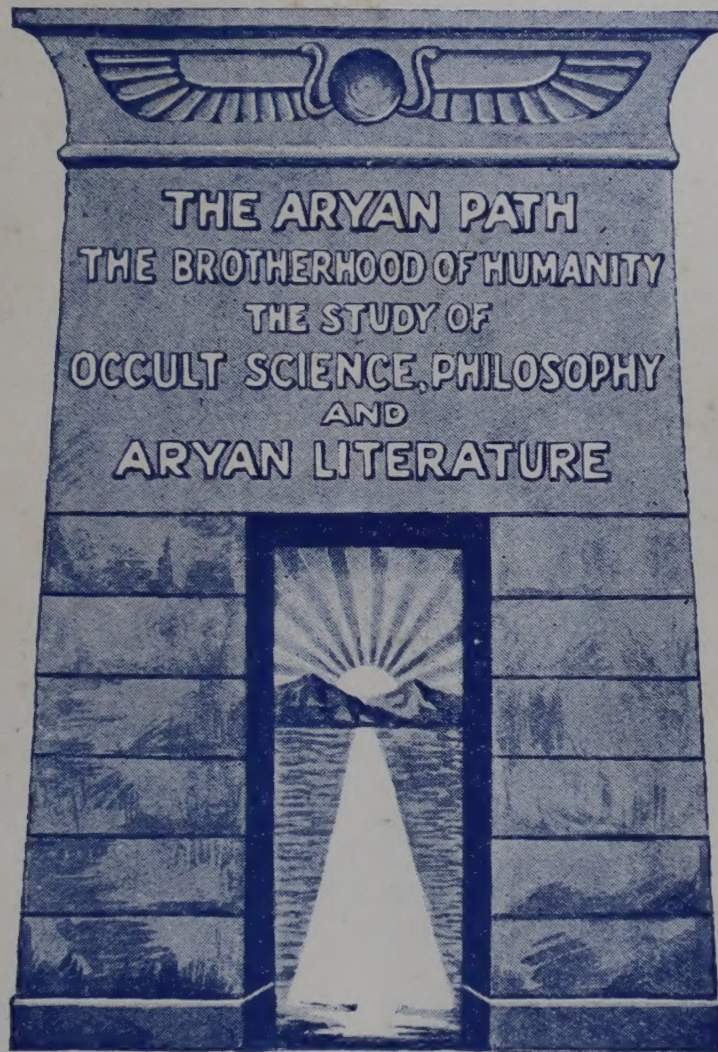




THE
THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



THE ARYAN PATH
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY
THE STUDY OF
OCCULT SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY
AND
ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XXV No. 6

April 17, 1955

In order that one should fully comprehend *individual* life with its physiological, psychic and spiritual mysteries, he has to devote himself with all the fervour of unselfish philanthropy and love for his brother men, to studying and knowing *collective* life, or Mankind. . . . To do this he has first "to attune his soul with that of Humanity," as the old philosophy teaches; to thoroughly master the correct meaning of every line and word in the rapidly turning pages of the Book of Life of MANKIND and to be thoroughly saturated with the truism that the latter is a whole inseparable from his own SELF.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

PUBLISHERS' ANNOUNCEMENT

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT: Established November, 1930. Published monthly by Theosophy Company (India), Ltd., 51, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay, India.

This Magazine is an Independent Journal, unconnected with any theosophical society or other organization. The Publishers assume full responsibility for all unsigned articles herein.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: No subscriptions are accepted for less than one year of 12 numbers, each beginning with the November issue. All subscriptions should be accompanied by the necessary remittance. Price, \$1, 4s., Rs. 2, per annum, post free.

COMMUNICATIONS: Contributions submitted for publication should be typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with wide margins, and copies should in all cases be retained by the writers, as no manuscripts are returned.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters from subscribers and readers are welcomed, with criticisms, comments or questions on any subject treated in the Magazine. Questions on Theosophical philosophy and history will be replied to direct, or, if of sufficient general interest, in the pages of the Magazine.

BEQUESTS AND DONATIONS: Gifts and legacies will be gladly received from those in sympathy with the objects of this Magazine, when such benefactions are unencumbered and **unrestricted**. Donors should make their gifts direct to **THEOSOPHY COMPANY (INDIA), LTD.**, which is an incorporated association, legally empowered to receive such donations and bequests in furtherance of its objects. Those objects are:

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

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th April 1955.

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th April 1955.

VOL. XXV. No. 6

WHITE LOTUS DAY—1955

We are not working merely that people may call themselves *Theosophists*, but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time. Falter not, so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus existing. You were not directed to found and realize a Universal Brotherhood, but to form the nucleus for one; for it is only when the nucleus is formed that the accumulations can begin that will end in future years, however far, in the formation of that body which we have in view.

These are great words, uttered by H.P.B. and recorded by W. Q. Judge in a memorable article, "Yours Till Death and After, H.P.B.," reprinted in *Vernal Blooms*. They contain direction for the few earnest and reliable student-servers who labour in the U.L.T. To help the Cause of the Holy Ones we need certain qualifications mentioned in the words quoted above: Earnestness; disinterestedness in not seeking human reward or earthly recognition; the power to labour steadily, faithfully, understandingly; the love for promulgating the doctrines of life and duty which are immemorial.

We are now preparing to celebrate White Lotus Day on the 8th of May—21 days hence. On this date in 1891 H. P. Blavatsky put aside her body, having completed her task, having fulfilled her mission. She came with a Heavenly Message.

What shall we concentrate on among her many priceless teachings? The centre from which issue hundreds of teachings like radii is the grand truth about the existence of those Adept-Teachers who enable the earnest devotee to walk the Path of Discipleship. Below we print ten important statements made by H.P.B., the teacher of pure and divine Occultism. These are culled from her articles and arranged to bring out the value of this particular teaching:—

It is hard to check one's natural impatience to tear aside the veil of the Temple. To gain the divine knowledge, like the prize in a classical tripos, by a system of coaching and cramming, is the ideal of the average beginner in occult study. . . . the originators of the Theosophical Society [refuse] to encourage such false hopes.

Occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice or suspicion.

Emotionalism is *not* philosophy; and Buddha devoted his long self-sacrificing life to tear people away precisely from that *evil breeding* superstition.

The chief and the only indispensable condition required in the candidate or chela on probation, is simply unswerving fidelity to the chosen Master and his purposes.

A "Chela" is one who has offered himself or herself as a pupil to learn practically the "hidden mysteries of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man."

The real Guru is always an Adept in the Occult Science. A man of profound knowledge, exoteric and esoteric, especially the latter; and

one who has brought his carnal nature under subjection of the WILL; who has developed in himself both the power (*Siddhi*) to control the forces of nature, and the capacity to probe her secrets by the help of the formerly latent but now active powers of his being:—this is the real Guru.

The *Mahatmas are the servants, not the arbiters of the law of Karma*. LAY-CHELASHIP CONFERS NO PRIVILEGE UPON ANY ONE EXCEPT THAT OF WORKING FOR MERIT UNDER THE OBSERVATION OF A MASTER. And whether that Master be or be not seen by the Chela makes no difference whatever as to the result: his good thoughts, words and deeds will bear their fruits, his evil ones, theirs. To boast of Lay Chelaship or make a parade of it, is the surest way to reduce the relationship with the Guru to a mere empty name, for it would be a *prima facie* evidence of vanity and unfitness for further progress. And for years we have been teaching everywhere the maxim "First deserve, then desire" intimacy with the Mahatmas.

[Do not] begin wrong by selfishly looking to the future and losing sight of the past.

Recognize in *Atma* the highest ruler in the world of perceptions, and in the will, the highest executive energy.

The strife is between the Chela's Will and his carnal nature, and Karma forbids that any angel or Guru should interfere until the result is known.

The above form a piece of instruction. What about H.P.B.'s *Vibhutis*, her Excellences?

She was like the Sun, the giver of life spiritual to thousands, and like the Sun radiated her brightness on all other planets. She was like the Moon, emitting the Warmth of Love Impersonal on all, some of whom used the gift while so many abused it. She was a veritable Hermes-Mercury, a Messenger and an Interpreter of the Gods. Like Venus she carried within her bosom both types of knowledge—terrestrial and celestial. Like Jupiter or Brihaspati she interceded with the gods on behalf

of men and protected the innocent against the wicked. Like Saturn she loved mankind and she knew that "man could not rule man, without injustice," and so taught that humanity should be ruled by "Spirits and genii of a divine nature more excellent than that of man." And like Mars her "Eye" was ever over the slumbering earth—in its death in war or in its peaceful sleep of love.

The worldly will scoff at such comparisons; the wiseacre will whisper to himself, "Sentimental hyperboles!"; the pseudo-theosophist will exclaim, "Unbalanced exaggeration!"; many a Theosophical student will say, "Unwise speech, even if true." But has not the time come for the aspirant-devotee to reflect calmly upon the mind which could give the knowledge contained in *The Secret Doctrine*; and upon the Heart which could utter *The Voice of the Silence*? Should not they who have learnt the priceless truths of the Esoteric Philosophy, their great value to our civilization, and the power they enshrine to elevate the individual and the mass mind—should they not make clean and clear their own perceptions and utilize such apparent "hyperboles" and "exaggerations" and "unwisdom" to enlighten their own convictions and deepen their own faith?

Our earnestness must increase, our detachment should widen, so that we know how to value man's praise or blame; our power to labour steadfastly with faith and knowledge must grow; our influence over the minds and hearts of our fellow men must spread in an ever-increasing measure. All this can and should be done by a study of and reflection upon Theosophical precepts. But in addition we need the force of example. H.P.B.'s example is there; from her emanate the Lights of the Seven-fold Wisdom of the Great Fraternity, the Great School. She embodied within herself the Love and the Learning of the Great Blessed Ones; she laboured for Their Cause, making It her own Cause. How she did all this can be learnt from her words and works. The former convey the power of her precepts; the latter, the force of her example.

Let us then meditate upon the nature and power of the Soul who masqueraded in the personality

of H. P. Blavatsky, but who was named and known "otherwise" by her Guides and Gurus, her Friends and Protectors. Thus we can emerge from

the muddy pond like a White Lotus, the sacred flower after which her Death Anniversary Day is named.

