

The Theosophical Movement

A Magazine Devoted to the Living of the Higher Life

Vol. 71—No. 9

July 2001

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THEOSOPHY COMPANY (INDIA) PRIVATE LTD.

40 New Marine Lines,

Mumbai 400 020,

India

Self-Reform for World-Improvement

It is to infuse a new current of ideas and aspirations into modern thought, in short, to supply a logical basis for an elevated morality, a science and philosophy which is suited to the knowledge of the day, that Theosophy comes before the world. Mere physical philanthropy, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, is worthless. The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery.

—H. P. Blavatsky

One of the characteristics of the Dark Age, the Kali Yuga, in which we live is the rapidity with which all things come to pass in it. In these fast-moving times it is not uncommon to find the unexpected happening. Effects are being felt by individuals and nations which seem to be out of all proportion to the causes sown.

An undercurrent of turmoil is prevalent in every quarter of the globe. Fear, war, poverty, hunger, disease have encompassed all. So much so that pessimistic forces are overpowering our race and we hear the doom of our civilization pronounced. But the destruction of our civilization should not be taken to spell the death of human souls and the stoppage of their progression towards perfection. Civilizations have arisen and slowly declined or crashed to nothingness, but the human mind-soul has always gone on, ascending the spiral of evolution. National governments may be overthrown, but the government of the natural order of things will go on. Popes and their churches will be swept away, but the Spirit of Religion will survive. Nuclear bombs may destroy laboratories and libraries and the knowledge that they hold, but the true Knowledge which is in the custody of the elect of the Race can never be destroyed and can be regained by a spirit of fearless inquiry. Mundane pomp and pride may be swept away, but the meek in heart will be ready to inherit the earth and to create a new civilization.

Students of Theosophy are labouring, not in blind faith, but by the light of sure knowledge, for a better time, a brighter morrow. In our civilization, in the name of freedom, license and selfishness are practised in personal as in national and international life. Knowledge, sufficient and genuine, enables the student to see that the death of selfishness alone will ameliorate the condition of the world. Legislative enactments can never wipe out selfishness and its triple progeny—Lust, Anger and Greed. Nor can religious preachers or social reformers succeed in destroying selfishness. And the failure in every case is due to lack of true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny.

It is only through self-reform of individual units that humanity *en masse* can be uplifted and made whole. Hence the need so to educate the individual as to make him aware of his own responsibility. That is the task for which students of Theosophy have to prepare themselves. The preparation involves re-forming their own morality, *i.e.*, the acquiring of a new code of ethics founded upon the principles of the Esoteric Philosophy—not for self-advancement, but with a

view to becoming better philanthropists, more efficient workers for the cause of Universal Brotherhood. In order to become effective servers of humanity, they are called upon to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood, without any distinctions whatsoever. The binding power necessary for the realization of Brotherhood comes from knowledge and morality. To practise Brotherhood means the purification of one's feelings and character according to the principles of the philosophy and science of Theosophy. If true knowledge and morality are not made the basis of life and their universal nature is not perceived, progress cannot take place and the world cannot be saved.

Students of Theosophy have to rise higher than the creed, religious and social, into which they are born. Often they fail to recognize their foes when they meet them and are caught in the whirl of worldliness. In these days there is much specious talk about better standards of material living, which misleads the student. Mental emancipation from worldly notions constitutes the right asceticism that he is called upon to practise. He has also to emancipate himself from any false philosophical notions and formulae that may have come to be accepted in place of religion and social practices rejected as false. Without due study he may but replace his old superstitions and ignorance with new ones; and, although to him they represent Theosophical Verities, they may be but a new set of superstitions and a new bundle of false knowledge. But, when the mind is purified by knowledge and is made ready to receive the light and guidance of the Manasic Ego, the Inner Ruler, then is the right way to Theosophic living discerned.

The mundane standard of morality is the aspirant's strong foe. Outside of metaphysics, the world of today has largely lost the values of morality and has substituted a code of convenience and convention that has one application for the rich and another for the poor; one for one's own clique or country and another for the opposite camp. True morality is at a discount while a tinsel show of rectitude is accepted as the hallmark of respectability.

The newer outlook, the larger morality, require the training and subduing of the Kama elements pertaining to the personality in order that the latter may become ready to glimpse the Light of Higher Manas, to listen to the inner Voice of Buddhi and to be filled with the divine radiance of Atma. Then only can come about the death of selfishness.

The application of moral rules has always been an arduous process in which the falls are many while the recompense generally remains afar off. For the disciple, his *dharma*—his religion or, in a wider sense, his duty—creates his morality. At every turn he has to seek for Truth with a liberal mind ere deciding upon what his duty is and how it can be performed.

It has been said that the first step in practical occultism is to guard and devote oneself to the interests of others. The disciple is taught to examine his motive, to keep ward and watch over it and to guide it according to right knowledge. A Master of Wisdom has written:

...motives are vapours, as attenuated as the atmospheric moisture: and, as the latter develops its dynamic energy for man's use only when concentrated and applied as steam or hydraulic power, so the practical value of good motives is best seen when they take the form of deeds.

Loving and self-sacrificing deeds give rise to Self-Knowledge. The puzzling injunction of the Master Krishna to the disciple Arjuna, to offer everything as sacrifice "to me alone" and then to act, puzzles no more when it is recognized that the disciple is learning to find the only basis of true morality. It is summed up in the grand words of the Gita:

But further listen to my supreme and most mysterious words which I will now for thy good reveal unto thee because thou art dearly beloved of me. Place thy heart upon me as I have declared myself to be, serve me, offer unto me alone, and bow down before me alone, and thou shalt come to me; I swear it, for thou art dear to me. Forsake every other religion and take refuge alone with me; grieve not, for I shall deliver thee from all transgressions. (XVIII, 64-66)

Man—a being in search of meaning.

—Plato

Unfolding Man

Students of Theosophy talk of the spiritual life and spiritual evolution, but do they always understand what they mean by these terms? The general tendency is to oppose spirit to matter, and from the very start a division is made which does not exist save in the realm of illusion. In Religion, in science, as also in various schools of philosophy, spirit and matter are understood to be two distinct and opposite concepts.

To know what spiritual evolution is in a practical way, it is necessary for us at the very start to understand very definitely that spirit and matter are neither different nor opposing forces but two aspects of one and the same reality. It is how we look at them that makes the difference. Looked at from one angle of vision, spirit appears as matter; looked at from another angle of vision, matter appears as spirit. Neither is superior or inferior to the other. Both of them exist and work together. Make a division between them and all understanding of cosmic or individual processes, spiritual, psychical or material, becomes impossible.

