and even unthanked. The former will bring thee praise and notice among men. Both are necessary: both are Our work; but—the rifts are so few! Art strong enough to forego the praise and make of thyself a heart centre of pure impersonal force? (*W.Q.J. Series No. 14*, p. 2)

In other words, we have to so live the life as to touch the hearts of people. The Great Master writes: "It is not the individual and

determined purpose of attaining Nirvana...but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause to benefit by it as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can, which constitutes the true Theosophist." Are we trying to find out ways and means of arousing interest in Theosophy? Are we willing to forget *our* interests in working for others?

We see that study, practice and promulgation of the philosophy of Theosophy is so grand a task that even devotion of one's whole life to it is insufficient. We must do our best, wait and acquire "patient resignation." Mr. Crosbie sums up the position while writing to a student worker:

There are many whom we cannot help. Their time has not yet come, perhaps, in that they have not arrived at that condition which permits such help as we can give. We can help those that are ready; they may not be many in number, but they exist, and will come, as the way clears for them to do so. A steady outpouring of the eternal ideas will attract and hold those who need them; others will come and go as their mood determines. I do not think you are to blame for the kind of people that come to you; they are samples of the city—mixed; some good—bless them—some indifferent, some bad and some very bad. You try to serve all and give them of your best; no one can do more. Every spiritual effort is a good action. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 192)

It is in and through the incidents of daily life, in work well done, in duties thoroughly performed, that we today can most readily make progress in the higher life—slow progress, it may be, but at any rate sure. These are stepping stones to better things. We advance most rapidly when we stop to help other wayfarers. We receive most when we sacrifice most. We attain to the largest measure of Divine love when we most unselfishly love the brethren. We become one with the Supreme most surely when we lose ourselves in work for Humanity.

YOGA OF MIND-CONTROL

MEDITATION has been prescribed by all the great Teachers and Sages as a necessary mental exercise which would lead the mind in the direction of the Soul, the self-conscious Thinker, the reincarnating Ego in every human being. This at once indicates that the mind is an important instrument of the Soul. It is a link or a bridge between the Soul of man and his lower, personal nature made up of: (1) the physical body with its organs of sense and of action; (2) the astral or design body, the foundation of the physical, made up of subtler ethereal matter, in which circulate (3) the currents of energy or *Prana*; and (4) desires and passions, feelings and emotions. In most human beings the mind has become a slave and a victim to the fourfold lower nature. At times, however, it aspires towards the Soul; hence the dual nature of the mind—the “heaven-aspiring” and “*Kama*-tending” mind. In Zoroastrian philosophy the two minds are called *Vohu-Mano*, the superior mind, and *Akem-Mano*, the evil mind. It is this evil or *Kama*-tending mind that drags the Soul down from its own pure plane and victimizes it. The steady mind becomes a channel for the flowing in of divine ideas.

Soul and mind have to be firmly united on one plane, under the afflatus of the overbrooding Divine Parent, Atma-Buddhi (*Cf.* “Thyself and mind, like twins upon a line, the star which is thy goal burns overhead”—*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 21). The first step indicated in the same book is: “Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul” (p. 28). The mind is the reflecting mirror and it can reflect both ways. At present, through its constant connection with the lower, personal self, it has gathered the dust and the dirt of that lower plane; hence the necessity to clear the mirror of the mind of all dirt through meditation and reflection upon one or another aspect of the Soul-Wisdom.

Thus, self-purification should always precede meditation. It is necessary to note that only in the Sixth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Sri Krishna instructs Arjuna to become a man of meditation. Prior to that He teaches about the immortality of the Soul, the

purification of the senses, the right performance of duty and the renunciation of the fruit of action. People become hasty for the practice of meditation before they know who they are, what the constitution of man is, how he came into existence, and what is the final goal. They begin to follow wrong methods of one type or another, which sometimes produce mental unbalance and derangement. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12* on “Mind-Control” gives some instances of such a nature.)

Besides the wandering nature of the mind which makes it fly from object to object and subject to subject, there are other undesirable traits which need to be changed. At times it is obsessed with one idea, pleasant or unpleasant, and dwells constantly upon it, to the exclusion of all else. The mind should be positive, alert, and active, for passivity is the cause of many other troubles which make of the mind a victim to foreign impressions and influences. The various tendencies of the mind are described thus:

Man, made of thought, occupant only of many bodies from time to time, is eternally thinking. His chains are through thought, his release due to nothing else. His mind is immediately tinted or altered by whatever object it is directed to. By this means the soul is enmeshed in the same thought or series of thoughts as is the mind. If the object be anything that is distinct from the Supreme Self then the mind is at once turned into that, becomes that, is tinted like that. This is one of the natural capacities of the mind. It is naturally clear and uncoloured, as we would see if we were able to find one that had not gone through too many experiences. It is movable and quick, having a disposition to bound from one point to another. Several words would describe it. Chameleon-like it changes colour, sponge-like it absorbs that to which it is applied, sieve-like it at once loses its former colour and shape the moment a different object is taken up. Thus, full of joy from an appropriate cause, it may suddenly become gloomy or morose upon the approach of that which is sorrowful or gloomy. We can therefore say it becomes that to which it is devoted. (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, pp. 141-42)

This clearly shows how man is bound down by his thoughts and how he and he alone can free himself from that bondage.

Just as the mind is an instrument of the Soul, so the brain is an instrument of the mind in physical life. It receives information *via* the senses and so it is like a receiving station. It gives orders, and impresses, influences and affects others, and becomes like a transmitting station.

There is a sort of conscious telegraphic communication going on incessantly day and night, between the physical brain and the inner man. The brain is such a complex thing, both physically and metaphysically, that it is like a tree whose bark you can remove layer by layer, each layer being different from all the others, and each having its own special work, function and properties. (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 64)

This constant communication between the inner man and the physical brain takes place *via* the mind; therefore it becomes necessary to understand the nature and characteristics of the mind and the brain, which at present are clogged with false concepts about life and life's problems, and with false values. The Divine Parent, Atma-Buddhi, is eternal and immortal, beginningless and endless. It is for the human Soul, Manas, the thinker, ever to try to be under the protection and guidance of its Divine Parent, and to radiate the Light thus acquired through a receptive mind and a clean and clear brain. There are minds that are not necessarily evil but are dull, confused, barren of good results, depending on the tendencies brought over from past incarnations. Hence the great necessity to curb and control and train the mind through the right practice of concentration and meditation.