LIVING THE HIGHER LIFE

Many are the men and women in the East as in the West who are desirous of changing and improving their own mode of living, of making progress in the higher or spiritual life. Ancient Philosophy teaches that human happiness and human progress are not dependent on social reform, or on religious institutions, any more than on political legislation. These cannot bring about the true inner reform and make a man noble and unselfish. The only true reform, therefore, is that of the individual by himself, through his own efforts. Human environment continues to be ugly or debased because ugliness and debasement exist in human nature. This is being perceived by the most advanced thinkers and therefore they are talking about a moral life, a soul life, a simple life, as an answer to most of the problems that beset us, even in the economic and political spheres.

The lives of many men and women are ruined or degraded or passed in a humdrum way because they copy what they see around them or what they hear, and believe anything and everything that comes in the name of religion or of science, of one or another political party or social institution, of this individual or that, without going to first principles. The very first requirement of the higher life is virility of thought, vigour of mind. We must stop being mentally lazy and intellectually indolent, and exert the power of our human consciousness, which is the power of reason, of thought, of self-energization and self-determination. Let us not believe or follow passively and blindly; let us accept or reject only after due thought and deliberation. The higher life is a life of self-effort; it needs strength and fearlessness.

If this is grasped it will not be difficult to understand why religious influence is a weakening and debasing influence. Soul life is not life according to any religion; it is not going to a church,

a mosque or a temple. Soul life is *living* the life according to the dictates of the Soul. Priests, bishops, *moulvis* and *purohitis* advocate the religious life; Prophets, Christs, Sages and Seers teach the spiritual life. If one aspires to understand what the Christ taught one must study for oneself the Sermon on the Mount instead of going to the churches; if one desires to appreciate the grandeur of Krishna one must study for oneself the *Gita* rather than go to the temple priest. This going away from the narrow, erroneous notions of religions which divide human beings instead of uniting them as true religion should do, is the first step in the living of the higher life.

The moment the fetters of religious beliefs and the limitations of political and social theories fall away, the aspirant to the higher life gets out into a free atmosphere where the mind is virile, where intellect can work vigorously. Instead of believing blindly he begins to look within for guidance, and in so doing he sees the necessity of studying the identical truths which the master minds of all ages, however few in number, have taught about human nature, its weaknesses and how to overcome them, its powers and how to develop them. The second requirement of the higher life is the ascertaining of these age-long truths, consistently taught by the Rishis and the Mahatmas, the Budhas and the Christs, down the ages. Thus we come to the existence of a code of knowledge, and we learn that the Science of the Soul is an exact science and its laws, rules and regulations are universal and impersonal, precise and definite like those of mathematics.

These immemorial and proven laws of the higher life begin with the basic idea that the living of this higher life does not entail external changes, that no change of outer environment is necessary. The higher life is not a life apart from home and

family and from the affairs of men, in some strange environment, a monastery or an *ashrama*, a jungle or a mountain top. It may be asked: What then did Jesus mean when he said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate"? The isolation which all the great Teachers have recommended is a very different type of isolation—separation from the lowest tendencies within our own devilish natures. The higher life begins in the home, where we find ourselves. It begins with a change, not in outer circumstances, but in inner attitude. Can a clerk, an accountant, a business manager, lead the higher Soul life? people often ask. The answer is a most emphatic yes. Paupers and princes alike can begin to live the higher life by assuming a new attitude to their poverty and prosperity. People demand one kind of facility and another kind of freedom *before* they begin to live the higher Soul life. That is a wrong beginning. The ancient Rishis and Teachers instruct us that the environment affects a man only in proportion as the man is ready to be affected, but, on the other hand, a man through self-reform compels the environment to change automatically.

When we have determined that we must stay where we are, it is easy to deduce that we must think of our old environment and circumstances differently. We are where we are not by chance or accident, but under law. We ourselves attracted to ourselves our environment. It follows that none else but ourselves, each one for himself, can and should change that environment, through his own individual effort. Man is the maker of his destiny. He must see that he himself has fashioned in the past his present circumstances and that his future growth depends upon his right endeavour in the present to live not as a body, not even as a mind, but as a Soul. That is the teaching of the *Gita* which says that even the most sinful of men can cross the ocean of evil in the bark of spiritual endeavour. That is the teaching of the Buddha who promised the boon of Nirvana to Upali, the barber. That is the teaching of Jesus who referred to the Kingdom of Heaven as being within us.

Thus the change in inner attitude results in our perception that we are, in our true nature, Souls,

capable of willing, of thinking, of feeling; that as Souls we are in the body and possess a mind so that unlike beasts we may ascertain the real value, i.e., the educative value of each event, each object in our environment, each person we contact. The moment this vision of our environment and of the world at large is gained, that moment the higher life begins. For many people the process is unconscious and indirect, which makes it lose half its benefit. We have to make it a deliberate and self-conscious process, under observation.

It is generally believed that physiological practices and ascetic rules of physical life are all that is required to live the higher life. This is a pernicious doctrine. Beware of false asceticism, Ancient Philosophy teaches us. Actions on the physical plane will take care of themselves if high and noble thoughts have been generated from within ourselves. It is on the mental plane, therefore, that we have to begin and make the *mind* exercise asceticism. The higher life begins with thought and ideation. It is only when we forget our personal self and fix our ideation and imagination on that which we truly are, that progress in the higher life is possible. Only when the mind is not swayed by Kama, is freed from the hundred cords of desire which bind it, can it be raised, through will-effort, to the Self, our inner Star and God, itself a beam of the immaculate Light of the One Self, the Supreme Spirit. The path of the higher life cannot be trodden until and unless we cease to identify ourselves with the personality and perceive that we are beings of Light, capable of lifting ourselves to the source of Light (Truth) and of Warmth (Compassion).

Right ideation has naturally to be founded on right knowledge. The higher life is not only a better, more useful and nobler life; it is also a wiser life, based on greater knowledge, greater wisdom, greater perception and understanding. From the spiritual point of view, knowledge and understanding must go hand in hand with goodness, unselfishness and purity. Try as we will, we will not succeed in being good, unselfish and pure unless our mind has really become enlightened through true knowledge. Therefore it is that study

is necessary. Study of metaphysical ideas and universal concepts purifies the lower mind and the lower, personal life.

Further purification comes about when we practise daily meditation based on this study of universals. Through a self-conscious, deliberate attempt to ideate in terms of impersonal and universal laws, to meditate on ideas and teachings that have nothing to do with our little, personal self and the people who surround us, but with the unity of all things, the brotherhood of all beings, we gain a broader mind, a wider horizon; we are able to understand things, not from the selfish point of view, but from that of the Supreme Self, as the *Gita* puts it. If this daily meditation is sustained and regular, not spasmodic, it will bring about a change in our attitude during the day, resulting in understanding, contentment and peace.

Then at the end of the day, before going to sleep, those aspiring to live the higher life are recommended to examine themselves, watchfully, honestly and sincerely, in the light of the Higher Self and the Science of the Higher Self. It is a most profitable practice to review every night our actions during the day, and actions include our thoughts, feelings, words and deeds; to examine our motives; to see whether we are coming closer and closer to our own inner ideals and aspirations, and to determine to what extent we have lived within ourselves according to our highest resolves. It is not in terms of our own personal likes and dislikes but in the light of the Higher Self that we are to examine ourselves. For this we will need knowledge about that Higher Self. Again we come to the necessity for study. It is necessary to know what are the laws that govern the spiritual aspect of our own being, as well as the spiritual aspect of the whole of Nature. If we study and understand the Science of the Self we will have a sure gauge for checking ourselves; if not, we will find all kinds of excuses for ourselves and will try to justify all our weaknesses. This self-examination, then, has to be based on knowledge, which alone gives us the power to see ourselves as we really are, in terms of the great and noble thoughts that

we have assimilated through our daily study and meditation.

As the aspirant marches onward on the path of spiritual progress, he comes to recognize the tremendous value of silence and secrecy. He will not gain what he is attempting to gain by talking to others about it; it will only hinder him. His very desire to tell others what he is doing is a subtle expression of pride which belongs to the lower, personal nature and is one of the greatest enemies of true progress. It requires true humility, not mock modesty which is a form of subtle pride, to live the higher life—that silent humility which makes the disciple “appear as nothing in the eyes of men.”

It may be asked: Is a change in inner attitude all that is required to live the higher life? Is there nothing to be done in a more practical way, no outer rules to follow? Indeed there is a great deal to be done. The whole of the manifested universe is a triple expression of Motion, Space and Time. Motion is causal and Time and its myriads of objects are effects in Space. Every thing and therefore every man in the universe is affected by these three, and our environment is nothing but a manifestation of Space, Time and Motion or Causation. For living the higher life, therefore, three aphorisms have been given to us in reference to outer things, events and circumstances: Purity in Causation, Accuracy in Space and Punctuality in Time. These three aphorisms can be applied in every walk of life, and they are all the Law and the Prophets any one needs to lead a better and a nobler life. Each of us moves in four spheres; applying this trinity to these four departments of our daily activity, we have to be pure and accurate and punctual in our thoughts, in our feelings, in our speech and in our deeds. If any one of us were to examine himself he would find that there are a number of things which he indulges in that are unnecessary. We have to make it a practice always to ask ourselves: “Is it necessary for me to do this, to go to this place or that, to speak thus, to feel or think in such a manner?” This will greatly help us to be pure in our motives, to

be accurate in the execution of our duties, to be punctual in all our tasks.

The aspirant to the higher life has to be well trained in patience—not the patience which is shot through with self-pity and false resignation, but patience of the type of which the Mahatma wrote: “Great man is he who is strongest in the exercise of patience.” Many are the difficulties to be encountered and many too the helps to be obtained, but unless a man starts right he will go wrong a long, long way. The immediate step in front of us is to look within to find the captain, and then to steer our vessel on the sea of life with the accurate compass, the punctual chronometer, but above all with that motive of unselfish good-will and desire to serve the passengers, our fellow men, by taking our own ship to the Haven of Beauty and Virtue, of Wisdom and Compassion.

THE “QUEERNESS” OF THEOSOPHISTS

[Reprinted from *Theosophy*, Vol. XIII, p. 181, for February 1925.—Eds.]

The criticism is sometimes raised against theosophists that they are not normal; are out of step with the common run. There are theosophists who make themselves conspicuous by the feverish retailing of “personal experiences,” like unto an old wives’ circle eagerly discussing “operations” and all the circumstances thereof, each waiting until the next bore is finished.

There are theosophists who have not acquired the ability to judge of the fitting time, place and person for the setting forth of the philosophy, and consequently get themselves misunderstood.