First, then, let us get it very clearly in our minds that when we speak of spiritual evolution we only mean this—evolution of matter from the point of view of the spirit. Spiritual evolution is not evolution of the spirit only, but evolution of spirit-matter from the point of view of the spirit. So also material evolution is nothing else but evolution of spirit-matter from the point of view of matter. Understand this and you will begin to understand that there is not a real gulf between the true scientist and the true philosopher. They are approaching the same thing from two different points of view. Browning uttered a profound truth when he said: "...nor soul helps flesh more,

now, than flesh helps soul!" To make a division between the two, therefore, is to take an attitude that may be philosophical but is not scientific at the same time, or may be scientific but is not spiritual, philosophical and ethical at the same time. When matter and spirit are seen to be indivisible, to be but aspects of the same truth, we have started on our quest aright.

If spiritual evolution is evolution of spirit-matter from the point of view of the spirit, how shall we apply this idea to ourselves? Are human beings material or are they spiritual? They are neither wholly material nor wholly spiritual; they are a combination of spirit-matter. Looked at from one point of view, our body is a material form composed of atoms, molecules, cells, organs; looked at from another point of view, our body is composed of living intelligences, nature spirits, angels, *devas*, gods, shining ones. In ancient Indian philosophy the body was regarded as a collection of thirty-three crores of gods. It is a living organism composed of lives, intelligences of different degrees of perception, possessing different capacities of expression. We would be confused and lost in a maze if we took the attitude that on one side and in one part we are matter, and on another side and in another part we are spirit. We are spirit-matter, not spirit *and* matter.

Now what are we? Let us understand the idea that we as actors and our actions are one, that we are made up of our actions. Actions are desire-impelled or thought-engendered or both. So, we are composed of thoughts, feelings, desires, be they right or be they wrong, and they give rise to actions, desirable or undesirable, pleasure-producing or pain-giving. But when we begin to probe further we find that we have something else within us. There is always a conflict between our desires and our thoughts. Our desires impel us in a particular way, to do a particular thing, and our thoughts interfere and say, "No, that is not right, that must not be." Often the desires win; sometimes the thoughts; but there is a conflict. If we observe that conflict we find that we have something more than desires and thoughts, something that enables us to decide which desires are good and which bad; which thoughts are correct and which incorrect. To judge and to decide what is what, we usually take the help of the voice of conscience. Often we do not follow its prompting, and then we have what is called "a pang of conscience."

Each one's conscience is for him or her the final and supreme seat of judgment. Spiritual evolution is from that point of view the culture of the voice of conscience. It implies what we all know, that our voice of conscience in every case and on every occasion does not speak correctly. Many a time we act according to its dictates and then find that we acted wrongly under the given circumstances. Our voice of conscience, then, is undergoing change and is evolving. We need to understand what it is and from where it comes.

First, the voice of conscience is the voice of our accumulated experiences, experiences gathered and assimilated in the past—the past not only of this present life but of prior lives as well—by the processes of our desire nature, our thought nature and our actions. Are there any principles or laws whereby the activity of our conscience in reference to our actions, feelings, thoughts, can be understood by us? If we experiment with ourselves we shall find that there is a way of understanding it.

With reference to our actions, the voice of conscience speaks to us when they are not charitable—that is, if we can make it speak truly; for, as we saw, the voice of conscience does

not always speak the truth, nor does it speak the whole truth, because it is the voice of *our* accumulated experience and we are not perfect. Hence the advice of a Christian prelate to his followers: "No doubt you may follow your voice of conscience, only make sure your conscience is not that of a fool." Culture of the voice of conscience, then, is what we are looking for. Charity in reference to *all* actions needs to be cultivated, using the word "charity" in a wider sense. It may happen, however, that sometimes the voice of conscience points out it speaks to us that our actions *are* charitable when really they are not.

In reference to the feelings, it says: "Your feelings are not harmonious." Harmony is the keynote of all right feeling. We move between elation and depression—tremendous joy on one occasion and tremendous sorrow on another occasion, and we are affected by the seesaw of pleasure and pain, cold and heat, popularity and unpopularity. There is lack of harmony and rhythm, and when the voice of conscience speaks clearly and forcibly it says: "Your feelings are not harmonious, and therefore your actions are not charitable." It may speak to us in a thousand ways, but when we analyse all that it says in reference to our actions and feelings, ultimately it will come to that.

In reference to our thoughts, it says: "Your thoughts are hurried and impatient." What are the thoughts that disturb us? Those that have for their energy and force the spirit of impatience. We are the manifestations of this predominant vice of impatience.

We are impatient of thought, inharmonious of feeling, uncharitable of action. When our actions are charitable, when our feelings are harmonious, when our thoughts are patient, then we are living the spiritual life; the moment we depart from that we go into the material life.

People normally do not look for anything higher than the voice of conscience. But, though very rarely, in a mood of exaltation, in an atmosphere that is idealistic, mystic, or spiritual, we can feel that there is in us something higher than the voice of conscience. On occasions the strange, still, small voice of God speaks to us a language which is different from the ordinary, familiar language of conscience. Spiritual evolution or the culture of conscience consists in the establishment of an intimate and harmonious relationship between that still, small voice and our ordinary voice of conscience. More and more attention paid to the latter makes audible to us, now and then, at rare intervals, the voice of our Inner God, which speaks with authority. And though, while it speaks, things may not be clear to us, though its great message, once delivered, may leave us somewhat confused, its urge is so tremendous that men and women are helpless before it, and they feel impelled to act in accordance with it. Our voice of conscience may, and often does, go wrong, but the still, small voice, if heard and heeded, always comes right. In the understanding of that lies the fact about what spiritual evolution is.

Theosophy teaches that this still, small voice of God belongs to our spiritual self. Our real spiritual self can focus its light only on our conscience, and through it, it contacts our thoughts and mind, our feelings and emotions, our brain and the body of action. The spiritual self that we really are is not able to manifest its powers in most of us at the present moment, because we have not trained ourselves as bodies, feelings, minds, to listen always to the voice of conscience. We are carried away by our desires and impulses; we are carried away by our

thoughts, analytical and critical; we are carried away by what people say about us and about the circumstances in which we are placed. Our thoughts and desires which impel us to act are not energized by our voice of conscience all the time. Desires and thoughts well up within us, but we do not ask: "What has my voice of conscience to say about it?" In nine cases out of ten we act impulsively and are wise after the event. We consult the voice of conscience after having finished the action and having made a muddle. That is why the energy of the soul, the light of the spirit-being that we are, does not come to us always and continuously. But it is there, and spiritual evolution is the evolution that makes that contact more permanent and more regular, the contact with the still, small voice of God speaking in three definite ways to the accumulated experience of our lower nature.