The method of restraining the restless, turbulent, wandering mind was pointed out by Sri Krishna to Arjuna 5,000 years ago, and it is: practice and detachment—the constant practice of bringing the mind back from its wanderings and putting it on the Supreme Spirit, and detachment from cravings of a lower order, which means attachment to the aspirations of the Higher Self. This is the best and the safest exercise. It may not result in quick progress, but

ultimately it is sure to bear fruit.

Along the same line Mr. Judge advises us to think as often as possible of the mantram phrase: "Thou Art That." So it is essential to understand who is "thou" and who is "That" and what is the relationship between the two. Such meditation brings its own power and strength for use in daily life. He also advises that if meditation on the Supreme Self is found difficult, then the bridge, the Masters, have to be sought. For many it is not easy to think and reflect on the abstract; for such the great and glorious figures of the Prophets and Sages, the embodiments of virtue and wisdom and compassion, would be helpful subjects for meditation. Such meditation would enable one to leave behind this *mayavic* world of illusions and to get something of the Light, Peace and Joy of the world of the Immortals. This daily meditation at a set hour on any spiritual subject should bring its energization in the various activities of daily life. People usually divorce meditation and living, but they are interdependent. The strength and the power gained during meditation manifest themselves as fortitude and patience in the daily struggle for existence. The man of meditation shows foresight in each event.

In *The Ocean of Theosophy* Mr. Judge speaks of the stream or thread of a life's meditation. Different people are engaged in different activities and are more or less concentrated upon what they have to do. The spiritual exercise of meditation enables each to become a pure channel of the Supreme Spirit and gives him a universal scope, working for the benefit of all. So there are three aspects to meditation: Meditation at a set hour; meditation in the performance of every duty with the mind, heart, and full understanding, as an offering to the Supreme; and the line of life's meditation, which should be continuous, so as to bring back the thread of a life's meditation in the next rebirth.

The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali provide ample hints on this great subject for people at all stages of life. There are obstacles in the way of attainment, but they can be overcome with a right attitude. The night, during which the body sleeps, is the day-time

of the soul, for it is then engaged in meditation on its own plane, with no objective disturbance of any kind. What takes place on that plane depends upon how the day was spent, what the ideation during the hours of work was, how the mind and the brain behaved. A clear brain and a controlled and receptive mind are valuable assets of the Soul, for the benefit not only of the individual but also of the nation and the race.

MEN seek retreats for themselves, houses in the country, sea-shores, and mountains; and thou art wont to desire such things very much. But this is altogether a mark of the most common sort of men, for it is in thy power whenever thou shalt choose to retire into thyself. For nowhere either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble does a man retire than into his own soul, particularly when he has within him such thoughts that, by looking into them, he is immediately in perfect tranquillity; and I affirm that tranquillity is nothing else than the good ordering of the mind. Constantly, then, give to thyself this retreat, and renew thyself: and let thy principles be brief and fundamental, which, as soon as thou shalt recur to them, will be sufficient to cleanse the soul completely, and to send thee back free from all discontent with the things to which thou returnest. For with what art thou discontented? With the badness of men? Recall to thy mind this conclusion, that rational animals exist for one another, and that to endure is a part of justice, and that men do wrong involuntarily; and consider how many already, after mutual enmity, suspicion, hatred and fighting, have been stretched dead, reduced to ashes; and be quiet at last....

But among the things readiest to thy hand to which thou shalt turn, let there be these, which are two. One is that things do not touch the soul, for they are external and remain immovable; but our perturbations come only from the opinion which is within. The other is that all these things, which thou seest, change immediately and will no longer be; and constantly bear in mind how many of these changes thou hast already witnessed. The universe is transformation: life is opinion.

—MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS

CREATIVE ASPECT OF ACTION

HOWEVER much we may accept reincarnation as a fact mentally, it is exceedingly difficult for us to realize it as a fact on the plane of action. This is mainly because we do not apply the knowledge that action is threefold. Our acts are objective on this plane, but they are ensouled by desire-feeling and thought. We do not realize sufficiently that no action can take place without a thought at its base, and no thoughts can arise without desire at their base. Because we are weak in desires and will, therefore it is that we find it so difficult to alter our actions or to act in the way we wish to act.

Let us, then, seek the cause of which action in the present is the effect. But the interrelationship that exists between thought, desire-feeling and action is so complex that it is difficult to disentangle them. The desire even to gain spiritual knowledge or to aspire to a better life has to arise before thought is devoted to that knowledge or aspiration, and without thought, desire would die unfulfilled. Therefore our prime need is to see the importance of thought and not to look on it merely as a means of acquiring knowledge; it should rather be seen as the amanuensis of our desire-feeling nature.

The phrase, "A man can have no attachment to that on which he does not think," should become a *mantram* which rises in the mind when we awaken to the fact that we are suffering through *remembrance* of some tragedy, insult or cause of despair. "Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences," we are taught. This will help us to meet the events of life which disturb us, but it will not help us to seek the true base of action and our reactions.

It is only the teaching of reincarnation which helps us to see that all our miseries, hatreds, etc., are the due effects of actions performed by us either in past lives or in this life. All hatreds or displeasures should, therefore, be seen as unjustifiable, for what happens to us is only what we have "desired" at some time or other, though then we desired without knowing accurately what the results would be. The Buddha taught:

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: all that

we are is founded on our thoughts and formed of our thoughts.
(*Dhammapada*, verse 1)

And *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 643) reminds us:

It is not, therefore, Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we, who reward or punish ourselves according to whether we work with, through and along with nature, abiding by the laws on which that Harmony depends, or—break them.

But all this seems negative! We need to remember that if the present is the result of past incarnations, then this present incarnation will be, or rather is, the cause of the effects which will appear in our future incarnations. Hence *The Voice of the Silence* reminds us that the effects that come to us in this life as the result of past causes must be accepted with the right attitude and allowed to work themselves out. “The ripple of effect, as the great tidal wave, thou shalt let run its course.” We can do nothing to prevent their coming to us, but the manner in which we greet them, or work with them or against them, brings to our mind the educative aspect of these effects, for as we deal with them they become causes for future effects.