There are theosophists who do none of these things, but who maintain an attitude of such aristocratic inner exclusiveness, are so out of touch with the happy-go-lucky companionships of com-

mon men, that their attitude, unknown to themselves, produces dislike.

There are theosophists with the “puritan complex”; earnest and devoted souls, many of them, but who are never quite able to shake off the feeling that to enjoy is to sin. They take their Theosophy very sadly indeed, and slowly petrify and dry up within, the while causing timid souls to shy off from Theosophy as from some gloomy dungeon. The young granddaughter of such a one was heard to say: “I have always believed in Karma and Reincarnation, but I never had any use for Theosophy, because I could not help seeing how much happier my grandmother would have been, how much more cheerful the whole home atmosphere would have been, if she had never heard of it.”

But there is a Theosophical “queerness” of another kind altogether; a queerness such as that of H.P.B., who, dying painfully by inches and overloaded with work for Humanity, showed always a keen, sympathetic sense of humour; who never complained of *her* troubles, but looked after those of others instead; who, knowing more of all the laws of nature than all scientists put together, betrayed in no way any sense of superiority over the meanest street sweeper; who, clean of human selfishness and human sins, a living sacrifice on the altar of altruism, cast no reproach at any criminal, any harlot; betrayed no sense of separateness from the meanest, and could turn from discussing the most abstruse problems of the Universe with a *savant* of bulging brow, to the woes of a child, without a break of interest.

We will not see her like again in this generation; but there is an increasing number of “queer” Theosophists who keep their troubles to themselves; who look after others first and themselves last; who prefer hard study and harder work to shallow amusement, and whose inner trials are visible on the surface only by an increasing strength, calmness, and universal sympathy.

SOCRATES, THE SEEKER

Sri Krishna, while propounding the doctrine of sacrifice through true knowledge as the most sublime form of sacrifice, thus addressed his disciple Arjuna:—

...every action without exception is comprehended in spiritual knowledge, O son of Pritha. Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error, O son of Bharata. (*Bhagavad-Gita*, IV. 33-35)

These great words of the Singer of the Song Celestial, uttered in India 50 centuries ago, reverberated in time and space till they found their abiding response in the Greece of the 5th century B.C., in the heart of an insignificant wayfarer of shabby clothes and bare feet, known to history and to philosophy as Socrates, the indomitable questioner and seeker in the interest of reason, justice and truth. Of muscular body but without prepossessing looks, his roving eyes did not fail to pierce the cloak of pretence under which people hid their lack of knowledge and of wisdom. Through his dilated nostrils exuded the very spirit of enquiry which made him adored of the youth of his time. One of the world's greatest educators, he dispelled his own doubts and helped others to dispel theirs by study, service and strong search undertaken in humility as advocated by Krishna.

Under the law of Karma a time comes in the life of everyone when he is pushed out from the seeming security of ignorance, to fall into the ditch of doubt. Unchecked doubt leads to despair and moral decay. Fight doubt, expunge it and cling firmly to thoughtful convictions; then with faith and hope an aspirant is ready to march forward in the company of the Wise. Socrates was such a man on the march who followed the time-honoured injunction repeated by the Delphic Oracle: "Man, know thyself." He struggled all his life to prove that to know one's own self was to know God and that the way lay through the up-hill path of the discerning mind.

The 5th century B.C., in which Socrates was born about the year 469, was an eventful one in

the history of Greece. Athens was the centre of the keenest cultural, intellectual and political activity. Pericles, the democratic statesman and general who aspired to make Athens the acknowledged intellectual metropolis of Greece, dominated its political life. The professors of worldly wisdom known as the Sophists started their movement about the middle of the century and provided early training for Socrates in the art of questioning. Among the famous thinkers of this period Æschylus deserves a special mention as the author of *Prometheus Bound*, an allegorical play about the vicissitudes of the human soul after the lighting up of Manas, noticed in *The Secret Doctrine* for its Theosophical value. The prevailing notion of God in those days in Greece was polytheistic. Æschylus introduced in his works the concept of one God, ruling the universe under Law. He believed that man was the maker of his destiny and that destiny was bound up with character.

Socrates picked up the thread of the ideation of Æschylus and having himself sensed the existence of a moral law in nature contrived to impress his conviction on his interlocutors through a process of masterly reasoning known to the world as the "Socratic Method." He explored the full possibilities of the human mind for the purpose of investigation into the unknown, wherein is rooted the ultimate cause of truth, justice, good government, piety and many other requisites of right living, which formed for decades the subject-matter of his discussions with friends and critics, and which all seekers of the higher life are called upon to study and to live up to. These Socratic Dialogues have been reduced to writing with profound understanding and elucidation by his pupil, Plato, himself an Initiate and the greatest Greek philosopher. Socrates, however, as we are told in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 117), could not be initiated into the Mysteries because of his mediumship, or his preoccupation with his "dæmon" or "familiar spirit"; "and this invisible counsellor," says H.P.B., "became the cause of his death."

We have no accurate account of the early life of Socrates. It is said that his father, Sophroniscus, was a sculptor, and his mother, Phænarete, a woman skilled in midwifery. Socrates humorously used to say that he himself was a midwife who tried to prevent miscarriages of the mind and helped at safe deliveries of well-defined ideas. As a boy, Socrates received the usual Athenian schooling and education in music and gymnastics. He is said to have studied the treasures which the wise men of old left in books. He had some knowledge of mathematics, astronomy and physical science as it existed then. From an entry in *The Theosophical Glossary* and other statements of his early education it is established that he was at one time a pupil of the Ionian astronomer and philosopher, Anaxagoras. This teacher, says H.P.B., was "thoroughly convinced that *the real existence of things*, perceived by our senses, could not be demonstrably proved," and he touched upon the possibilities of the mind where the senses cannot penetrate. He taught that the atoms which constituted all bodies "were primarily put in motion by *Nous* (Universal Intelligence, the Mahat of the Hindus)." Thus, his teachings became instrumental in planting in the yearning heart of Socrates the seed of investigation into the eternal verities through the means of the mind. From the same source Socrates became aware of the immortality of the Soul and declared that it is far happier when it can free itself from the body. As Cicero said, he was destined to bring philosophy down from heaven to earth, *i.e.*, to substitute man for the universe as a subject of inquiry.

The parents of Socrates were of middle-class respectability who gave their son the freedom to complete his education the way he liked. As a well-educated man of some means he had to learn the use of his sword and spear. Military training was looked upon as something to be proud of. So Socrates quite naturally went through it and turned out to be a very good infantryman who rendered meritorious services in the eternal feuds of the Athenians with the neighbouring city-states. On the field of battle he left nothing to be desired in devotion to duty and in courage and endurance,

whether in defeat or in victory.

An important incident during the Potidæa campaign, which Plato records in his *Symposium*, brings out the mystic in Socrates. Alcibiades, a noted pupil of Socrates, is made to say:—

In one instance he was seen early in the morning, standing in one place, wrapt in meditation; and as he seemed unable to unravel the subject of his thoughts, he still continued to stand as inquiring and discussing within himself, and when noon came, the soldiers observed him, and said to one another—"Socrates has been standing there thinking, ever since the morning." At last some Ionians came to the spot, and having supped, as it was summer, they lay down to sleep in the cool: they observed that Socrates continued to stand there the whole night until morning, and that, when the sun rose, he saluted it with a prayer and departed.

Early in life Socrates came in contact with the Sophists. These professional travelling lecturers attacked the prevailing superstitions and priestcraft. The intelligentsia of Athens flocked to their meetings with eager expectation, because within their ranks were prominent men like Protagoras, Gorgias and Zeno, who made much of worldly success and power. Socrates, who had not been a brilliant schoolboy, was delighted by this method of acquiring knowledge without taskmasters and text-books. The Sophists had among them masters of rhetoric, theorists on cosmology, and humanists. They circulated new ideas of personal conduct, virtue, goodness, democracy and justice to take the place of traditional customs and beliefs. But they were not agreed among themselves and had no constructive help to offer for living the self-reliant life that they advocated. The consequence of their teaching was that the youths lost respect for their elders and claimed the right to do as they liked. Socrates was not against young people doing what they liked, but he was not sure that by so doing they got the best out of life. Simple questions such as, What is it worth while to like? What does one really want? were not raised or dealt with. The Sophists had also no convincing definitions of terms like justice, goodness, democracy, etc., used by them.

Socrates thought that the Sophists assumed too much. People cannot have a true conception of what they like and what they want till they have

knowledge of the true purpose of life. It is only through knowledge that one can liberate his soul from the bondage of the body and be happy. It was no use feeling and affirming as passing whims dictated. Every proposition must be well thought out and be capable of withstanding cross-examination. It must be presented in clear-cut language leaving no room for prevarication or indefiniteness. Every word used must have its own fixed meaning. In the Dialogue entitled *Phædo* Socrates is made to say, "To use words wrongly and indefinitely is not merely an error in itself; it also creates an evil in the soul."

He was impressed by the forensic ability and intellectual attainments of the Sophists but was amused at their self-complacency. The casual way in which they treated the basic principles of justice and truth on which the universe was sustained became a matter of concern to him. He had the intuitive perception that the aim and end of knowledge must be the building of individual and corporate character in order to make life worth living in the interest of the immortal soul. He was aware that justice and truth were unattainable in their entirety, but that their apprehension to some extent was essential for forming right opinions and for right actions.

In all humility, Socrates assigned to himself the task of studying the hearts of men and, by talking with them, making them aware of their own limitations and inducing them to join him in the search for true knowledge. For this task he was equipped with a masterful will which subdued every emotion and a mind which had hardly an equal in clearness and impartiality. His line of approach was similar to the one indicated by Madame Blavatsky in the following words:—

Let us compare all things, and, putting aside emotionalism as unworthy of the logician and the experimentalist, hold fast only to that which passes the ordeal of ultimate analysis.

For a long time he was a familiar figure by the tables of the money-changers, in the market-place, or under the avenues adjoining the gymnasia. The "beggary prater," as his detractors called him, even found entrance into the circles presided over by

Pericles, now at the head of the State. In all such places he would enter into conversation with everyone, young or old, and, seizing on some trivial occasion, would make easy, unconstrained transitions to the discussion of the deepest problems. It has been said of him, "He thirsted for pure concepts as ardently as any mystic ever panted for union with the Godhead."