First, it shines as the light of reason. Through reason the soul contacts all the accumulated experience of our thoughts; that which can control and guide the thoughts and the mental processes is the reason aspect of the soul, that which is sometimes spoken of as the higher mind, that which sees the underlying connection between the variety of thoughts and thinking processes.

Secondly, there is the light of intuition. Intuition is that light of the soul which makes possible the culture of our feelings and emotions. Just as reason contacts the mental processes of our lower nature, so intuition makes its contact with our feelings and desires and emotions.

Thirdly, just as in the lower nature desires and thoughts produce action, so in the higher nature intuition and reason working together bring into existence that higher kind of action which is creative or willful.

The light of the will, the light of intuition and the light of reason are, then, the three great lights that illuminate the voice of conscience and are able to speak to it definitely. Not all of us have this triple light of the soul; that is why our spiritual evolution has either stopped or is proceeding at a snail's pace. In moments of intense suffering or anguish, or in the hour of some uplifting experience, the still, small voice of the God that we are speaks; but the constant endeavour to bring the light of reason to our thoughts, the light of intuition to our emotions, and to make all our actions creative by the power of will—that is lacking in most of us. To do these three things is to have fulfilled the needs and purposes of spiritual evolution.

Three qualities are necessary for acting by will, through the channels of intuition and reason—qualities that will make action charitable, emotions harmonious, thoughts patient.

The dominant virtue or characteristic of reason is energy—energy that makes reason break the fetters of mortality and see the illusion of space and time. Take an instance: Are the Christ and the Buddha dead and gone today? For those who are energized by reason, the Great Ones and their message are present, living, now, here. So the energy of reason destroys the material limitations of time and space and moves on and on; and when one has that energy of reason all other energies get transformed. It is the real source of health, spiritual, psychic, intellectual and physical. That energy of reason makes us realize the immortality of other beings and of ourselves.

Next, the quality that gives birth to intuition is heart-knowledge. It pertains to Buddhi and is different from mind-knowledge. There is the same difference between mind- and heart-knowledge as between reason and intuition. When heart-knowledge speaks, it speaks through the faculty of intuition. Its characteristic is that it illuminates the whole subject at one flash, which reason does not do. Reason unfolds step by step, in the process of time; but the light of intuition is like sunlight which suddenly bursts into a room when the windows are thrown open, and which illuminates everything it comes in contact with. The light of intuition shines only when the emotions, the feelings and the desires are under control. People often ask why it is that they do not get intuitions. Intuition is one of the faculties of the soul and nobody is devoid of it in his innermost nature; but its influence is not felt in the lower self because the desire or feeling nature, which is the substratum on which intuition can naturally alight, is in a disturbed and inharmonious condition. The sun of intuition cannot reflect itself on the ruffled waters of our emotions; the sun throws its perfect image on the waters only when the latter are steady and quiet. Reason cannot dwell in an impatient mind; intuition cannot dwell in a heart full of discords.

For the unfoldment of the creative will something higher than the light of Manas-reason or of Buddhi-intuition is required. The Light of Atma, the Self, gives us the power to create in a real way—to create with patience and harmony, through reason and intuition. What we ordinarily call the will is often not the real will; what in us we name "will," in other people we call "obstinacy"! The real will always creates harmony, concord, unity—the manifestations of right action. It is the golden fire which is the core of intuition. When the active will of the spirit begins to operate, all our actions become sacrificial, altruistic, sacramental. When intuition works, all pairs of opposites in reference to feelings, all rights and wrongs, pleasures and pains, correct and incorrect things, vanish and resolve themselves into a unity; only the blissful aspect of rhythm exists. When the energy of reason works, all our thought processes, through absence of impatience, become pure and compassionate. Creative will is the pristine power of the soul which lives by creative activity.

Now, what shall we do to conscience so that the still, small voice of the Inner God may speak to that conscience? The quality of dispassion, *Vairagya*, needs to be developed. Our voice of conscience tells us to do a thing, but does not speak to us in the language of dispassion, because it leads us along the grooves we have made for ourselves by our past actions, feelings and thoughts. People often say, "My voice of conscience spoke, therefore I acted." But is it dispassionate? Or is it a passionate voice arising out of our own accumulated past which is not perfect? When it is a dispassionate voice it is bound to get the threefold light of the soul. There is no exception.

To sum up, there are seven qualities that need to be developed: Charity (*Dana*) for action, Harmony (*Shila*) for emotion, Patience (*Kshanti*) for thought—the three lower; Dispassion (*Vairagya*) for the voice of conscience connecting the lower with the higher, Energy (*Virya*) for reason, Heart-Knowledge (*Dhyana*) for intuition, Will (*Prajna*) for creative activity. These are the seven Paramitas, the seven virtues mentioned in *The Voice of the Silence*. The spiritual path is marked by seven stages, and it is said that there are seven portals of initiation and seven golden keys, one for each portal. These portals and keys are within us: lower hands, lower heart, lower head; higher hands, higher heart, higher head; and the relation that exists between

these. When the relation is established and maintained between the lower and higher, we live as spirit-beings; when we live in the lower, we exist as matter-beings.

The process of spiritual evolution is going on in all of us, in this temple of the body created by living intelligences for the living spirit which resides within it—that immortal spirit which, in Gita terminology, "has hands and feet in all directions; eyes, heads, mouths, and ears in every direction"—and we are it. But often the temple is polluted by our uncharitable actions, inharmonious feelings, impatient thoughts, and then it ceases to be a fit habitat of the spirit.

The cross on which the spirit is crucified continually is fourfold: actions, desires, thoughts, the voice of conscience. The Crist is triple: will, intuition, reason; in the language of Theosophy: Atma, Buddhi, Manas. To control that fourfold lower nature by the sevenfold virtues—that is the path of spiritual evolution that takes us from the world of mortality into immortality, the world of the Masters, which is not somewhere far away in space, but is right here. To see with the single eye of spirit the thousand things of the flesh, and see them all co-ordinated in one unbreakable whole, that is to see spiritually. To try to realize that all beings are but aspects of the one great Spiritual Being; all heads think the thoughts of the one Thinker; all hands perform the actions of the one Actor; all hearts feel that love of the one Lover—and we are that Thinker, Actor, Lover—that is to live in and as Spirit. We are It. And there is no higher power anywhere outside of us. The beginning of the task is the culture of conscience, and through the first and early steps that we studied, we shall embark upon the ocean, leaving behind the world of darkness, and see stretching before us the New World of Immortal Life.