With the usual paradox in matters spiritual, we are told also to “teach to eschew all causes.” How, then, can we deal with effects? The use of the imagery of the “tidal wave” is interesting, for we all know full well that we can do nothing against it when it comes. Whatever can be done in preparation against it has to be done *before* the wave comes. But while it brings suffering, we can do much by always remembering, “Rigid Justice rules the world.” Only this firmly rooted concept will help us to see the “wave” as the “mighty sweep of never erring action... the karmic progeny of all our former thoughts and deeds” (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 37). By our right attitude to the wave we may “exhaust the law of Karmic retribution.”

But there is a positive side to this question of retribution; that is, we can “create this ‘day’” our chances for our “morrow.” “In the ‘Great Journey,’ causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects.” We can “gain Siddhis” for our future births by our present actions. The Buddha pointed out that our only real possessions are

our actions. They are the one thing that we possess which we cannot lose or have taken away from us.

It is with this creative aspect of action, the building of the future by our present actions, that we should be more concerned. Also, the knowledge of the threefold aspect of action must be applied practically.

Life is made up of effort. It is an effort to learn to walk, to talk, to be what we plan to be. Without effort, apathy will take hold of us and we shall “drift into the eddies” of life and be lost. Effort has, therefore, to be applied to our *thoughts* if we would alter our mode of action.

We are told: “Thy Soul cannot be hurt but through thy erring body.” This body is the field of action for our thoughts, feelings and desires; hence it is necessary to deal with our thoughts and emotions, with the picture we have of ourselves in the mind, lest the senses which produce desire-feeling “make a playground” of the mind. The Soul itself, we are told, is a stronghold, and we have to chase all our foes away from it. The Soul is the permanent part of ourselves, and it will last through all “tidal waves” that may destroy the body and sweep away all desire-feelings and actions. But it can be “hurt” through our erring body, the field of action for the Soul’s foes.

The foes that we have to drive away are the qualities that pertain to the body, to the desires-emotions and the thoughts. Hence *The Voice of the Silence* asks us to chase away “ambition, anger, hatred, e’en to the shadow of desire.”

Desire lies at the root of ambition; anger comes when we are thwarted; hatred is directed against the people or the conditions that prevent us from getting what we want. Hence, since ambition is the result of thought devoted to a desire, we have to get at our thoughts, lest they bring our desires to fruition and breed thought-children which harm us.

On the creative side, in order to avoid being slain by these thought sensations which “swarm round humankind,” we have to make our own thoughts harmless. Realizing that what makes these

thoughts harmful are the sense-organs and sensations which produce desires and feelings, we must refuse to let these senses and remembrances “make a playground of the mind.” We have to “withhold internal images” also, which are mostly born of remembrances which tempt.

A few moments spent in looking at our thoughts when we are not thinking of anything particular will show us that our sense-impressions and desire-feelings have been receiving pleasure from the possession and use of our mind. At times we allow them to do so consciously, and breed dreadful consequences for ourselves in the future.

Control of our thoughts will aid us at the further stages on the Path, for we have to reach that state where no thoughts can disturb us. We have to reach that fixity of mind in which “all earthly thoughts fall dead before the fane”—“e’en as the butterfly, o’ertaken by the frost, falls, lifeless at the threshold.”

Control of thought helps towards the control of feelings and desires and even actions. It is by thinking about feelings and desires that they are strengthened.

The use of the will in all this is important, for, without effort either in right or wrong direction, nothing can be achieved. What is will? The *Glossary* tells us that it is sevenfold in its degrees of manifestation, and at our stage it is mostly locked up in desire. Thought plans a line of action towards the goal decided upon by desire, but only through the will aspect of desire, forcing the mind to execute the plan, will result its fruition in action. Therefore we are told to *will* to desire the right.

The Path is strenuous, but we need not fear, for impersonal LAW is the one aspect of life that is completely trustworthy.

Our efforts, though they do not yield any result in this life, will not be wasted, but will form the basis or starting point for success in other lives. What we clear off of our debts from the past will not come again to us. If we can keep our vision clear, if we can keep alive in us the inherent idea of perfection attained by becoming one with the highest, and then see that this is not isolation but

union, we can pass through heart-breaking circumstances undisturbed. We must keep in mind that only by the tears we shed for the troubles of others can action follow to relieve the causes of others’ woes. To live to benefit mankind, not ourselves, is the first step. All the help we can get to achieve progress, whether in life’s daily journey or in the journey of an entire lifetime, are means to this end. We have to water the seed, the inherent idea, and take away the weeds, so that the former may grow until all life is seen as an education in the art of helping.

This is not easy, for remembrances of past pleasures and pains flood the mind. At every moment of conscious awareness we should think of the purpose of life—to live to benefit mankind; not the chosen few, but the whole of mankind that suffers and toils, and whom we can help by letting more of the true Spirit of Life manifest through our earthly life. Becoming one with all, clearing away all disharmonies of the past and creating only harmonies in the present and the future, we shall be brought into the Company of the Servants of Humanity to whose Work we are dedicated.

It is easy in the world to live after the world’s opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude....

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. Speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said to-day. “Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.” Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

REMEMBERING PAST LIVES

ONE great difficulty lies in the way of the recognition of the fact of reincarnation. It has often been expressed through the question: “Why do I not remember I have been here before?”

This leads to the subject of memory. Instances of persons claiming to remember their past lives are coming to light and are being investigated, and this may lead in time to a greater acceptance of the idea. The technical reasons for these remembrances (or lack of them) cannot be grasped except through the teachings given in Theosophy—themselves the restatement of the Ancient Wisdom.

These technicalities can be resolved into two questions: (1) Where is memory stored? and (2) What happens to us after the death of the body? Theosophically, these questions cannot be considered adequately unless we take the *astral body* into account. By definition, it is a subtle, invisible, electro-magnetic counterpart of the physical body, capable of resisting change but simultaneously so sensitive that the most fleeting impressions of the senses, emotions and thoughts are recorded therein. By its nature it constantly attracts and throws off physical particles, molecules, etc. Recent experiments have confirmed the ancient teaching that the physical body is renewed every seven years, yet, as many of our memories last longer than seven years, it should be obvious that they cannot inhere solely in the physical molecules that make up the brain organism.

Science has gone so far now as to teach that every atom (Theosophy teaches that the real “atom” is infra-physical—astral, in fact) has an electro-magnetic field associated with it which is enormously strong. If we continue this idea we can see that a molecule, comprising several atoms, has also its peculiar electro-magnetic field. Stretching the concept still further, we can see that our physical organs, and our bodies, composed of aggregations of atoms, molecules, cells, must have electro-magnetic fields peculiar to themselves, in which they live and by which they affect the environment in which they live. The complex field, associated with

each physical form, was called in the ancient teachings *linga sharira* (model body) and in modern Theosophy is known as astral body. Like all electro-magnetic fields, it extends to a measurable distance around the form which it supports and serves to aggregate. It is in this special electro-magnetic field that our personal consciousness functions during our lives.