He exposed the bankruptcy of physical science and the tyranny of dogmatic religion and emphasized the philosophical study of the moral values of life through self-examination. The strictly scientific basis of human affairs was then a novelty, as nature-philosophers had never made man the subject of their study. It was, therefore, not without justice that Socrates maintained till the end that he was a humble searcher for truth, not the proud possessor of exhaustive knowledge and he took considerable pains to strengthen this impression. For the success of his mission he took care to see that his interlocutors did not feel keenly their intellectual inferiority and avoid him, but he could not help if his searching conversations left behind them an unpleasant memory in the minds of some. He fully realized, and it was his aim to make others realize, that the most important questions affecting human life were as yet unsolved riddles, and that words and ideas which everyone had been accustomed to bandy about with thoughtless confidence were, in truth, thickly beset with contradictions and ambiguities. He felt that knowledge was endless, and as a rule people knew so little that they did not notice the wide gap between pretence and performance, though few would err knowingly and wilfully.

Socrates held that the consciousness of one's ignorance and limitations is the first step towards the acquisition of Wisdom. Henceforth one's task is to develop a sense of honesty and sincerity and, with courage and humility, the seeker who has become aware of his ignorance now struggles to acquire knowledge with perseverance "as one who doth for evermore endure." In this task others can help us with their experience and we should be ready to help them with ours. Thus hand in hand

we go in search of harmony and unity under the benign guidance of the Divine Law.

The Socratic method aims to free the mind from the thralldom of confused thoughts and customary notions. Questions and answers on the statements made or opinions expressed are the necessary external stimuli to enable the pupils to cut through their dogmatism, to rectify their defects and make efforts to solve their problems themselves after mature thought and through the impartial use of their reasoning faculty. Thus they also learn to refrain from making hasty assertions which cannot endure the test of fair play and become the cause of much misunderstanding and heart-burning.

The masterly technique used by Socrates can be summed up as follows from what Professor Gomperz states in *Greek Thinkers*¹:—

“Two things may be ascribed to Socrates,” so we are informed by his intellectual grandchild, Aristotle, “inductive reasoning and the fixing of general concepts.” . . . Although Socrates was primarily concerned with the philosophy of concepts, and to that extent followed a line of investigation leading towards the universal, it was only with the greatest caution and deliberation that he passed from the particular to the general. . . . “Socrates always chose the most obvious and the most commonly accepted starting-point for his investigations, thinking this the safest plan,” says Xenophon. . . . Unwearied is the perseverance of the master in threading the mazes of an intricate problem. . . . The highest ethical virtue of the researcher, inexhaustible patience, is combined with one of the greatest of intellectual excellences, absolute freedom from prejudice. No proposition, to express the Socratic attitude in a formula, is so self-evident, so universally true, that we may not be called upon, good ground being shown, to reconsider it on first principles and test its validity anew. No assertion is so paradoxical or so shocking as to absolve us from the duty of giving it a full and fair hearing, of diligently scrutinizing the arguments in its favour and weighing them with judicial impartiality. No investigation, however laborious, is to be shirked, no opinion, however repugnant to our feelings, is to be howled down, or stifled in ridicule and opprobrium. The wide-hearted, strong-headed Athenian thinker succeeded in combining two almost irreconcilable attributes—fervid zeal in discussing the highest concerns of man, and cool, dispassionate candour in the treatment of these very questions. His judgment is uncorrupted by love, unclouded by hate. There was, indeed, but one thing which he ever

hated, to wit, that “hatred of discourse,” or “misology” which is the great obstacle to unfettered and unprejudiced discussion.

Socrates carried on his conversational activities in the full blaze of publicity for many years without serious opposition. Along with sincere enquirers and students, young men of wealthy families clustered around him to have the pleasure of hearing him expose the ignorance of men of position and power in public life. It was not to be expected that his activities should remain confined to the upper classes and the intelligentsia only, or that the opposition to his novel and unprecedented movement not gather strength with the passing of years. Aristophanes, a comedy writer, produced a play called *The Clouds* in 423 B.C. In this play Socrates was vehemently attacked and held up to public ridicule and contempt as a miserable recluse of mean bearing, basking in the smoke and cloud of his changing ideas, and teaching arguments to boys to defy their elders. Such burlesque writers in those days were the purveyors of mass opinion and this play had its own part to play in the trial of Socrates 24 years later.

Aristophanes hated the reformist spirit of the age which questioned the old-time commonplaces of morality and religion. He heaped on Socrates the sins of the nature-philosophers and the Sophists. The former were unpopular because they did not believe in gods and introduced the belief in the elements; and the Sophists were unpopular on moral grounds, as clever people who wanted to make other people clever for their own gain. Socrates had his differences with both, and, when he got a chance to cross-question them, did not hesitate to pick holes in their assumptions which did not conform to the requirements of logical reasoning and consistent thinking.

Though a man of meagre resources, Socrates would not take money for his discourses as the Sophists did and, as he said, “corrupt his opinions.” The *Apology* records him saying at the trial: “I am so busy in this pursuit that I have never had leisure to take any part worth mentioning in public matters, or to look after my private affairs. I am in very great poverty by reason of my service to God.”

¹ Translated by C. G. BERRY; Vol. II, pp. 55-59.

The Sophists and other public teachers used to trim their sails to suit the weather; not so Socrates, who disregarded those in power and unhesitatingly exposed the weaknesses of the democracy whose officers were selected by lots without concern for their qualifications. His enemies said, "The Sophists distribute their poison for a fee and to those only who pay for it, but Socrates scatters his poison all around gratis. This must be stopped; he must be silenced."

At last in 399 B.C., Anytus, a politician who had taken some part in establishing the new democratic government, with the help of two others, preferred the following indictment: "Socrates commits a crime by not believing in the gods of the city, and by introducing other new divinities. He also commits a crime by corrupting the youth. Penalty, Death." As Socrates pointed out in his defence, these had been the stock charges levelled against all philosophers for years.

As no warrant for arrest was issued, the indictment meant that the accused had the opportunity to leave Athens and get out of the jurisdiction of the court if he did not wish to be tried. Both his friends and enemies expected him to do this, but Socrates decided to remain and defend his cause before the court. The case was heard by a jury of 501 Athenians who had the power to decide the issue by a majority vote. Plato was present in the court. His *Apology* is considered the most trustworthy account of the defence case and reveals who the real historical Socrates was and what he stood for. A few passages are quoted below from this most illuminating work whose study will do immense good to every student of Theosophy and every believer in a good life. Socrates says:—

Wherever a man's post is, whether he has chosen it of his own will, or whether he has been placed at it by his commander, there it is his duty to remain and face the danger, without thinking of death, or of any other thing except dishonour. . . .

For anything that men can tell, death may be the greatest good that can happen to them: but they fear it as if they knew quite well that it was the greatest of

evils. And what is this but that shameful ignorance of thinking that we know what we do not know? . . .

Athenians, I hold you in the highest regard and love; but I will obey God rather than you: and as long as I have breath and strength I will not cease from philosophy, and from exhorting you, and declaring the truth to every one of you whom I meet, saying, as I am wont, "My excellent friend, you are a citizen of Athens, a city which is very great and very famous for wisdom and power of mind; are you not ashamed of caring so much for the making of money, and for reputation, and for honour? Will you not think or care about wisdom, and truth, and the perfection of your soul?" . . .

If you think that a man of any worth at all ought to reckon the chances of life and death when he acts, or that he ought to think of anything but whether he is acting rightly or wrongly, and as a good or a bad man would act, you are grievously mistaken.

After he is sentenced to death he says to those who voted for his death:—

I think that it is a much harder thing to escape from wickedness than from death; for wickedness is swifter than death. And now I, who am old and slow, have been overtaken by the slower pursuer: and my accusers, who are clever and swift, have been overtaken by the swifter pursuer, which is wickedness. And now I shall go hence, sentenced by you to death; and they will go hence, sentenced by truth to receive the penalty of wickedness and evil. And I abide by this award as well as they. Perhaps it was right for these things to be so and I think that they are fairly measured.

Finally he says to those who found him not guilty:—

And you too, judges, must face death with a good courage and believe this as a truth, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life, or after death. His fortunes are not neglected by the gods; and what has come to me today has not come by chance. I am persuaded that it was better for me to die now, and to be released from trouble: and that was the reason why the sign never turned me back. And so I am hardly angry with my accusers, or with those who have condemned me to die. . . . But now the time has come, and we must go hence; I to die, and you to live. Whether life or death is better is known to God, and to God only.

Thus this noble and fearless aspirant to Wisdom and pursuer of the Truth took his cup of poison with malice to none, for he had the inner conviction that he was an immortal soul whom death could not touch. He deserves the grateful recognition of all sincere aspirants as a great man.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT—1875-1950

VI.—“ THE SEPTENARY TERM OF TRIAL ”

Experience has shown that any process of growth is attended by its regularly recurring periods of difficulty and the necessity for readjustment, whether it be the development of a human personality, the awakening of the inner life of a chela or the growth of the U.L.T. Unless this is understood, symptoms may be treated or suppressed instead of more fundamental measures being adopted to clear the way for soul growth. The human personality has its seven-year cycle marked by the awakening of Manas in the personality, the onset of puberty and so on, and in the upbringing of the child it is very necessary to understand the full significance of these stages in relation to soul development, as well as the particular needs of the soul at each stage, instead of only regarding the traits, desirable and undesirable, which manifest themselves at such times of awakening faculties.

Relying upon the law of analogy as well as upon the statements of his Teachers, the Associate of the U.L.T. must anticipate the cyclic occurrence of difficulties and trials in his own life and that of the U.L.T., and cultivate the habit of looking underneath the surface of events to the deeper issues involved. The stronger the flow of the Spiritual Will, the more profound will be the adjustments that have to be made, and the more intense the difficulties that have to be met. It is at such times that differences in orientation between the awakening spiritual aspirations of the soul and the *skandhas* are thrown, as it were, on to the screen of conscious awareness; and the individual is forced to choose between surrender to the desires and inertia of the personality and sustainment of the will to subject these to the purposes of the soul. He cannot continue as hitherto. The difficulty of the choice is increased by the attempts of the personality, assisted by outside intelligences (if the individual has made himself of sufficient importance to the Movement to draw their attention to himself), to becloud the real

issue and delude the individual into thinking that the difficulties lie in people and circumstances outside of himself. At all costs and however befogged he may be, he must hold to the principle that the issue is to be resolved within himself first, whatever outer action may be necessary; and that, if he is sensible, he will apply for help to the Books which embody the experience of millennia, and make what use he can of the past history of the Movement.