How often does one see strong-hearted men and determined women moved by a strong aspiration towards an ideal they know to be the true one, battling successfully, to all appearance, with Ahriman and conquering him. Their external *Se/ves*, have been the battleground of a most terrible, deadly strife between the two opposing Principles; but they have stood firmly—and won. The dark enemy seems conquered; it is crushed in fact, so far as the animal instincts are concerned. Personal selfishness, that greed for self, and self only, the begetter of most of the evils—has vanished; and every lower instinct, melting like soiled icicles under the beneficent ray of Ahura Mazda, the radiant EGO-SUN, has disappeared, making room for better and holier aspirations. Yet, there lurks in them their old and but partially destroyed vanity, that spark of personal pride which is the last to die in man. Dormant it is, latent and invisible to all, including their own consciousness; but there it is still. Let it awake but for an instant, and the seemingly crushed-out personality comes back to life at the sound of its voice, arising from its grave like an unclean ghoul at the command of the midnight incantator. Five hours—nay, five minutes even—of life under its fatal sway, may destroy the work of years of self-control and training, and of laborious work in the service of Ahura Mazda, to open wide the door anew to Angra Mainyu. Such is the result of the silent and unspoken but ever-present *worship* of the only beautiful creation of the Spirit of Selfishness and Darkness.

—H. P. Blavatsky

Learning and Teaching

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance....Unsullied by the hand of matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of spirit—the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdoms.

—The Voice of the Silence

Learning is questioning. It is acquired by strong search and humility. It fails in one of its chief purposes if it does not evoke gratitude for the Teaching and the Teacher. To both these reverence is due, for it is They who open the understanding to newer and wider horizons.

With an averagely developed reasoning faculty, the inquirer may feel that he is well equipped to study subjects such as religion, cosmogenesis, anthropogenesis and the life and behaviour of nature's finer forces. He is mistaken. In such a study, the intellect is not all that important and may under certain circumstances become a hindrance. Further, the inquisitive mind which modern methods of study encourage is definitely not the questioning mind, and he who has it will have to curb its ebullience. One notable defect which makes a farce of student-life is perceptible in the modern spirit of irreverence that has taken hold of pupils as a class (the young and the grown-ups alike) and which precipitates in bouts of indiscipline and violence against teachers and institutions. A student who is infected by this virus is very much in need of mental readjustment, for, till this particular maladjustment is removed, he will cease to derive any benefit from the teacher's efforts. The knowledge and help that flow from the teacher to the pupil through osmosis will in such circumstances remain incommunicable. In all cases, the desire to learn must match the willingness of the teacher to instruct. Without it, there can be no pupil-teacher relationship. Where minds should join in harmony—the one to give, the other to receive, there is a feeling of frustration and antagonism and therefore a recoiling from close and friendly intimacy.

In worldly schools and academies, pupils are left to themselves to adjust their relationship with co-pupils. Rivalry instead of emulation is encouraged. This is bad enough. What is worse is that jealousy, fear, animosity, sexual attractions, etc., are allowed to simmer so long as they do not surface during study hours. Such undesirable tendencies which are allowed to exist between co-students generate an inner disturbance in the pupil. This beclouds perception and hinders concentration. But the greater and more lasting ill effect that arises from such tendencies is that in the mind are sown seeds of fear, distrust and discord. A pupil exposed to such influences becomes a drag on his nation and society because he starts seeing foes, real or imaginary, in all congregations of men. He is unfortunate, for, wherever he goes, he carries with him germs of discord, unsettled ideas and a distorted vision of the true destiny of himself and his fellow-men.

Where devoted students gather and along with the teacher get immersed in the study of universal truths, there an interplay of affection and respect becomes manifest. An electrifying force pervades the group and enables the teachings to alchemize the mind and brain of each pupil according to the degree of his receptivity. There is a constant and harmonious interflow of

sympathetic currents in and around the group. At least for that time and in that group, brotherhood in one of its real senses gets established. The solidarity and spirit of unity which can pervade a group and raise it to sublime heights may be likened to a similar condition in a musical ensemble where the individual instrumentalist finds his identity merged in the composite whole and the joint effort achieves not only a harmony in sound but creates an atmosphere which, emanating from the group, overspreads the audience. True union or brotherhood, whether it be joined in study or application or service, discloses something more than a compact unity. It gives birth to that impalpable something whose force and influence radiate from the group in ever-widening circles. Even at his stage of a beginner, the student can make a valued contribution towards such unity.

To resolve to be a student is easy. To become one requires the imposition of a rigid discipline on oneself, and that is not easy. Any ordinary institution of learning has a set curriculum, a fixed set of textbooks, and set modes of imparting knowledge. The pupil is expected to move within those prescribed limits only. Why, then, should a grown-up man who in his youth has passed through this discipline chafe at similar limits when he enters upon the study of a knowledge as unknown to him as was at one time algebra and geometry? And yet, to judge from experience, the would-be student of life wants a lucid and exact clarification on points which at his relatively kindergarten stage are inexplicable because of non-development of certain faculties which alone can help him to understand. The beginner has to realize that the reasoning processes of the intellect have their uses only for a lower stratum of consciousness and that if he desires to delve deeper into knowledge, he must build for himself other instruments of perception—like, for instance, intuition. Without his microscope, telescope and X-ray machine, man is handicapped even in earthly knowledge because his physical senses are powerless for the penetration of those points in space which these instruments reveal. So with intuition. It opens up new horizons of knowledge which no reasoning can reach. There are vast areas of knowledge inaccessible to the man of ordinary intellect, and he is too often tempted to turn away from the higher study because of the initial difficulty of arousing intuition.

Whereas the intellect can be heightened by a greater development of the brain and memory, the development of intuition requires the concentrating of attention on all fields of action, and specially those of ethics and service. This is difficult to most natures, and students failing in their attempts are prone to fall back on their intellect, hoping that somehow this will help them to progress. The hope is futile as that of the person who, frustrated by a wrongly set up microscope, discards it and hopes that his physical sight will so develop in time as to bring about the desired magnification. Pupils who lay aside their quest for intuition go on marking time. They attend classes and lectures year after year in endless routine, wondering why enlightenment does not come.

Both *The Voice of the Silence* and *Light on the Path* speak of an inner Voice, an indwelling Divinity. Says the Voice:

That which is uncreate abides in thee, Disciple....If thou would'st reach it and blend the two, thou must divest thyself of thy dark garments of illusion. Stifle the voice of

flesh, allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine, that thus the twain may blend in one.