Going deeper into the subject, we can see that our brain must have, underlying it, its special electro-magnetic field; following the channels of the nerves, this field envelops the whole of the physical body of the person, and is particularly attuned and sensitive to the impressions received by the physical organs of sensation: eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. On this special and highly intricate field of sensitive electro-magnetic forces which the astral brain represents are imprinted the experiences of a lifetime—sensations, feelings, thoughts, aspirations, anticipations, disappointments—in fact, everything that comes to us through our physical senses, our emotional sensitivities and our lower-mind sensations. Since the astral electro-magnetic matter does not change rapidly, the impressions made on it last for the whole of the life. Some that are more deeply imprinted (because of the special attention given to them when they are formed or impressed) can be easily recollected and brought to the surface of the inquiring mind for use. None are ever completely “lost.” “Memory” can thus be seen to inhere in each atom, in each molecule and in each cell, the brain serving as the focal point for *personal* consciousness.

If an astral body, the model upon which the physical is assembled, is posited, we may well be asked: “What holds *it* together?” Theosophy answers that it is the Ego, the Real Man, technically called *Atma-Buddhi-Manas* (the three-in-one), or, Spirit-Truth, Discernment and Mind. This entity is also called the Reincarnating Man. Around the astral body physical molecules gather, so that this conscious intelligent entity (the real “I”) may have a physical body to live in and have experiences in the physical world.

At the time of physical death the *Real Egoic Consciousness*

(Atma-Buddhi-Manas) enters for a time into close *rapport* with its “ambassador in the body,” the personal consciousness. Under the superior influence of the Immortal Ego (the *Higher Manas*, technically), all the impressions and memories of the lifetime are revived, down to the most fleeting; they are gathered up from the physical and the astral centres of memory and focused or centred in the electro-magnetic astral body which survives the death of the physical body for a while. Theosophy teaches that thereupon follows a process of sifting of these memories and impressions. A separation takes place in terms of the energy associated with each of them. This energy is different from that ordinarily associated with the mechanical forces known to science. Theosophy posits a moral quality in association with every force. Each atom, “an independent, conscious entity,” records the motive impression associated with any act, feeling or thought impressed on it by the human entity it is for the time being in association with. Taking this into account, that which follows will be understood.

Those impressions and memories of the personality, the physical body of which has just died, which are consubstantial in terms of moral quality with the Higher Manas will be absorbed by it and built into its permanent memory. Those experiences and memories which are of a lower, personal, selfish character remain behind in the astral body and are gradually dispersed along with it as it proceeds to disintegrate and die out on the astral plane where it now is. This affords us an understanding of the ancient teaching concerning the *skandhas*, of which there are said to be five main divisions: (1) the material properties or attributes (*rupa*); (2) sensations (*vedana*); (3) abstract ideas (*sanjna*); (4) tendencies both physical and mental (*sanskara*); (5) mental powers (*vidyana*). These *skandhas* separate at the time of death and unite at the birth of man and constitute his personality. They serve as the physical basis for our Karma, and their cycle of dispersion and re-collection corresponds with that of the force with which we impressed them. They determine the limits and the capacities of our personality. We alter and change these impressions from moment to moment

and in them we are laying up our future Karma.

The matter, physical and astral, of the new incarnation is a fresh combination of our old *skandhas*, minus the special combined memories of the *brain* of the past incarnation. The personal memories of any previous incarnation have been “lost” during the vast period that we know of as *devachan* (the period during which the Higher Manasic entity meditated and assimilated that which was consubstantial with its nature in the life last lived). This enormous period of time having elapsed (averaging, Theosophy teaches, 1,000 to 1,500 years), the Karma of the personality—the *skandhas*—brings about a new incarnation. There is thus a mathematical coincidence between the return of the real Ego and its vehicles which permit it to have experience in the material physical world. The character and the capacities with which we are born are thus seen to be the result of our past. Our brain is, however, a fresh, clean slate, and the “memory” of a previous life is not recorded there in its entirety. It is on this new “film” that our present memories begin to be impressed.

If all of this is true, then how is it that some people do remember incidents that can only be related to a past life—incidents that have been proved to be correct and which cannot be accounted for on the basis of this life?

Theosophy teaches that if a child dies very young, before the Egoic consciousness has had the opportunity to acquire any food for assimilation in *Devachan*, the Ego is reborn very early, often with the *same astral body* on which the memories of the short life just lived were impressed. These memories are sometimes transmitted to the waking brain consciousness of the new body while it is still young. Such an immediate rebirth need not be in the same environment, but under Karma a new physical body would be selected by the Ego in an environment which would best suit its development and the working out of its karmic life.

Another case where a quick return into incarnation is said to occur is that of the “out-and-out materialist.” Here, however, the disintegration of the astral body would take place on the astral

plane in the usual course, but the new incarnation being “almost immediate,” the new brain consciousness, while it would not have a detailed memory of the past incarnation, might, possibly, be influenced from the astral plane by the remnants attracted to it of its not yet fully dispersed *previous* astral body, which carries impressions, more or less clear, of the past. Quick rebirth is also possible, to give another instance, in the case of a person who dies an accidental death, or is killed in war.

There is still another possibility as to why some people claim to “remember” what they think is their past life. The astral earth—electro-magnetic, like the human astral body—is the sensitive field whereon are impressed the records of all actions, thoughts and feelings, by whomsoever generated, and some people have developed in their nature, to a greater or lesser extent, the sensitivity or capacity to see or read these recorded impressions. Not being fully trained to observe these, their glimpses are often indefinite and partial. This may result in chronological inaccuracies, the substituting of one place or event for another, etc. Theosophy teaches that we reincarnate in places and in the company of persons with whom we have been connected in past lives. This adds to the sensitivity of those who have developed the ability to *see* in the Astral Light of the earth the pictures and records, vague or strongly impressed, with which we are surrounded and which are said to influence us constantly though unconsciously. The lower astral light has been called the most powerful hypnotizing medium, and Theosophy warns us of its nefarious influence. Thus, sensitive persons may recall something which has nothing whatever to do with their own past lives. Of course there are cases where, having in this life seen a picture or heard of an event, now lost to our conscious waking memory, we sense a familiarity with it when we see or hear it again—to the extent even of averring that we have been there “before.” We can also think of the case of the psychometer—a person who is peculiarly sensitive to the impressions of the past imprinted on an object—so sensitive, in fact, that he can know and describe the events the object has been

associated with. Obviously, then, the recollection or perception of scenes or events of the past is not always a proof of reincarnation.