The first septenary period of trial for the chela is described by H.P.B. in her article “The Theosophical Mahatmas.” It is a test of his unswerving fidelity to the chosen Master and His purposes, which must sustain him through perhaps years of non-intercourse, though objects, senses, men and time conspire to make him think that Masters laugh at him. His imagination of the Master as a living Man within him must react upon his faith in that Master so that step by step it becomes that Master who speaks and acts in him. His human faults and mistakes, the apparent success or otherwise of the work that he does in the world of men are of secondary importance at this stage, for, given the right attitude, the Master is able to make the necessary adjustments so that apparent evil is turned to good account.

Serious attention should be given to the statement by Mr. Judge in Letter XII of the first volume of *Letters That Have Helped Me*: “In a certain sense every sincere member of the Theosophical Society is in the way of becoming a chela, because the Masters do some of Their work with and for humanity through this Society, selected by Them as their agent.” If that was so, then the foregoing applied, in a certain sense, to the Society, and applies similarly to the U.L.T. today. In fact, in February 1882, a Master wrote to Mr. Sinnett: “On the 17th of November next the Septenary term of trial given the Society at its foundation in which to discreetly ‘preach us’ will expire.”

The Society represented an exoteric effort to inculcate human brotherhood, to spread a knowledge of the existence of the Wisdom-Religion and to demonstrate the presence of hidden powers in man; but underneath there flowed a powerful deeper current of faith in Masters as real, living beings. The declaration of belief in Masters "arouses dormant ideas in others, it opens up a channel in the mind, it serves to make the conducting lines for the forces to use which the *Mahatmas* wish to give out," wrote Mr. Judge in "The Mahatmas as Ideals and Facts." (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 10) Yet in the very power of that influence lies danger, the danger attendant upon the temptation to desecrate that which is holy by using it for selfish purposes and, in disappointment, to seek Masters at "strange doors behind which lie in wait the fiercest enemies" of those whom one is seeking. Hence the need for discretion, hence the need to await the result of the first septenary term of limited trial. The result of that trial would determine what further help could be given. The opportunity given to the Society was spoken of by a Master as an experiment.

The Society in that term of trial went through many difficulties, culminating afterwards in the Coulomb crisis and the departure of H.P.B. from India, betrayed by those who would have defended her at whatever cost to themselves had they shown themselves worthy of further help from the Masters. But throughout the term the underlying issue was not the skill with which the outer affairs of the Society would be managed, but whether or not the prominent members would be capable of keeping sacred and holy their belief in Masters, would be capable of seeking those Masters on the terms shown necessary by generations of experience and not on conditions laid down by motives of self-interest. The outer attacks were inevitable and clearly foreseen, and they could have been used as opportunities. Attacks are free publicity. They give the opportunity to present Theosophy in a true light, and to Theosophists the opportunity to show the ties of brotherhood which bind them together, the courage and feeling of charity

which animate them and the intellectual integrity which they value. If the opportunity is rightly taken the attacks will react to the immense good of the Movement.

The prominent members of the Society in India did not emerge victorious from the trial. Their personalities, no doubt with the enthusiastic help of the fiercest enemies of the Masters, succeeded in beclouding the real issue and making it appear that the difficulties and attacks arose out of the indiscretions of H.P.B., instead of being a test of themselves. The failure to achieve victory was a tragic one. A Master wrote in 1884:—

...the present crisis that is shaking the T.S. to its foundations is a question of perdition or salvation to thousands; a question of the progress of the human race or its retrogression, of its glory or dishonour, and for the majority of this race—of *being or not being*, of annihilation, in fact.

We do not want to waste our energy in vain regrets for what is past, but to look forward to the future. What are some of the lessons of this period which we may apply in the future?

First, there is encouragement in the Master's use of the word experiment. The Masters with all Their knowledge of the possibilities, favourable and unfavourable, with all Their vast experience, were willing to make the experiment. This implies that no one is doomed to failure, that the members could have succeeded, that the Masters were willing and able to await the outcome of the experiment. Does not this also imply that the help that the Masters can give in 1975 is not yet fated by what has transpired since 1875 in the Movement, that the help we can give as individuals is not circumscribed, however much it may be hampered, by what we have done or been in the past? In other words, there is still time in which we can do and be that which will make possible wider and more tangible help by the Masters in 1975.

Secondly, in all the trials that must come in the future, beware of the habit of looking for their cause in the mistakes and indiscretions of others; but instead look beneath the surface of events for the fundamental issue in terms of the future benefit of the Movement rather than that of our

own spiritual progress. Further, in an assessment of a situation it is unwise to rely upon our own power of analysis without first finding out what are the possibilities by searching through such books as *The Voice of the Silence* and *Letters That Have Helped Me* and some of the articles of H.P.B. and Mr. Judge, and so on; and making use of the object lessons provided in the history of the Movement.

Thirdly, the first clause of the U.L.T. Declaration of Policy is of far-reaching importance. This test of the independence of our devotion, that of our loyalty to the Masters, is the first we have to meet. We have been tested in the period of slack between two tides; we are being tested now while the new current may seem slow in gaining way, and we shall be tested in the future at the height of the rising waters. H.P.B. had the lion's strength to support "shocks—physical and mental, one of which would have killed any theosophist who would go on doubting of the mighty protection." She was able to do so because of her unswerving devotion to her Master and belief in the collective Wisdom of the Brotherhood to which He belonged. The moral for us is clear.

“A TRUER REALIZATION OF THE SELF”

The year 1975 no longer seems so very far off. Perhaps it is characteristic of the last couple of decades of the cycle H.P.B. spoke of as beginning with the last twenty-five years of each century that many students are beginning to feel a sense of urgency. Have they put into practice the teaching, which they were told must be applied in daily life, and thus helped to realize the wish expressed by their Teacher who said in her Third Message to the American Theosophists: "May Theosophy grow more and more a living power in the lives of each one of our members"?

Before we can answer this question we must ask another. Which of the many approaches to our philosophy will make it a vitalizing power

in us? Cosmology, anthropology, metaphysics, parapsychology—which? The same Message quoted above gives us a hint: "... the Ethics of Theosophy are more important than any divulgement of psychic laws and facts." Why? Because, whereas the latter relate wholly to the material and evanescent part of man, "the Ethics sink into and take hold of the real man—the reincarnating Ego."

The ethics then are evidently what we need: the aspect of Theosophy which will awaken the immortal portion of ourselves. Those other teachings which educate only the mortal and therefore impermanent part of us, important as they are, can really contribute to our becoming true Theosophists only when apprehended by a mind cleansed by the light from within. Hence our course is clearly defined—to apply the ethics of Theosophy, that is, the law of universal brotherhood, in order to enable the immortal man in us to reflect itself in the lower. This means that the personality has been able to unite itself in some degree with the higher consciousness or ego. In so far as this is achieved the man has made Theosophy a living power in his life. To what extent have we achieved this?

The ancient doctrine of the two souls in man—the mortal and the immortal—has been emphasized in the modern Theosophical Movement from its inception. So has also the fact that to reach the goal of our evolution it is absolutely necessary that we humans so direct our lives and control our minds and emotions that the "Silent God" within may become a conscious presence and an active potency.

Nor is the student left without hints as to the method to be employed in the effort to reach the end in view. He cannot go far in his search without lighting upon passages which deal with this subject. We have been generously supplied with advice for our guidance. Many illuminating facts have been given us, and we have not been denied the warning that time, energy and perseverance will be needed to produce results.

And a good thing too, for without determination and the will to hold grimly on, we shall never be able to make use of the privilege of guidance.

inspiration, comfort from our higher ego. "Let me again insist," says Mr. Judge, "upon your trying to realize in yourselves that you are a part of the All. That is the constant subject of meditation, and will bring the best results." A gigantic task!

On the other hand very definite encouragement is also given to the student. In the Preface to his rendering of *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali* Mr. Judge writes:—

... when a firm position is assumed with the end in view of reaching union with spirit through concentration, He [Ishwara] comes to the aid of the lower self and raises it gradually to higher planes.

The wise thing to do, therefore, is surely to make the attempt. "We have one word for all aspirants," wrote one of the Masters—"TRY."

"LOUIS AGASSIZ AND THE RACES OF MAN"

In *Isis* for September 1954 Edward Lurie contributes an article under the above title. He writes:—

When Louis Agassiz came to the United States from Switzerland in 1846 he soon became identified with a scientific controversy which raged for nearly two decades and affected religion, politics and social theory in its varied ramifications.

This was the controversy as to the origin of man—the primal pair of the Bible *versus* a polygenetic origin. Agassiz supported the pluralistic concept of the origin of man. In 1850 he stated that "the differences between the races were primitive... races did not originate from a common centre, nor from a single pair."

This belief is a fundamental teaching of *The Secret Doctrine* which states:—

As regards the evolution of mankind, the Secret Doctrine postulates... the simultaneous evolution of seven human groups on seven different portions of our globe. (II. 1)

Agassiz was led to the stand he took on man's polygenetic origin as a result of his studies of animal origins. As a zoologist it was his view that a belief in a common centre or origin for animal species was the greatest obstacle to the intelligent

study of their geographical distribution. It has to be remembered that, in his time, the Garden of Eden view held good also for animals. While Agassiz maintained his religious convictions he insisted that naturalists had a right to examine the question of human origins without reference to religious or political doctrine.

Unfortunately Agassiz' pronouncements, while they gave the Biblical fundamentalists and literalists a hard knock, were made to serve to strengthen the cause of those who advocated slavery on the basis that the negroes were of a lower race. To this Agassiz rejoined that he was concerned not only with negroes but also with Chinese, Malayan and other human types and he emphasized the spiritual brotherhood and moral unity of mankind while maintaining their physical differentiation. In later years Agassiz maintained that American negroes had a right to political equality. Hurt by the charges of heresy and bigotry made against him, he exclaimed, "Why, there is no freedom for a scientific man in America."

H. P. Blavatsky spoke highly of Agassiz and linked him with such scientists as Balfour Stewart, Crookes, Quatrefages, Wallace, Butlerof, etc. She wrote:—

We, Theosophists, would willingly bow before such men of learning... though we may not agree, from the standpoint of esoteric philosophy, with all they say. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 651)

On this subject of man's polygenetic origin H.P.B. made several references to Agassiz. In *The Secret Doctrine* she said:—

Mankind did not issue from one solitary couple. Nor was there ever a first man—whether Adam or Yima—but a first mankind...

Once that both creation *ex-nihilo*—an absurdity—and a superhuman Creator or creators—a fact—are made away with by science, polygenism presents no more difficulties or inconveniences (rather fewer from a scientific point of view) than monogenism does.