Says Light on the Path:

Stand aside in the coming battle, and though thou fightest be not thou the warrior. Look for the warrior and let him fight in thee. Take his orders for battle and obey them. Obey him not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires; for he is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself....If thy cry reach his listening ear then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within....He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth. When once he has entered thee and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee, and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee.

The inner Voice and inner Teacher has to be searched for through all experience and all teachings. Intuition itself, though it introduce the student to territories hitherto sealed, is itself an aid—a valuable one, but still an aid. The study of the basic aspects of the Teachings, even the recondite ones about Karma, the Hierarchies, Cycles, Light, Force, etc., must be so undertaken as to lead to and not away from the moment when the inner Voice becomes a living, vibrating entity. Thus, for the student there are two teachers. The first is one perhaps a little more learned than his pupils—a person who possibly delays his own advancement towards the Light because he burns with the desire to help as many as he can to step across the threshold that separates the non-eternal knowledge from the eternal Wisdom. This Teacher, in however small a degree, is the representative of the ultimate Teacher. Any disrespect to him, any opposition or ill-feeling, creates insularly bad influences that thwart teacher and pupil alike.

The Teachings that flow from the inner Voice, and therefore in reflected degree through the teacher of a class or group studying Occultism, are *sui generis*. They remain the ultimate in knowledge. Yet, the real secrets, the true mysteries, cannot be imparted by the earthly teacher. They are communicated by the inner Voice, and so the awakened man cannot but say, "This have I heard."

What is God-given is what we call human nature. To fulfil the law of our human nature is what we call the moral law. The cultivation of the moral law is what we call culture. The moral law is a law from whose operation we cannot for one instant in our existence escape. A law from which we may escape is not the moral law. Wherefore it is that the moral man (or the superior man) watches diligently over what his eyes cannot see and is in fear and awe of what his ears cannot hear.

There is nothing more evident than that which cannot be seen by the eyes and nothing more palpable than that which cannot be perceived by the senses. Wherefore the moral man watches diligently over his secret thoughts.

When the passions, such as joy, anger, grief, and pleasure have not awakened, that is our central self, or moral being (chung). When these passions awaken and each and all attain due measure and degree, that is harmony, or the moral order (ho). Our central self or moral being is the great basis of existence, and harmony or moral order is the universal law in the world.

When our true central self and harmony are realized, the universe then becomes a cosmos and all things attain their full growth and development.

—Lao Tzu

The Dissemination of Theosophy

Study-application-promulgation have been called the three sides of an equilateral triangle. Promulgation is the test-tube in which our study-application-assimilation has to be evaluated. It reveals gaps in our knowledge and also draws our attention to our lack of application. The task of promulgation is not easy. Not only does the student need the capacity to speak or write; he has also to learn the right *method* of presentation of the teachings—how to put them across not just for the minds but for the hearts of people, whether they be listeners or readers.

How can individual students of Theosophy promulgate? Speaking from the platform and writing for our magazines are two avenues for collective teaching; conversation and correspondence, for personal teaching. All four should be utilized. But often our life speaks more eloquently than words. Inevitably, the Philosophy is judged by the way its exponents conduct themselves in life. Each student has his or her own circle of non-theosophical contacts, and the precepts and example of each carry forth and convey Theosophy.

Theosophy can do little for those who refuse to open the window of their minds. Apathetic people are best left alone after an initial effort. But those who seek the Truth are more numerous than we imagine. Even in our circle of friends, relations, acquaintances, there are those who want light and are seeking answers to their questions. Our response could be: "There is knowledge on this subject in Theosophy, of which I am a student. It has benefited me and it could benefit you. Do you wish to know? According to the answer would be our next step. Enthusiastic inquiry, doubting sarcasm, or flat denial, each has to be responded to with tact and patience, and our attitude has to be compassionate, without a trace of irritation at others' ignorance, or their mistaken belief, or their criticism of Theosophy. So much misunderstanding prevails as to the doctrines of Theosophy that part of our task is to dissipate erroneous notions from the minds of inquirers. Even those who are critical of Theosophy now, may, after knowing us better, become more responsive to us. Our life, and life alone, will awaken them.

The tendency to be self-assertive or to push ourselves forward should above all be refrained from. By so doing we stand between the inquirers and Theosophy, instead of letting Theosophy speak through us. Not "Behold, I know," but "Thus have I heard" should be our attitude. The student-exponent must look upon himself as a transmitter, a channel; and the right preparation of mind and heart should be made for his mission to be fulfilled.

It is the common sense of Theosophy that should be put across to inquirers, and abstruse teachings are best avoided. A show of erudition on the part of the student is sure to nip the inquirer's interest in the bud. This has happened with newcomers at U.L.T. meetings, and can happen in conversation as well. Many an inquirer, after showing an initial interest in Theosophy, has turned away when the presentation of the teachings goes over his head. A simple presentation of our basic doctrines, such as those of Karma and Reincarnation, would go a long way in answering many a query that commonly comes up: "Why do I suffer?" "Why am I where I am?" "Why are there inequalities in life?" "Is there a God who rewards or punishes?" "Does prayer help?" Of all Theosophical doctrines, Karma is perhaps the most comprehensive and has the greatest number of practical bearings on daily life.

Every metaphysical teaching of Theosophy has its practical counterpart, and it is the latter that makes a greater impact on casual inquirers. The Stanzas of the Book of Dzyan, on which The Secret Doctrine is based, and the Book of the Golden Precepts are both derived from the same source. This is something we need to keep in mind in our promulgation endeavours. In Master's words: "Theosophy *most be made practical*; and it has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless digressions, in the sense of desultory orations and fine talk."

Mr. Judge wrote that we are not working for "success" but rather developing in ourselves persistence of effort. The effort to be always ready to present the Teachings and to meet and help others in what ultimately counts.

"The object of Theosophical study and work," Robert Crosbie said, "is *not* individual development, but that each and all should become true helpers of Humanity." Our efforts at promulgation in our own circle may seem inadequate, but even "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Let us do what we can and all that we know how to do, leading the minds of the people we contact to the Light of Truth, and if even one or two are awakened by that Light, we shall have done enough.

Mr. Judge had this to say in an address given by him in London, at the 1892 European T. S. Convention:

If we believe in our message and in the aim of the Society, we ought never to tire telling the people that which they can understand. And the rich as well as the poor are the people to whom I refer. They need the help of Theosophy, for they are wandering very close to the marshes of materialism. They must have a true ethic, a right philosophy. Tell them of our great doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. Tell of these with confidence, unshaken by opinions of others, and that confidence of yours will beget confidence in the hearer. Science and exact scholarship are factors

in our progress, but although they are important the mass of the people are more important still. You cannot scientifically prove everything. But if you are sure, as so many of us are, that we are immortal pilgrims, then tell the people plainly and practically how they have been here before in other bodies, and will be here again to suffer or enjoy just as they may have decided in their other life, and they will believe it. They will soon come to that belief because these laws are facts in nature, facts in their own real experience....