In one short article we cannot consider all the arguments that are advanced in support of reincarnation. This article is concerned with memory, the basis for memory, the memory of the personality which dies and disintegrates shortly after the death of the body, and the memory of the individuality, which is that of the real man, the Atma-Buddhi-Manasic Triad. It also deals with the fact that there must be a storehouse of memory that corresponds to our physical earth—the astral plane. This, too, would have two levels—that of the ordinary personal events that fade into insignificance after a period of time proportionate to the impress made, and that of events involving the permanent individuality, which persists and is *timeless*.

Theosophical philosophy, it will be seen, posits that the whole of Nature is ruled by Law. Every part of Nature is conscious, and there are many degrees of consciousness and many ways of recording the impressions of conscious entities. Each atom has its place, just as each world, sun or system of worlds has its rightful and reasonable place in the entire scheme of things. The purpose of life is to learn and it is all made up of the experiences of learning, involving the entire range of consciousness, from the apparently unconscious to the infinitely superconscious. Theosophy again posits as the purpose of evolution the raising of the entire mass of matter to the nature, stature and dignity of conscious “godhood.” This means that each of the lives or “atoms” we use now will, at some time, pass through the man-state, will in fact become a man, before it passes on to the stage of an entity of godlike wisdom. This goal of conscious immortality of the Monad gives us the inspiring concept of the Great Servants of Humanity—the Masters, Elder Brothers—whose work of compassion is to remain in the world as intelligent and conscious forces for good, as *Nirmanakayas* and Adepts—so that we may have before us *living ideals* of the “good” made “perfect.” May we, too, achieve, and do our *whole duty!*

ACTIVATING DORMANT POWERS

BECAUSE man is the microcosm of the great macrocosm, he carries within his sevenfold nature centres through which the powers that manifest themselves in the Cosmos can find a focalizing point for their eventual conscious operation. There is no power in nature which has not a corresponding centre in man, yet how many of us are actually aware of the fact!

Latent powers are those which are not yet commonly used by mankind, but all powers can be made patent by proper usage in accordance with the basic Law of Nature, which, as *The Light of Asia* says, is “a Power divine which moves to good, Only its laws endure.” Mr. Crosbie has told us that “we have to think and *practise* altruism before the higher and more recondite powers of the universe can be placed in our possession for our use.”

According to the knowledge that an individual possesses, will be the thought and energy generated by him, and such thoughts and energies find expression through the higher and lower aspects of man’s mind or Manas. H.P.B. has informed us that the “Higher Ego cannot act directly on the body,” but that “the ‘lower’ *Self* does”; and that although the Higher Ego “is of the divine homogeneous essence of ‘Alaya-Akasa,’ or Mahat—its reflection, the Personal Mind, is, as a temporary ‘Principle,’ of the substance of the Astral Light.”

It is in this dual nature of Manas during the incarnation of the Manasic entity that lies the key to the understanding not only of the powers which are at present dormant in man’s inner nature, but also of how the reflected aspects of those powers which show themselves in lower Manas can be transformed by spiritual growth into their counterparts, which have their seat and basis in higher Manas.

Inherent in all beings is the power of faith, and although the faiths of many are false, because based on ignorance, yet there is a true Faith which is founded upon right knowledge. It is lower Manas that tends to accept blindly, without checking, testing or verifying

what is presented on the authority of an individual, a community, a religion, a philosophy or a science. This same power of faith, when it is expressed by Higher Manas, requires complete freedom to investigate and verify what is presented by any individual or group of individuals. Only that is accepted which the soundest reasoning and intuitive perception have found to be derived from universal truth and to be based upon universal natural Law. Inherent in every human heart is the faith that Truth exists, and when this power of faith is made active by the actual search for true knowledge, such knowledge by degrees springs up from within, and the light of higher Manas begins to shine through.

In addition to the power of faith, the searcher for truth needs to activate other latent powers, and one such power may be termed the power of resignation, or the recognition that law rules in everything and every circumstance. Recognition of Karma as the law or power which moves to good gives us the capacity to accept it in all circumstances and under all conditions, for we realize its unerring equity, wisdom and intelligence. When we begin to recognize the rule of law in all things, we by degrees change the attitude of indifference to this law—a characteristic of lower Manas—into the attitude of attentive resignation. This attentiveness precedes the receptivity to true ideas by which is achieved an understanding of the Law and the capacity to work with it.

Receptivity to true ideas emanating both from within and from without is a further power that must be made active by the individual who wishes to tread the Path towards Enlightenment. Receptivity is a positive state of mind in contradistinction to passivity, which leads in time to mediumship. From one point of view, receptivity may be considered as the activation of the Buddhi principle within us, for it leads to the development of right discrimination. By the proper use of this power of receptivity, the candidate for true wisdom becomes an impersonal channel for the harmonious working of the Karmic law in nature and in man.

Enthusiasm as “the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal Truth, out of the mire of lies terrestrial,” is another of the

latent powers in man which must be made patent. The contrast between this type of enthusiasm and the various degrees of proselytizing fanaticism that exist in our world is shown by the understanding tolerance of the one, and the very often dogmatic, destructive intolerance of the other. The force of energy of *Virya* is constant, consistent, persists from life to life, and is that which makes one pursue his line of life's meditation—that upon which the heart is set—throughout a life cycle. The sporadic impulses of fanaticism which have their base in lower Manas change according to the desires of individuals, but the enthusiasm engendered by Higher Manas embraces within its scope an ever increasing force or power which tends towards the good of others.

The power to do good carries with it the implication that one must become good, and so the knowledge of good and evil must be fully assimilated by the conversion of all the evil tendencies within our lower nature into their opposite counterparts which work for good. This conversion comes about by the gradual embodiment of all the virtues and the elimination of all evil tendencies. For this task, we need to know that duality exists within our own nature, and that evil arises because our desires set in motion the will to follow the lines of endeavour formulated by our lower mind in order to bring about their fulfilment. Only aspirations to benefit others will enable us to be free of the lower selfish type of desires, and this requires the resolution to take the first step on the Path of Discipleship, which has been declared to be “to live to benefit mankind.” The second step—its natural corollary—is “to practise the six glorious virtues.”