Nevertheless, it is as scientific as any other claim. For in his Introduction to Notts' and Gliddon's "*Types of Mankind*," Agassiz declares his belief in an indefinite number of "*primordial races of men created separately*"; and remarks that, "whilst in every zoological province animals are of *different species*, man, in spite of the diversity of his races, always forms one and the same human being."

Occultism defines and limits the number of primordial races to seven, because of the "seven progenitors," or *prajapatis*, the evolvers of beings. These are neither gods, nor supernatural Beings, but advanced Spirits from another and lower planet, reborn on this one, and giving birth in their turn in the present Round to present Humanity. (II. 610-11)

Referring to these seven primeval groups of mankind H.P.B. further says:—

Nor is this archaic teaching so very *unscientific*, since one of the greatest naturalists of the age—the late Professor Agassiz—admitted the multiplicity of the geographical origins of man, and supported it to the end of his life. The unity of the human species was accepted by the illustrious Professor of Cambridge (U.S.A.) in the same way as the Occultists do—namely, in the sense of their essential and original homogeneity and their origin from one and the same source:—*e.g.*, Negroes, Aryans, Mongols, etc., have all originated in the same way and from the same ancestors. The latter were all of one essence, yet differentiated, because belonging to seven planes which differed in degree though not in kind. That original physical difference was but little more accentuated by that of geographical and climatic conditions, later on. This is not the theory of Agassiz, of course, but the esoteric version. (*S.D.*, II. 607 fn.)

Another Theosophical concept of Agassiz was his belief that man is the end towards which Nature tends. H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 170) quotes his statement that the progress in the succession of beings

consists in an increasing similarity of the living fauna, and, among the vertebrates, especially, in the increasing resemblance to man. Man is the end towards which all *animal* creation has tended from the first appearance of the first palæozoic fishes. (*Principles of Zoology*, p. 206)

H.P.B., however, comments:—

Just so; but "the palæozoic fishes" being at the lower curve of the arc of the evolution of *forms*, this Round began with astral man, the *reflection of the Dhyān Chohans, called the "Builders."* Man is the *alpha and the omega of objective creation...* Therefore, the tendency spoken of by the eminent naturalist above quoted, is one inherent in every atom....

But in citing the passage from Agassiz' work with approval, it must not be understood that the occultists are making *any concession* to the theory, which derives man from the animal kingdom.

Earlier in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 420 fn.), when H.P.B. was combating Huxley's denial of man's survival

of bodily death, she quoted from Agassiz' *Essay on Classification* the following passage which reflects the spiritual nature of his thinking:—

Most of the arguments in favour of the immortality of man apply equally to the permanency of this principle in other living beings. May I not add that a future life in which man would be deprived of that great source of enjoyment and intellectual and moral improvement, which results from the contemplation of the harmonies of an organic world would involve a lamentable loss? And may we not look to a spiritual concert of the combined worlds and *all* their inhabitants in the presence of their creator as the highest conception of paradise? (Sect. xvii, pp. 97-99)

It was the method of Agassiz to study nature directly, not through books. He conducted summer camps for that purpose. Whittier's poem to Agassiz was inspired by an address given by the latter in 1873, the year of his death, at such a camp. Agassiz had been saying that in every natural object he saw "a thought of God" and this fired Whittier. It is this poem, "We have come in search of Truth, etc.," that Theosophy School has adopted and adapted to serve as its School Poem.

RIGHT MINDFULNESS

"... the simple action of your swift pen..."

It is a terrifying thought that a small slip may cause a holocaust of destruction—the carelessly thrown lighted match, the careless writing of a prescription, a small but vital piece of mechanism neglected—yet life is full of such happenings. It is even more terrifying to realize that a slight error on the part of those who are working for the welfare of humanity may undo much of the work of others. When we add to this the fact that they will have to bear the heavy Karma of their slight action, it makes us think seriously.

The above quotation from a letter of the Master points out how the "simple action" of a pen threatened to bring about the destruction of the "work of seven years, the constant untiring efforts of the builders" of the Theosophical Movement. Though we may not be of the calibre of those early students, or be working in all parts of the world under the same great strain, yet it is good

for us to be on the watch against such mistakes in the future.

The principle of the small error and its possible vast results is brought out in many legends. One example is given in the legend of Nala and Damayanti in the *Mahabharata*.

Nala and Damayanti met under idyllic conditions; for, as King and Princess of neighbouring kingdoms, they first knew of each other by hearsay and later through a swan which carried messages between them.

The story tells how one day Nala caught a swan flying over his palace garden and would have killed it had it not spoken to him. It said that if its life was spared it would fly to Damayanti and tell her of the wonder and beauty and greatness of Nala. Nala set it free and it became the messenger between the two, who inwardly vowed themselves to each other.

On the way to the *swayamvara* (the ceremony of choosing the bridegroom), at which Damayanti would place her garland round the neck of her chosen suitor, Nala met the gods Indra, Agni, Varuna and Yama, who were also going to compete for Damayanti's hand. They told him that he must visit her first and tell her of their wishes. When he objected that it would be impossible for him to get into the palace, they enabled him by their divine powers to pass into the presence, for the first time, of the woman he had grown to love. He gave her the gods' message, but she repeated that on the morrow she would place her garland round his neck.

In the festive hall she looked for him but saw five Nalas sitting together; for each of the gods had made himself a replica of Nala! In her bewilderment she begged the gods to give a sign, that she might know which was her beloved. Then they resumed the signs of their divinity, and she saw that four of the five cast no shadows, did not perspire and did not blink their eyes, and that the flowers of their garlands did not droop

but were as fresh as when they were picked. And so she bestowed her garland upon Nala.

Nala and Damayanti spent many years in bliss but one day Nala performed a ceremony without first washing his feet, that is, without making the full prescribed preparations.

Kali, another god, had also wanted to marry Damayanti but had arrived too late, and, having met the four gods returning from the wedding, had vowed to himself that he would be revenged on Nala. All through the happy years he had waited for any tiny slip which Nala might make, which would give him his chance. The chance had now come; so he slipped into Nala's body and many years of despair, suffering and sorrow now fell on Nala and Damayanti.

First Kali took advantage of Nala's other weakness, a love of gambling, and by foul means he succeeded in depriving him of his kingdom and of all he possessed. With but one garment each, Nala and Damayanti were banished into the forest. Later Nala lost his garment and Damayanti's was shared by both.

The situation was so bad that Damayanti begged him to go with her to her father, but another defect in him then came to the surface: his pride. Because of this, and further misguided by Kali, he cut into halves the garment wrapped round both and left her in the forest alone to find her way to her father.

Each of them had horrible adventures, but in time they were reunited. All their good points aided them; for Nala had the eight gifts which the gods had given him and Damayanti's own purity preserved her from molestation and brought her the help of a good queen. But their misfortunes brought great suffering on others as well as on themselves: on their kingdom, on their children and on Damayanti's parents. Although through suffering character is made, needless suffering is caused by such slips, and needless suffering, no less than a useless sacrifice, deserves to be called a "crime of folly."

THE U.L.T. IN INDIA

On Friday, the 18th of February, the foundation-stone for the new home of the Bombay U.L.T. was laid. A plot of land had been bought several years ago, but during the war and for many years after it nothing could be done to proceed with the task of erecting the building. The plot is situated in a very convenient place at 19, New Marine Lines.

The foundation-stone was laid in the presence of a large gathering of associates, friends and admirers of the U.L.T. Over 500 people were present and the programme was as follows: The laying of the foundation-stone with a proper Theosophical invocation; this was followed by the announcements of U.L.T. activities, the reading of its Declaration, as well as of some of the greetings and messages received from friends and colleagues in all parts of the world. There were three further readings: the first from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, 12th Chapter; the second from the *Dhammapada*, "The Canto of the Self"; and the third from *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 27 to 30. One of the boys of Theosophy School read the Declaration of Theosophy School and seven girls recited together the Theosophy School Poem. Then followed the Closing Talk which treated of the importance of the work of the Theosophical Movement and of its being the highest form of service.

The building will be a large structure with an auditorium seating 500 people, a reading-room and free public library with a special section for children, offices for Theosophical workers, and accommodation for housing such cultural activities as are in line with the aims and objects of the Theosophical Movement. A large amount of money will be needed to complete the work and the Bombay U.L.T. appeals to all its friends to give it both financial and moral support. It is expected that the building will be completed early next year.

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W. Q. Judge Day was celebrated on Sunday, the 20th of March, by the Bombay, Bangalore and Matunga Lodges and by all the U.L.T. Study Groups. The programme of the day was as follows:—

- I. Opening Announcements
- II. First Reading: *The Heart Doctrine*, pp. 59-60, "Three Great Ideas"
- III. Welcome to New Members
- IV. Second Reading: *Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 119-121 (Indian ed.), "What should be done . . . spiritual knowledge"
- V. Recitation of Theosophy School Poem
- VI. Third Reading: *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chapter XVIII, pp. 129-132, "Learn from me . . . whose deeds are righteous"
- VII. Closing Talk

FRATERNIZATION

At Bombay new members were welcomed before an audience of 275.

* * * * *

Our regular programme at Bombay is: On Sundays a Public Lecture; on Tuesdays a Ladies Class, now studying *The Eternal Verities*; on Wednesdays a Question and Answer Meeting; on Fridays a Study Class in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, and on Saturdays Theosophy School for children and young people, including a class for adults.

At Matunga on Sunday mornings there is a short Lecture followed by questions and answers, and on Thursday evenings a Study Class, now using the U.L.T. Pamphlet Series.

At Bangalore on Sunday mornings there is Theosophy School for children and young people; on Sunday evenings a Public Lecture; on Wednesdays a Question and Answer Meeting, and on Fridays a Study Class in *The Ocean of Theosophy*.

The U.L.T. Study Groups carry on their work on a similar pattern.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The Annamalai University has published its Silver Jubilee journal full of good things. It is elegantly printed and illustrated. All Theosophical students will be interested in an article appearing therein entitled "The Philosophy of Theosophy." It is a short exposition of the genuine Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky.

The London Branch of the Indian Institute of Culture, Bangalore, has completed two years of active and purposeful existence. At several meetings subjects were taken up which are of special interest to students of Theosophy. Mr. D. L. Murray's talk on "What is Man?" and Mr. Claude Houghton's talk on "The Influence of Imagination on Action" are two good examples. Both talks have been reported in *The Aryan Path*.