Do not, as Theosophists, confine yourselves to the intellect. The dry or the interesting speculations upon all the details of cosmogony and anthropology will not save the world. They do not cure sorrow nor appeal to those who feel the grinding stones of fate, and know not why it should be so. Address yourselves therefore to using your intellectual knowledge of these high matters, so as to practically affect the hearts of men. ("The Promulgation of Theosophy": Judge Pamphlet No. 24, p. 33)

The Problem of Human Misery

The whole world is in search of happiness and peace, and yet a mere glance around shows how men and women of all countries and nations are overburdened with sorrow and suffering on the physical as well as the mental and moral planes. Cries of woe deafen one's ears; sights of misery and pain through disease, starvation, homelessness sadden one's eyes and heart. Above all, non-recognition of the soul-satisfying philosophy of Life, the Eternal Verities, non-acceptance of the Way of Life indicated by the Bearers of the Torch of Truth down the ages, overwhelms an earnest and sincere student and makes him wonder why mankind prefers ignorance to wisdom, darkness to light, mortality to that which is immortal and eternal! Conferences sponsored by governments or leading organizations are held in all the countries of the world to find out ways and means to improve the lot of mankind, to raise the standard of life, to provide men with all the amenities; but, in spite of spending so much of time, money and energy, where are we? There seems to be no way out!

Has anyone solved the problem of human misery and human woe as the Great Teachers have done? Some think the cause of the trouble to be economic and social; others think it is religious and political. Is it so? Why is there no happiness or peace in countries where educational progress is at its best? This proves that none of these outward things can bring true happiness or peace, that the latter cannot be bought or sold or be obtained as gifts, but that they can be acquired only through a right mode of thinking and of living.

What in reality is true happiness? It is a spontaneous feeling of inner joy and contentment arising out of the focusing of the consciousness away from the personal, on the impersonal and

the universal. It is known as *Ananda*, true and everlasting bliss. The consciousness is centred not in the little self but in the Self of all creatures, for the common good of all beings.

In Zoroastrian scriptures there is a simple verse: "Happiness to him through whom happiness flows to others." In a few words it teaches that when another's happiness is considered, when something is done for the benefit of others, it results in one's own happiness. The same idea is stressed by Madame Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy*:

Our philosophy teaches us that the object of doing our duties to all men and to ourselves the last, is not the attainment of personal happiness, but of the happiness of others; the fulfilment of right for the sake of right; not for what it may bring us. Happiness, or rather contentment, may indeed follow the performance of duty, but is not and must not be the motive for it. (p. 226)

True happiness is quite different from fleeting pleasures that come and go, bring momentary joy followed by misery. It is permanently established because of the right perception of existing things, the recognition of the voidness of the seeming full and the fullness of the seeming void. Unless and until the distinction between the mortal and the immortal, between the fleeting and the everlasting, is clearly grasped, true happiness cannot be experienced. It is on the clear understanding of unity in diversity, of the One in the many and the many in the One, that true happiness depends.

The practice of virtues in the daily performance of duties leads one to real happiness and contentment. The divine and the demoniac qualities are described by Krishna in the Sixteenth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Do not the demoniac qualities that are mentioned bring to mind an exact picture of our modern civilization and our atomic age? Men and women are victimized by passion-anger-greed, the three gates of hell. Krishna says that they destroy the soul; therefore are we asked to abandon them. If people could realize the consequences of their behaviour they would act differently. Instead of abandoning their wrong ways they get more and more involved in them, only to find that happiness recedes from them the more they seek it. Far from getting what they desire, they are plunged in misery and sorrow. The path that leads to happiness has been indicated, but it is the reluctance of people to gain knowledge that has caused havoc. Krishna speaks of all such thus: "Maintaining this view, their souls being ruined, their minds contracted, with natures perverted, enemies of the world, they are born to destroy." Is this not true in view of what is happening at present? For what purpose are nuclear weapons manufactured and vast amounts spent if not for destruction? The sad end of all those who have made of themselves "enemies of the world" is described in the *Gita*. Somehow people prefer to remain in bondage rather than become free! Man himself has to put forth effort to change the quality of his mind and heart; until then it is not possible to attain to true happiness.

Lord Buddha has given instructions in the *Dhammapada*, in the chapter on Happiness, on how to live happily, what the obstructions in the way are, how to overcome them, etc. Freedom from hatred, from the disease of longing and from anxiety is described as being the way to happiness. Individually or collectively, consciously or unconsciously, people succumb to these forces, and yet, the Buddha asks us to live happily amidst those who are filled with hatred,

longing and anxiety, ourselves rising above these ebullitions of the lower nature. The symptoms of these inner diseases are evident everywhere. An attitude of detachment towards our possessions is another essential characteristic. It brings about real joy which is the nourishment of the Shining Ones. All individual and collective troubles would vanish by living the life according to these principles. In verse 204 of the Dhammapada we are told:

Health is the greatest of gifts; contentment is the greatest wealth; trust is the best of relationships; Nirvana is the highest happiness.

Health is of the body as well as of the mental and psychic natures. A healthy person becomes more and more integrated, therefore tranquil and happy. Contentment is a rare quality in our restless civilization of wants. Most of us hardly restrict our wants following the law of necessity, and so we are always discontented. And are we always trustful of one another these days? Nations are in constant fear of one another because of lack of trust; neighbours, friends, relations are distrustful of one another. If people were to practise this valuable advice of Lord Buddha in daily life, how different the world would be! Instead of the ceaseless chase after possessions, instead of fear, anxiety, discontent and distrust, there would be peace, tranquillity and happiness on all sides.

There is an old story that proves how true this fact is. Once a king wanted to find out who was the happiest man in his kingdom. He ordered his ministers to send out men in different directions in search of such a one and get a shirt from him. They looked everywhere but everyone seemed to have some ailment, some affliction of one type or another. At length they came across a poor village boy who was full of joy and happiness, but he had no shirt on! He must have been contented with his lot and could not have been envious of those with shirts, otherwise he would not have been happy! So it is the right attitude of mind that brings one happiness and not the objective things of the world. Anyone can be happy and content in the Self through the Self by forsaking every desire, as Krishna points out in the Second Discourse of the Bhagavad-Gita.

His son is dead. What has happened? His son is dead. Nothing more? Nothing. His ship is lost. What has happened? His ship is lost. He has been haled to prison. What has happened? He has been haled to prison.