Freedom from the personal desires of the lower nature becomes the next latent power which must be activated from within the mind of man. Attachment to desires, their gratification and fulfilment, leads in time to licence, which is subjection of the will by the power of desires. To aspire to serve humanity with knowledge and understanding is equivalent to learning to free the will from the domain of desires in which the majority of men live. The more the personal will of man becomes at one with the Will of Nature,

the greater becomes our power to serve all beings. This power to serve all prepares the candidate to enter the Path of Renunciation as against the Path of Liberation. This power becomes energized by the power of enthusiasm and the power of discrimination, which helps us to know which type of service it is necessary to render. The power of resignation makes us work with the Law, and an impersonal channel for the Law's working is made available. The power of enlightened faith ensures the harmonious fulfilment of *Dharma* or Duty—that which is due to others.

From what has been said it may be perceived that latent powers may be made patent by right usage and by the conversion of the lower Manasic tendencies into their higher Manasic counterparts. This conversion must be accomplished by the candidate for enlightenment by self-induced and self-devised efforts, and by willingness “to do, to dare and remain silent.” “There are the powers of all Nature before you: take what you can.”

THE Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
 Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit,
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
 Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
 Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
 Lift not your Hands to It for help—for it
 As impotently moves as you or I.

—*The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*

SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE

SCIENCE, or the pursuit of knowledge or truth for its own sake, covers a much wider field than that with which modern science and scientists deal. From the Theosophical point of view, science covers the knowledge of both the objective and subjective universes and of man and his relationships with these. Science, therefore, comprises the knowledge or truth about the universe, our solar system, our world or earth, all the kingdoms which compose that earth, and the interrelationship of all of these.

Even modern science has reached the point in its search for truth where it recognizes that our objective universe reflects but a combination of inner forces. The truthful scientist not only admits this, but also realizes that he has not understood, nor even traced to their ultimate analysis, the powers and forces which interpenetrate and give substance to all forms which he is endeavouring to investigate and fathom.

The concept of intelligence as the synthesizing power behind the vast variety of forces and forms making up our objective and subjective universes has not in general been inquired into by modern science and scientists, primarily because they have not yet fully accepted this most ancient idea as a basis for their investigation into the composition of the universe, our solar system, our world and all the beings that constitute the recognized kingdoms of Nature, both visible and invisible. This does not, of course, deny the fact that the most advanced of our present-day truth-seeking scientists have observed the progressive advancement in intelligence, from the mineral to the vegetable to the animal, culminating in that most perfectly created being on earth—man. Such scientists have also perceived the immense difference in intelligence that exists between the highest types of animals on earth, with their inherent instinctive capacities of choice, and the lowest types of human beings, the savages, with their limited yet individual capacities of choosing consciously and deliberately between one course of action and another. No doubt such scientists

have pondered and wondered about the differences in these degrees of intelligence and consciousness, and have endeavoured to trace the gradual development of these through the many forms of life and being, culminating as these apparently do in man. Having traced the rise in intelligence and forms throughout all the kingdoms of Nature, from instinctive choice to self-determining choice, the true scientist has sought, but never found in modern thought, the so-called missing link that would bridge the vast gulf between these two types of choice, although there has been constant search for a key to complete the picture of the Darwinian theory.

Inheritance of certain characteristics and traits of family, nation and race has been carefully analysed and classified, but the capacity of individuals to transcend any and all of these has not been sufficiently studied and considered in the light of such teachings as reincarnation and karma, because few scientists are prepared to accept these teachings even as working hypotheses in their search after real knowledge or truth, and until they do so, such knowledge and truth must ever evade their grasp mentally and morally.

It is not the purpose of this article to offer explanations of the reasons for the differences in the degrees of intelligence expressed by the various forms of life or being, however lowly or highly organized they may be, even though such explanations are available and can certainly be arrived at and examined by those scientists who consider the truth and the gaining of it to be a higher and greater duty than mere acceptance and adherence to theories, however well grounded these may be in the objective facts and data that our modern materialistic science lays so much stress on. This does not necessitate the denial of such facts as have a universal basis for their acceptance, but only of such facts as require acceptance without individual investigation and proof, in the realms of thought, feeling and action. From this point of view, the true scientist will never enforce his opinions upon another, but will always consider that the final word on any subject remains as yet unsaid, and so will always be ready to give and receive freely such information as has been gained, never as a final word, but only as

an extension of knowledge, in the search for truth. Such an attitude of mind will always leave room for further research by one-self or others, in any scientific field, and all the facts collected and examined impartially with the object of knowing the truth will widen the field of research from the “known” to the “unknown,” from the “visible” to the “invisible” realms of Nature. In this way the sincere scientist will become aware of the “basic fact” that the “key” to the objective universe with its vast variety of forms is to be found in its complementary aspect, its inner invisible counterpart made up of the forces and intelligences that give it vitality and being.

Madame H. P. Blavatsky has garnered and marshalled many vital and important facts in the two volumes of her *Secret Doctrine*, in the sections entitled “Science and the Secret Doctrine Contrasted,” and these properly studied with the true scientific attitude of impartial research for the “Truth and Knowledge of Things in Themselves” will reveal many further avenues of research. One result of such study will be the synthesizing of all the knowledge scientists have themselves acquired into a more true and comprehensive unity than they may at present hold.

An extract from an article by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, entitled “The Negators of Science” (published originally in the magazine *Lucifer* for April 1891 and reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for April 1962), gives a very clear picture of who a “man of learning” or true scientist is in reality. It reads:

What is it that constitutes the real man of learning? Is not a true and faithful servant of science (if the latter is accepted as the synonym of truth) he who, besides having mastered a general information on all things, is ever ready to learn more, because there are things *that he admits he does not know*? A scholar of this description will never hesitate to give up his own theories, whenever he finds them—not clashing with fact and truth, but—merely dubious. For the sake of truth he will remain indifferent to the world’s opinion, and that of his colleagues, nor will he attempt to sacrifice the spirit of a doctrine to the dead letter of a popular belief. Independent of man or party, fearless whether

he gets at loggerheads with biblical chronology, theological claims, or the preconceived and in-rooted theories of materialistic science; acting in his researches in an entirely unprejudiced frame of mind, free from personal vanity and pride, he will investigate truth for her own fair sake, not to please this or that faction; nor will he dislocate facts to make them fit in with his own hypothesis, or the professed beliefs of either state religion or official science. Such is the ideal of a true man of science....