On February 4th Dr. Betty Heimann, founder and former Head of the Department of Sanskrit at the University of Ceylon, spoke on "The Wider Aspects of Karma." She agreed with an eminent Western theologian that the doctrine of Karma was the most concise and perfect theory there was of justice, reward and punishment. The concept of the *Karma-bija* or seed developing in time into the *Karma-phala* or fruit was a biological, not a mechanical, one.

... Karma was undoubtedly in a higher cosmic sense an ethical law of responsibility—"responsibility" because it demanded an awareness of the vast consequences of every initial thought, word and deed, however fleeting, insignificant or small; "cosmic" because it was by no means on the human plane alone that the cause had its effects, for nothing was visualized as being isolated, the whole manifested universe was one in the divine ground "atma," and therefore all events had repercussions through the whole cosmos; "law" because once set in motion each process went on till fully worked out—nothing got lost.

Dr. Heimann also pointed out that the sense that everything was connected also had its parallel in the grammatical use of the word "Karma." Thus *Karma kara*—literally "the doer of Karma"—was the heavy worker, more especially the blacksmith; *Karma anta*—"the spot on which Karma is

done"—was the cultivated soil; *Karma yuga*—"the present period of the world yuga"—was the period of toil, laborious work and sweat, the most remote from the Golden Ages of leisure in Paradise; and, in the psychological sense, *Karma indriyas* were the sense organs of action. In Sanskrit grammar, "the most dynamic functional grammar of all languages," almost all technical terms were derivations of combinations with the word "Karma." In the system of Yoga, Karma stood for the gradual training and exercise, bodily and psychic, and the self-effort and self-activity by which the Yogin developed ever higher towards salvation and ridance from egoistic tendencies, weaknesses and limitations.

In a significant foot-note in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 302), Madame Blavatsky remarks on the richness of meaning of "Karma":—

Karma is a word of many meanings, and has a special term for almost every one of its aspects. It means, as a synonym of sin, the performance of some action for the attainment of an object of *worldly*, hence *selfish*, desire, which cannot fail to be hurtful to somebody else. Karman is action, the Cause; and Karma again is "the law of ethical causation"; the *effect* of an act produced egotistically, when the great law of harmony depends on altruism.

We must be thankful to Dr. Heimann for pointing to the profundity and breadth of the doctrine of Karma; these are clearly brought out in Theosophical literature, but are blurred in the popular versions of Hindu and Buddhist ethics. It is a great pity that Dr. Heimann has adhered to these versions even in one respect—in her exposition of the doctrine of metempsychosis which is wrongly made to imply a literal rebirth into kingdoms below the human.

Dr. Heimann would do well to read what Mr. Judge has to say on the subject of transmigration and metempsychosis; the relevant articles in *The Path* have been reprinted in the third section of *The Heart Doctrine*, prefaced by the following words of H.P.B.:—

Nature, propelled by Karma, never recedes, but

strives ever forward in her work on the physical plane; that she may lodge a human soul in the body of a man, morally ten times lower than any animal, but she will not reverse the order of her kingdoms; and while leading the irrational monad of a beast of a higher order into the human form at the first hour of a Manvantara, she will not guide that Ego, once it has become a man, even of the lowest kind, back into the animal species—not during that cycle (or Kalpa) at any rate.

“What is universal in our living religions and cultures? In spite of all our differences, are there elements on which all men can agree?” Many scholars have searched the wisdom of the Orient and of the Occident for answers to these fundamental and urgent questions. The usual approach is to point to certain beliefs or practices in the various religions and cultures that are similar and to come up with the *cliché* that the similarities are more important than the differences and, therefore, we should love one another and stop fighting. Dr. William Allison Shimer, however, in his article, “Universal Elements in Living Religions and Cultures” (*Vedanta for East and West*, January-February 1955), approaches the question from a different angle.

One universal element in our religions and cultures, Dr. Shimer points out, is the universe. All systems of thought and belief are parts of and concerned with the same universe; they are interpretations of the same reality. Not only this, but when they are all found in one tiny corner of that vast universe, the earth, one would expect them to be similar in some respects.

There is still another point: Every religion or culture is “found in the consciousness of one species of being on the earth—*homo sapiens*.” Scientists and psychologists, anthropologists and sociologists find no basic differences among the various peoples of the earth in physical constitution and blood, in capability of intellectual development and cultural achievement when given equal opportunity.

In view of all this, it would be very surprising indeed if the various views of the world and of

life could succeed in making themselves entirely different. Whether we consider the concept of God or the problem of existence or the origin of life, it is important, says Dr. Shimer, that

we do not let the seeming differences in terminology and imagery blind us to the fact that all these beliefs and theories are attempts of the same human consciousness to understand, to explain, and to grasp revelations of the same human experience of the same universal reality....

Just how this vital universe is pictured or interpreted will vary from person to person, but fundamentally contemporary science has come round to offering a reasonable understanding of what the primitive intuition and religious revelations have grasped long ago, and over and over again. The universal reality, whatever else it may be, is spiritual and creative. There is a moral freedom at the heart of the world and ethical responsibility in the inalienable rights of man.

Here is the most profound universal element in the great religious cultures of human history. It is akin to the Brahman of Hinduism, the Karma and Nirvana of Buddhism, the Tien and Tao of Confucianism and Taoism, the immanent God or Allah of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These are but a few of the many expressions of how reality looks to different groups of the relatively few members of a short-lived species crowded into a tiny corner of this vast universe.

The adherents of the different religions are entitled to equal rights and respect because all hold an equal relation to the universal source of values. A maturity of outlook, an appreciation of common values and an understanding of the spiritual and moral character of the universe is essential to democracy, to cultural pluralism, to world-wide justice, peace and co-operation.

H.P.B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled*:—

Our examination of the multitudinous faiths that mankind, early and late, have professed, most assuredly indicates that they have all been derived from one primitive source. It would seem as if they were all but different modes of expressing the yearning of the imprisoned human soul for intercourse with supernal spheres. As the white ray of light is decomposed by the prism into the various colours of the solar spectrum, so the beam of divine truth, in passing through the *three-sided* prism of man's nature, has been broken up into vari-coloured fragments called RELIGIONS. (II. 639)

In another place in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 613) H.P.B. has prophesied that in a few centuries' time there will linger no sectarian beliefs in any of the great

religions of humanity, and that the time will come back when mankind will have but one religion.

In an article, "Guardini, Berdyaev and the Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" (*The Hibbert Journal*, January 1955), Professor James C. S. Wernham takes up the charge of the Roman Catholic philosopher, Romano Guardini, in his "*Religiöse Gestalten In Dostojewskijs Werk*," that the ostensible onslaught on popery was only a screen since it was put into the mouth of the atheistic Ivan. From such a source it must be false. Guardini concludes that "the Legend cannot be identified with the fundamental exigencies of Christianity"; that, on the contrary, the Christ of the Legend is a "false Christ," "the purely notional product of Ivan's disbelief."

By emphasizing the context of the novel and minimizing the religious content of the Legend, Guardini endeavours to draw attention away from the central theme so as to depict the Christ of the Legend as a heretic for the reason that he does not accept the "Order of Creation" and therefore "has no essential relationship with the Father Creator." Curiously enough, Guardini does admit that in the Legend "it is the Roman Church and especially the hierarchy which is being aimed at . . . but above all, as the most resolute expression of her spirit, the Jesuit Order."

Professor Wernham rightly points out that the Legend cannot be both a polemic against Rome and a defence of Rome. If the former is true the Grand Inquisitor cannot be right and the latter theory falls to the ground.

Berdyaev, in his *Dostojewski* and *Slavery and Freedom*, strongly upheld the Legend as an authentic portrait of the Christ Spirit. He has also shown that it has its application to the crude socialistic theories of the day aiming at domination, and he was of the opinion that Dostojewsky looked upon socialism as "nothing but a secularised Catholicism." But in that he was drawing a parallel which did not suggest that the onslaught on popery was only a veiled attack on socialism. As Professor Wernham says:—

For Berdyaev, we have in the Legend, as we have not elsewhere in comparable purity, the authentic image of Christ; for Guardini, we have merely the ideological product of a diseased mind seeking self-justification.

The first English translation of "The Grand Inquisitor" was made by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for November and December 1881, shortly after its publication and the author's death. One of the Masters in a letter to Mr. Sinnett remarked:—

The suggestion to translate the *Grand Inquisitor* is mine; for its author, on whom the hand of Death was already pressing when writing it, gave the most forcible and true description of the Society of Jesus than was ever given before. There is a mighty lesson contained in it for many.

Gerald Wendt in the *Unesco Features* "Science Notes" for 11th February discusses the work of Professor Daniel L. Arnon, plant physiologist at the University of California, who has announced "a new era of unlimited abundance." But this new day of synthetic food is still "some years in the future." What is claimed now is that an "understanding of nature's method" has been attained. Says the writer:—

It has long been known that a substance called chlorophyll, which gives plants their green colour, is essential to the process. . . . Its function in the plant is to capture the energy of sunlight and to pass it on to other, hitherto unknown materials which then use it to produce the chemical action of growth. . . . The plant cells contain very small granules, called chloroplasts, inside of which the chlorophyll is arranged in tiny plates or wafers.

Professor Arnon has been able to extract the chloroplasts with their chlorophyll and with this material, by direct chemical synthesis, he has produced sugar from water and carbon dioxide. It was found that another substance called ATP or *adenosine triphosphate* played an important rôle in the action. Hence the need for phosphates and vitamins as well as sugars and starches and fats in human food. Gerald Wendt says:—

What has now been achieved is the understanding of how sunshine makes plants grow . . . the process is a simple sequence of chemical reactions which do not involve any "life-force" and can be carried out in laboratory vessels.

Is it all so simple as it reads? Is chemical reaction any more understood in its essence than plant growth itself or the growth of any other organism? The *akasa* has not yet yielded its secrets to modern chemistry. Yet "we breathe and imbibe it into our organic system with every mouthful of fresh air. Our organism is full of it from the instant of our birth," says H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 616). Until the still-derided "life-force" or principle of life or *akasa* is accepted and its properties studied, biological secrets will not be unravelled.