But that any of these things are misfortunes to him is an addition which everyone makes of his own....If any man be unhappy, let him know that it is by reason of himself alone.

—Epictetus

Avataras—Divine Incarnations

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, July 1963.]

Who or what is an *Avatara*, a Divine Incarnation? This question comes to mind when we begin to think of Krishna or of the Buddha. Is there a meaning for us in the conception of an *Avatara*? Or is it just a Hindu concept of Ten Incarnations of Vishnu, nine already having passed and one more yet to come?

If we turn to The Theosophical Glossary, we are told there under "Incarnations": "The *avatar* doctrine constituted the grandest mystery of every old religious system." An under "*Avatara*" we read that it is "the descent of a god or some exalted Being, who has progressed beyond the necessity of Rebirths." Such a "descent" means that the "god" or the "exalted Being" takes birth "in the body of a simple mortal." Thus, Krishna is said to be an *avatar* of Vishnu. "The Dalai Lama," H.P.B. says, "is regarded as an *avatar* of Avalokiteswara, and the Teschu Lama as one of Tson-Kha-pa, or Amitabha."

The Glossary continues: "There are two kinds of *avatars*: those born from woman, and the parentless, the *anupadaka*."

What is the difference between an *Avatara* and one whose Ego has taken complete charge of the human entity, one who has become a perfect human being? We are given a good analogy by Robert Crosbie in *The Friendly Philosopher* (p. 152):

A *Siddha-Purusha* (perfect man) is like an archaeologist who removes the dust and lays open an old well which has been covered up by ages of disuse. The *Avatara*, on the other hand, is like an engineer who sinks a new well in a place where there was no water before. Great Men give salvation to those only who have the waters of piety hidden in themselves, but the *Avatara* saves him too whose heart is devoid of love and dry as a desert.

To which category, then, does Krishna belong? He calls himself *Adhiyajna*, the Great Sacrifice—"Adhiyajna is myself in this body," He says in Chapter Eight of the Gita. In this sense, Krishna is a distinct principle in Nature—the principle of Divine Compassion. We can understand more of the meaning of Compassion when we remember that Compassion is not an attribute but is "the Law of Laws—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF"—the Self of the World-Soul. What *Atma* is to us, that Divine Compassion, the Law of Laws, is to the Great Lodge of Masters.

Krishna thus viewed is not just one individual Master, is not any single Guru or Teacher, but is that principle which all emancipated ones try to attain and to embody within Themselves. Krishna is called *Purna Avatara*, not only because He incarnated in His full glory as related in the Mahabharata, but also because He is the principle which furnishes Divine Compassion to any vehicle or channel when it is needed. But this is a mystery too deep to go into, and deeper still to speak about. (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, August 1934)

Who, then, was and is He? What relationship exists between Him and our world of men?

When an emancipated Soul of former fields of evolution, out of compassion infinite, comes to do the work of the Planetary Being in this or in any other earth, He brings within Himself, and with Him, the seed, the *bija*, for all future Avataras, sometimes designated as Maha-Vishnu. (*Ibid.*)

Did Krishna, then, live and work also in the early periods of humanity? If so, who was He?

Krishna becomes the *Adi-Purusha*, the Primal Man, who strikes the key-note of Truth at the starting of all cycles, major and minor—Vivaswat at one cycle, Manu at another, Ikshwaku at a third, and so on, all receiving from the same Seed, from the one Source, the Light, the Wisdom and the Power of His Great Sacrifice.... If it is true that we know something of the incarnation of Krishna 5,000 years ago, at the starting of the Kali-Yuga, we know nothing of His work in earlier periods and especially at the commencement of this humanity, when the Planetary Being, the Father of Wisdom, incarnated the Light of Krishna as the *Adi-Purusha*. And then it was that those great truths were impressed within men's Souls, those Truths which are called our inherent ideas, and which come to us as our instinctive intuitions. They were burnt into our very Souls in the innermost part of our natures, in Manas, the Thinker. Therefore Krishna says, "And among the organs and the senses, I am the Manas." (*Ibid.*)

It is when we understand that these inherent ideas are within our Souls that we realize something of the nature of the Great Renunciation of all *Avataras*, and this recognition will lead us to seek the Gurus whose very task it is to assist men to unfold those ideas to the full. We then see that the Masters, the Gurus, can only be found *within*, in our own hearts, in the very place where the Divine Hand of Krishna placed the seed of spirituality—Krishna, the Mysterious Lord, the Lord who is united with all of us through His Great Sacrifice.

Turning to another aspect of this concept, we have the Ten *Avataras* of Vishnu (the pervading power) mentioned by H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 274-75):

1. Matsya-Avatar: as a fish. It will also be his tenth and last avatar, at the end of the Kali-yug.
2. Kurm-Avatar: as a tortoise.
3. Varaha: as a boar.
4. Nara-Sing: as a *man-lion*; last animal stage.
5. Vamana: as a dwarf; first step toward the human form.
6. Parasu-Rama: as a hero, but yet an imperfect man.
7. Rama-Chandra: as the hero of *Ramayana*. Physically a perfect man....
8. Christna-Avatar: the Son of the virgin Devanaguy (or Devaki), one formed by god, or rather by the manifested Deity Vishnu, who is identical with Adam Kadmon....
9. Gautama-Buddha, Siddhartha, or Sakya-muni....

10. This avatar has not yet occurred....When Vishnu appears for the last time he will come as a "Saviour."....

In this diagram of avatars we see traced the gradual evolution and transformation of all species out of the ante-Silurian mud of Darwin and the *ilus* of Sanchoniathon and Berosus. Beginning with the Azoic time, corresponding to the *ilus* in which Brahma implants the creative germ, we pass through the Paleozoic and Mesozoic times, covered by the first and second incarnations as the fish and tortoise; and the Cenozoic, which is embraced by the incarnations in the animal and semi-human forms of the boar and man-lion; and we come to the fifth and crowning geological period, designated as the "era of mind, or age of man," whose symbol in the Hindu mythology is the dwarf—the first attempt of nature at the creation of man.

H.P.B. also tells us that

from a fish the progress of this dual transformation [spiritual and physical evolution] carries on the physical form through the shape of a tortoise, a boar, and a man-lion; and then, appearing in the dwarf of humanity, it shows Parasu Rama physically, a perfect, spiritually, an undeveloped entity, until it carries mankind personified by one god-like man, to the apex of physical and spiritual perfection—a god on earth. (*Ibid*, p. 276)

A study of the Gita with these statements in mind would, perhaps, bring a deeper understanding of the closing verses in that "Song of the Lord":

As I recall to my memory the wonderful form of Hari, the Lord, my astonishment is great....and I rejoice again and again. Wherever Krishna, the supreme master of devotion, and wherever the son of Pritha, the mighty archer, may be, there with certainty are fortune, victory, wealth, and wise action.