Has modern science reached a point where another great step forward may be taken? Only such scientists as can truthfully measure up to the above description will be able to answer this, and, more important, prove it by their own mental attitude in furthering their scientific research, not for the honour and glory that may accrue to them, but so they may unearth a scientific gem which will prove of general service to their fellow men.

HE who is wise, restrains emotion, and is ever pure, gains that resting-place from which he is not born again.

He whose charioteer is wisdom, who grasps the reins—emotion—firmly, he indeed gains the end of the path, the supreme resting-place of the emanating Power.

The impulses are higher than the bodily powers; emotion is higher than the impulses; soul is higher than emotion; higher than soul is the Self, the great one.

Higher than this great one is the unmanifest; higher than the unmanifest is the spirit. Than spirit nothing is higher, for it is the goal, and the supreme way.

This is the hidden Self; in all beings it shines not forth; but is perceived by the piercing subtle soul of the subtle-sighted.

—*Katha Upanishad*

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

It has been a matter of great prestige for India that Rabindranath Tagore was the first non-Westerner to be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. Hence, when the Nobel medal was stolen recently from the Viswabharati museum, the citizens of India experienced feelings of anger and shame. However, some feel that the whole thing needs to be viewed in the right perspective. “We need to look beyond it, and confront our real loss of Tagore—the silent, steady erosion of his thoughts, his ideas, his vision that once breathed new hope into our nation,” writes Antara Dev Sen (*The Indian Express*, April 1). It is more important to keep Tagore’s vision alive. She describes Tagore’s philosophy thus:

Forever defying artificial boundaries between people and ideas, he stood for openness, for free thought, for a world based on the equality of human beings, refreshed by cultural exchange, alive with intellectual curiosity, a compassionate world that nurtures human development in every possible way. Through his poetry, songs, essays, fiction and plays, Tagore emphasized the importance of humanism over all other considerations, even patriotic nationalism. Fervently against slotting people by religion, race, caste, gender, language or nationality, the poet-philosopher who believed in the “Religion of Man” would have died a million deaths if he saw us perform today.

The theft of a medallion is a sign of moral degradation of the nation. More than a century ago, a Master of Wisdom observed: “India has been going down for thousands of years. She must take equally long for her regeneration.” An article, “The Religion of Rabindranath Tagore”—paying homage to Tagore on the occasion of his birth centenary—appeared in *The Theosophical Movement* (Vol. 31, April 1961). It describes him, among other things, as a many-sided genius, a philosopher, a humanitarian and an educational reformer. He shunned narrow patriotism and was concerned about the affairs of the whole of humanity. His emphasis was always on unity, harmony, love and self-sacrifice. For him

religion was synonymous with truth. We find in his ideas an echo of the philosophy of Theosophy. He said:

Mere information about facts, mere discovery of power, belongs to the outside and not to the inner soul of things. Gladness is the one criterion of truth, and we know when we have touched Truth by the music it gives, by the joy of greeting it sends forth to the truth in us. That is the true foundation of all religions. It is not as ether waves that we receive light; the morning does not wait for some scientist for its introduction to us. In the same way we touch the infinite reality immediately within us only when we perceive the pure truth of love or goodness, not through the explanations of theologians, not through the erudite discussion of ethical doctrines....

The divine principle of unity has ever been that of an inner interrelationship...But what is most important of all is the fact that man has also attained its realization in a more subtle body outside his physical system. He misses himself when isolated; he finds his own larger and truer self in his wide human relationship....Whatever name may be given to it, and whatever form it symbolizes, the consciousness of this unity is spiritual, and our effort to be true to it is our religion.

What is the origin of speech? What was the language of early humanity? In *Science* magazine (February 27), researchers explore the language evolution. Did human speech originate 2.4 million years ago, when man first made stone tools? Or, can it be linked with expansion in brain areas associated with producing or processing language? Researchers in genetics at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, are of the view that the “speech gene” concerned with language and articulation may have undergone mutation between 100,000 to 200,000 years ago, gradually leading to well-developed linguistic ability. “Most researchers are inclined to the view that language gradually emerged over perhaps a couple of hundred thousand

years,” *Science* reported in 1998.

In recent years, however, many researchers have sought to connect language capability with changes in motor areas of the brain. While some believe that language evolved in our early ancestors as a manual system (sign language) and not as a vocal one, others look upon language as primarily oral behaviour. “Genetic and linguistic data indicate—but can’t quite prove—that our ancient ancestors spoke with strange clicking noises.” It is speculated that sounds of click languages may have been the original mother tongue, and the later involvement of larynx may have led to the development of phonology—sounds that could combine in endless ways to form a vocabulary, in turn paving the way for the emergence of syntax.

Speech may be defined as “the faculty of expressing thoughts and emotions in spoken words.” Only human beings are endowed with articulate speech, and that did not originate from a few simple, crude animal sounds. Theosophy asserts that “a human brain is necessary for human speech.” It has been observed that “the brain of the large ape, the gorilla, measures no more than 30.51 cubic inches; while the average brains of flat-headed Australian natives—the lowest now in the human races—amount to 99.35 cubic inches!” (*S.D.*, II, 661)

Speech is connected with mind. The First Race was mindless and therefore also speechless. The Second Race had a “sound language,” *i.e.*, chant-like sounds consisting of vowels only. The language of the early Third Race was “only a slight improvement on the various sounds in Nature.” In the middle of the Third Race, *i.e.*, 18 million years ago, when man’s mind was “lit up,” speech developed gradually.

The Secret Doctrine (II, 198-200) tells us that speech developed in three stages:

- I. Monosyllabic: It developed at the close of the Third Root Race, after the lighting up of Manas. It was the vowel parent of the monosyllabic language mixed with hard consonants.
- II. Agglutinative: Monosyllabic speech slowly developed into the

agglutinative languages consisting of loosely connected words. This primitive speech was spoken by the civilized among the Fourth Race Atlanteans, and it too slowly decayed and almost died out. More advanced among the Atlanteans left behind the inflectional, highly developed language for the Fifth-Race humanity.

- III. Inflectional: This speech of the early Fifth Race is now the “mystery tongue” of the Initiates of the Race. It was the root of Sanskrit, from which gradually sprang other languages.