Sun-force is the primal cause of all life on earth and *The Secret Doctrine* says:—

It descends in a larger supply to vegetation in the *Sushumna* sun-ray which lights and feeds the moon, and it is through her beams that it pours its light upon, and penetrates man and animal, more during their sleep and rest, than when they are in full activity. (I. 537)

In another issue of *Unesco Features* (No. 137 for 25th February), François Le Lionnais, in the "Science Notes" section, recommends the advisability of avoiding all "quack" treatments and going in for "scientific" healing, in answer to a *Unesco Features* reader in the Belgian Congo who wrote:—

I agree that the public should be cautioned against quackery, but this slighting term should not be applied to homœopathy or magnetism, both of which have undeniable successes to their credit, most of them achieved by qualified doctors.... "I would rather be cured in a stupid fashion than killed scientifically," says the Chinese proverb. In short, I feel that modern science has not the right to neglect any avenue of research that has not been carefully explored under the supervision of unbiassed doctors.

François Le Lionnais, while acknowledging that some unorthodox "healers" who act in good faith do heal, remarks that "this proves nothing." We give below a few of his statements:—

A cure is not conclusive proof of the value of the treatment. It is undeniable that a number of illnesses are cured by nature, and the doctor called in—whether he is a qualified doctor, a charlatan or a quack—yields to the natural human temptation of taking credit for the cure.... a cure may even be achieved if the doctor

can win the patient's confidence. The importance of the psychological factor and the mental outlook of the patient have long been recognized and it is no exaggeration to say that sometimes they greatly contribute towards a cure.... quack treatments can boast of the same proportion of successes as placebos [*i.e.*, substances producing no organic effects, prescribed to patients who are made to believe that they are taking genuine medicine], whereas scientific treatment produces a higher percentage of cures.... The value of scientific medicine is not that it happens to cure illness, but that it produces more cures than would be possible by purely natural means or by the effect of suggestion.... The "healer's" lack of specialization is only a minor defect: his chief fault is his unscientific approach.... let us therefore say: "I would rather be treated scientifically and risk the slight chance of losing my life, than allow myself to be treated by irrational methods even though they may hold out a faint hope of recovery."

Isis Unveiled contains instances upon instances of authentic cures effected by these "irrational methods" employed by those stigmatized as "quacks" by the modern medical man, barring of course real charlatans who are only out to exploit their victims. To let H.P.B. speak for herself:—

European physicians—according to time-honoured practice—settle the case of professional rivalry, by treating the native doctors as quacks and empirics; but this does not prevent the latter from being often successful in cases in which eminent graduates of British and French schools of Medicine have signally failed. (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 621 fn.)

Modern medicine, while it has gained largely in anatomy, physiology, and pathology, and even in therapeutics, has lost immensely by its narrowness of spirit, its rigid materialism, its sectarian dogmatism.... it too often happens that after the best practitioners have vainly exhausted their art upon a patient, a mesmerist or a "healing medium" will effect a cure! The explorers of old medical literature, from the time of Hippocrates to that of Paracelsus and Van Helmont, will find a large number of well-attested physiological and psychological facts and of measures or medicines for healing the sick which modern physicians superciliously refuse to employ. (*Ibid.*, I. 20)

Elsewhere in *Isis Unveiled* are described authentic magnetic cures; the magical power of music over certain diseases; healing by faith and by the faculty of imagination; the extirpation of diseases by "the imperative will" of a strong, healthy, determined and, above all, a morally pure healer, "which,

consciously or unconsciously, draws to and reinforces itself with the universal spirit of nature, and restores the disturbed equilibrium of the patient's aura"; the hidden powers of certain herbs and plants and even of minerals and metals; and the drawing of nourishment and recuperative energy, not only from the stomach, but from the earth herself and even from the sun and the stars.

What is needed is a recognition among modern medical men of the wisdom of the ancients. If the history of medicine were assimilated by young students much of the false glamour and excessive pride of present-day knowledge and methods might disappear. It is to be hoped that such common-sense principles as obtain in ancient systems of medicine will begin to revitalize the theory and practice of our contemporary so-called science of medicine, which has become a sorry caricature indeed of the ancient Art of Healing.

In its "Workshop" section for December 1954, *Adult Leadership* discusses "A View of Personality." One view has been selected, but the short extracts from the discussion given below may be correlated with much that Robert Crosbie has written on the subject in *The Friendly Philosopher*, e.g.:—

Theosophists often speak of "getting rid of the personality," and, so far as observed, do not appear to have any clear idea of what they mean. Without personalities, there would be no field, no evolution. It is not the personality that is in the way, but the personal idea in regard to it. (p. 38)

Our personality is the resultant of our own Karmic tendencies manifesting in any one life; and, as Mr. Judge states in his article on "Karma" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 6*): "It is the attitude of the mind which draws the Karmic cords tightly round the soul. . . . it will be only through a change of mind that the Karmic burden will be lifted." The following few sentences culled from the above-mentioned section of *Adult Leadership* may be found helpful:—

Personality is a phenomenon of life as it is lived. . . . It is our way of life, under the conditions of our own lot, in a real world of frustration and opportunities.

The first problem that the student of personality must solve is how he shall analyse the phenomena in a meaningful way for the purposes at hand. . . . *The decisions he makes will be determined by what he thinks personality is.*

It is not the characteristics of an individual that create his personality. It is his attitudes towards them.

If any given personality is to be understood, meaningfully and predictively, it is necessary to know, quite definitely, the inner nature of the person's attitudes and purposes, plus the characteristic ways he expresses himself outwardly. The student should be able to put himself, mentally, in the position of the person he is studying, and see and feel life as that person perceives it—not as he, himself, would perceive it under similar circumstances.

The last extract has its personal application too. Mr. Crosbie put it this way:—

May I add one word to you, as a friend and brother: make clean and clear, first, the mental conceptions and perceptions; the rest *will follow naturally*; there will be no destruction—the undesirable will die a natural death. "Grow as the flower grows," from within outwards. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 8)

In *The Middle Way* (London) of February 1955, Dr. Edward Conze translates, with a commentary, the Meditation on Death as outlined by Buddhaghosa in *Visuddhimagga* (VIII. 3-17 and VIII. 25-41). He reminds us of Buddhaghosa's saying in another place that among the 40 meditative practices only two are always and under all circumstances beneficial: the development of friendliness and the recollection of death.

But there is a spiritually helpful awareness of death, and a merely instinctive one, which, though natural, is not helpful. Buddhaghosa's instructions on how to meditate on death are valuable. From all the eight points of view that he describes and recommends, death is approached as a necessary and natural part of the cosmic order and as an inevitable consequence of the nature of incarnated life. Pondering upon it thus, the meditator comes to a better understanding not only of death but also of life. Not only does he lose all fear of death; he is

always watchful, he feels disgust for all forms of becoming, he forsakes the hankering after life, he disapproves of evil, he does not hoard up many things.

...He gains familiarity with the notion of impermanence, and, when he follows that up, also the notions of ill and not-self stand out to him...He...dies without fear and bewilderment.

This is an important subject, and an interesting example of a fine mind's attainment to a tranquil contemplation of death is afforded us in Maitraye Devi's translations of Rabindranath Tagore's two poems, "Whither?" and "Where?"—both on death—which appear in *The Aryan Path* of March 1955. The first represents the natural awareness which, touching as it is, Buddhaghosa warns us against; the second looks back on life's long day from the sundown splendid and serene, a death welcomed in the knowledge that it is a stage in the soul's pilgrimage and with gratitude for Those who have guided the soul on its pilgrimage:—

But I leave my salutation to them, from whose life
light fell on our path and cleared our doubts.

Downtown Community, one of New York's leading experimental schools, held in February a series of parent-teacher discussion meetings on the topic of discipline. Dr. Norman Studer, director of the school, is reported by *The New York Times* of 12th February to have stated that "the democratic way" is vital in working with children, but since "a child is not always capable of distinguishing between his real needs and the whims or desires of the moment," parents and teachers need to enforce certain rules of behaviour.

In rejecting the idea of total freedom for children, however, Dr. Studer cautioned that adults must not swing back to the opposite extreme of complete regimentation. Ruling children through fear and punishment can be damaging. Within a framework of adult-set limits and controls, the youngster must still have freedom to experiment and make mistakes, the amount of freedom suitable for him depending on his age and maturity. Only in

this way can he develop the inner controls necessary for self-discipline, Dr. Studer declared.

An atmosphere of love and understanding is the first essential for helping children grow in self-discipline. As children grow, they should take increasing responsibility for helping to establish their own limits and rules, Dr. Studer said. They should be made to plan their own activities and evaluate their own accomplishments. When adults make rules, these should be sensible and reasonable, and children should be helped to see that they were devised to aid and protect them.

Theosophy presents very definite guidance for the parent or teacher who recognizes his responsibility to the old soul that has come in a new body. It takes seven years in general before the personality has reached a point when the Manasic Ego can take a firm grip on it. Before that time, when the real responsibility of the child begins, his elders must prepare the field. Every child needs discipline to help him starve out such tendencies brought over from past lives as are out of line with the soul's aim and to unfold the innate good. Discipline should start very early in a child's life and last throughout life. Children taught the law of Karma and made to recognize the value of service and of duty and responsibility in younger years are bound to turn out to be better men and women than those whose thoughts and feelings have been unguided, undisciplined by philosophy.

Many have to learn to be wiser parents. Fathers and mothers ignorant of the true meaning of life and its purpose, and not realizing in the least that children are timeless souls, can hardly be said to be successful parents. The Ego's status must be recognized and respected.

Special attention may be called to "A Word to Parents" in the *Teacher's Manual and Guide to The Eternal Verities* (pp. 65-73).

BOOKS

By H. P. BLAVATSKY

Isis Unveiled

Centenary Anniversary Edition. A photographic reprint of the original edition of 1877. Two volumes bound in one.

The Secret Doctrine

A photographic reprint of the original edition of 1888. Two volumes bound in one.

The Theosophical Glossary

A photographic reprint of the original edition of 1892.

Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge

The Key to Theosophy

Raja-Yoga or Occultism

The Voice of the Silence

Five Messages

Quotation Book

By W. Q. JUDGE

Vernal Blooms

The Ocean of Theosophy

Letters That Have Helped Me

Echoes from the Orient

The Bhagavad-Gita

Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita

The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali

An Epitome of Theosophy

The Heart Doctrine

By ROBERT CROSBIE

The Friendly Philosopher

Answers to Questions on The Ocean of Theosophy

OTHER BOOKS

Light on the Path

Through the Gates of Gold

Because — For Children Who Ask Why

The Eternal Verities

The Laws of Healing — Physical and Metaphysical

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Cycles of Psychism

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Information as to the meeting place and times of meetings may be had from the United Lodge of Theosophists, Bombay.

The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Correspondence should be addressed to: The U.L.T., 51 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay.

U. L. T. LODGES

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