It is believed that Jesus Christ was nailed to the Cross on a Friday, popularly known as Good Friday, and rose from the dead three day later, on Easter Sunday. Jesus is supposed to have made this sacrifice at the Cross for redeeming mankind. “The Crucifixion of Christ symbolizes the end of the dominion of self and exaltation of the spirit so that the person takes on the nature of Christ, putting to death his old sinful nature,” writes M. P. K. Kutty (*The Times of India*, April 9). It is strange that the Cross, which is a symbol of suffering, should become the symbol of Christianity. “The symbolism of the Cross remains a mystery,” writes Kutty. According to Evangelist Ravi Zachariah, “the Cross is foreign to everything we exalt—self over principle, power over meekness...comfort over sacrifice...the body over the spirit, anger over forgiveness, man over God.”

Theosophy teaches that like Jesus, Krishna and Buddha too died on the “cross.” The Cross represents the “Tree of life.” “Tree” is a symbol of sacred and secret knowledge. “Tree” also stands for various Initiates. Realizing the unity of all, these Adepts and Initiates identify themselves with humanity and take upon themselves the Karma of suffering humanity. Taken literally, the whole of the life of Jesus up to crucifixion, shows this great sacrifice which spiritual beings undertake to help humanity.

H.P.B. explains the occult meaning of Crucifixion and

Resurrection of Christ thus:

Christ—the true esoteric SAVIOUR—*is no man*, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit *crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions*, and buried deep in the “sepulchre” of his sinful flesh; he who has the strength to roll back *the stone of matter* from the door of his own inner sanctuary, he *has the risen Christ in him*. The “Son of Man” is no child of the bond-woman—*flesh*, but verily of the free-woman—*Spirit*, the child of man’s own deeds and the fruit of his own spiritual labour. (*The Esoteric Character of the Gospels*, p. 2)

In a way Crucifixion and Resurrection reflect the initiation ceremonies practised by the ancient Egyptians and other early civilizations. These initiations took place in crypts, caves, temples, pyramids and elsewhere, where the neophyte underwent a series of physical and psychological trials through which he proved his strength and readiness for spiritual rebirth. The Cross—a symbol with many meanings—was used during these ceremonies.

The Cross, say the Kabalists...is, perhaps, the *most* ancient of symbols. (*S. D.*, II, 541)

The Cross and the Circle are a universal conception—as old as human mind itself. They stand foremost on the list of the long series of, so to say, international symbols, which expressed very often great scientific truths, besides their direct bearing upon psychological, and even physiological mysteries...(*S.D.*, II, 555)

Now, the primordial system, the double glyph that underlies the idea of the Cross, is not “of human invention,” for Cosmic ideation and the Spiritual representation of the divine Ego-man are at its basis. Later, it expanded in the beautiful ideal adopted by and represented in the Mysteries, that of regenerated man, the mortal, who, by crucifying the man of flesh and his passions on the Procrustean bed of torture, became reborn as an Immortal. Leaving the body, the animal-man, behind him, tied on the Cross of Initiation like an empty chrysalis, the Ego Soul became as free as a butterfly. (*S.D.*, II, 561-62)

Homeopathy is one of the alternative medicines that have been gaining popularity these days. It was first tested and tried by the 18th-century German doctor, Samuel Hahnemann. However, its rationale still eludes scientists. Is it a miracle cure, placebo or nothing at all? “Homeopathy involves treating illnesses with such extreme dilutions of herbs, animal substances and chemical compounds that frequently not one molecule of the diluted substance is left in the solution. Homeopathy defies the known laws of science, not to mention common sense,” writes Michael Castleman, author of several consumer health books. (*Psychology Today*, April 2004)

Homeopathy works on the Law of Similars, *i.e.*, “illness can be cured by substances—plant, animal or mineral—that evoke the same symptoms in those who are well.” Many critics have labelled homeopathy as “absurd,” as they are unable to explain the “Law of Potentization,” which holds that homeopathic medicines grow stronger as they become more dilute. Some seek to explain homeopathic cures as placebo effect.

H.P.B. writes in the article “The Bugbears of Science” (*The Theosophist*, February and April 1883) that homeopathy is not a new science. The law of *similia similibus curantur* (like cures like) was spoken of and used by Hippocrates, Paracelsus, Haller, Stahl and several other renowned chemists. Even in those days, those who claimed that “with the *decrease* of the dose was obtained a proportionate *increase* of the effect,” were regarded as charlatans, deluded fools and quacks. However, H.P.B. supports the efficacy of this claim based on analogy. She writes:

And the analogies we find around us tend all to confirm instead of contradicting the possibility of the great virtue claimed for the infinitesimals in medicinal doses. Indeed, observation shows in the great majority of cases that the more a substance is reduced to its simplest form, the less it is complicated, the more it is capable of storing energy, *i.e.*, that it is precisely under such a condition that it becomes the most active. The formation of water from ice, steam out of water, is followed by absorption of heat; steam appears here, so to say,

as the reservoir of energy; and the latter when spent during the conversion of steam back into water shows itself capable of performing mechanical work, such as moving of heavy masses, etc....When we turn to substances chemically homogeneous, or elementary substances so called, we find again that the greatest chemical activity belongs to those elements that are the lightest in weight in order to obtain some definite chemical action. Thus, if in the majority of cases it is observed that the simpler and the more attenuated a substance has become, the more there is an increase of forces in it—then why, we ask, should we deny the same property or phenomenon there, where the masses of substances owing to their minuteness escape our direct observation and exact measurement? Shall we forget that the *great* and the *little*—are relative conceptions, and that infinitude is equally existent and equally unattainable by our senses whether it is on a large or on a small scale?

She then gives simpler evidence. A piece of musk would fill the air in a room with particles of that odoriferous substance without causing any appreciable change in the weight of the musk piece.

We also all know what strong effects may be produced upon certain sensitive organisms by certain smells, and that these may induce convulsions, swoons, and even a condition of dangerous coma. And if the possibility of the influence of infinitesimally small quantities of certain odoriferous substances upon the olfactory nerve need not be questioned at this stage of scientific enquiry, what ground have we in denying the possibility of like influence upon our nerves in general?... Thus, the influence of homeopathic doses becomes perfectly admissible and even probable; and the cure of diseases by occult agency....ought to be accepted as an ascertained and well verified fact for all but the conservative and incurable apostles of negation.