Man's free will is is but a bird in a cage; he can stop at the lower perch, or he can mount to a higher. Then that which is and knows will enlarge his cage, give him a higher and a higher perch, and at last break off the top of his cage, and let him out to be one with the free will of the universe.

—Tennyson

In the Light of Theosophy

The sequencing of the human genome—the "book of life" as it is called—is proving to be as much a cause for concern as for celebration, as its implications are being realized. An

individual's genetic make-up is now an open book for all to read, and discrimination based on such reading is already a reality. In some countries like Britain, for instance, insurance companies have the right to access the results of genetic tests for certain diseases, and the persons concerned can be hit by higher premiums or refused coverage. The door now open to insurers will lead the way for others, such as employers; and there can be many other discriminations.

As was clear at a recent UNESCO conference, the issue is a real Pandora's box, giving rise to several questions. The March issue of Unesco Sources states editorially:

In part these questions may be resolved by the nature of the genome itself. The fact that we have fewer genes than first thought (about 31,000 according to the public Human Genome project consortium, less than half the initial predictions) gives rise to optimism. It means that we are not just the simple sum of our genes. It also indicates that our cultural, social and physical environments and histories have more impact on shaping who we are and how we function than our genetic makeup. And it proves, once and for all, that there is no genetic basis for racism. "Overall, there are more differences in the DNA of two Caucasians than between a Caucasian and an African," says Craig Venter, the boss of the private company, Celera Genomics.

The Universal Declaration of the Human Genome and Human Rights, adopted by UNESCO's General Assembly in 1998, provides a set of principles which have achieved broad international consensus:

Article 1. The human genome underlies the fundamental unity of the human family, as well as the recognition of their inherent dignity and diversity. In a symbolic sense it is the heritage of humanity.

Article 2. Everyone has the right to respect for their dignity and their rights regardless of their genetic characteristics...

Article 6. No one shall be subjected to discrimination based on genetic characteristics that is intended to infringe or has the effect of infringing human rights, fundamental freedoms and human dignity.

Scientists reported recently that the planet Mars may have been a land of lakes in its earliest period, with layers of earthlike sedimentary rock that could harbour the fossils of any ancient Martian life. NASA's Mars global surveyor spacecraft captured images with its Mars Orbiter Camera of these sediments in craters and chasms that look very much like Earth. The images and scientific findings were published in Science journal.

The sedimentary rock on Mars is said to date from the earliest span of Martian history, between 4.3 billion and 3.5 billion years ago. The images show many uniformly thick layers of sediments,

which, scientists say, more than likely means water was present. This latest evidence of possible water on Mars in the past has fuelled interest in the planet, seen by many as a virtual twin to Earth. Liquid water is seen as a prerequisite for life.

Almost nothing is taught in Theosophy regarding the nature of life on other planets, though what little is said is highly significant. It is for one thing indicated that most of the planets of the solar system bear conscious intelligent beings. The question of whether "life" exists or not on this or another planet is of no importance to Theosophists who know that the planets themselves are alive, for the reason that all matter is alive. Nature is not in the habit of duplicating basic patterns. Throughout the evolution of the earth, the same fundamental plan of life-forms is found in all kingdoms, but that plan necessarily varies with each globe. Says The Secret Doctrine:

"The Spheres of Being, or centres of life, which are isolated nuclei breeding their men and their animals, are numberless; not one has any resemblance to its sister-companion or to any other in its own special progeny." (II. 33)

How, then...can we hope to speculate with profit on the nature of globes which, in the economy of nature, must needs belong to states of consciousness other and quite different from *any* which man experiences here?

Still the fact remains that most of the planets, as the stars beyond our system, are inhabited. (II, 701)

Easter Island, the world's most remote inhabited island in the South Pacific, is dominated by gigantic stone statues called *moai*. The tallest exceed 30 feet, and statues in the range of 12 to 20 feet are commonplace. Some are estimated to weigh as much as 80 to 90 tons. How they were built and moved to their present locations still remains a mystery to scientists and locals.

Fred J. Eckert writes in *The World and I* (March 2001):

Who built the *moai* of Easter Island? Why? How did they do it? And how were the *moai* moved and erected? No one knows for certain. It is accepted that these majestic statues were built to honour Polynesian gods and deified ancestors such as chiefs and other figures important in the island's history....They were likely meant to look out over a village or grave as protectors. They may also have been status symbols for villages or clans.

Understanding why the inhabitants of Easter Island built these mysterious statues is one thing—how is quite another. The builders had only very primitive tools, and even the smallest *moai* weighs several tons. It is understandable that a small number of artists could carve these gigantic statues with woefully simple tools but much harder to imagine the group moving them. Many of the *moai*—there are hundreds of them—are erected at sites as far as 12 miles from the quarry at which they were carved. How could so few people have moved them even a few feet, let

alone several miles? And how could it have been done without breaking them? Once they were moved, how were they erected? Even today, using powerful cranes, this would be no simple task.

While experts are baffled and have only theories to offer, many inhabitants of the island believe that the *moai* were erected and moved by *mana*, a magical force.

The Secret Doctrine answers many of the questions over which scientists, not cognizant with the history of the early races of humanity and their civilization, have racked their brains. Easter Island with its wondrous gigantic statues has been called by H.P.B. "a speaking witness to a submerged continent with a civilized mankind on it." The most ancient traditions and literature of various and widely separated peoples corroborate what the Esoteric Philosophy maintains, that, ages ago, there existed in the Pacific Ocean a large continent occupied by the Third-Race Lemurians, which by a geological cataclysm was engulfed by the sea. Most of the islands from the Malayan Archipelago to Polynesia are fragments of that once immense submerged continent. Ages later, because of an uplifting of the ocean floor, portions of this submerged continent, which may have been mountain peaks or high plateau, reappeared on the face of the ocean, among them Easter Island. It was subsequently occupied by the Fourth-Race Atlanteans, who had escaped from the cataclysm which overtook their own land, only to perish here from volcanic fires and lava.

As for the giant statues to be found on Easter Island, The Secret Doctrine states that their workmanship is of a high order and that the men who made them were no savages of the stone age. How were they built? Archaeologists say that there is no reason to believe that any of the statues have been built up, bit by bit, by scaffolding erected around them. How then could they have been built except by giants of the same size as the statues themselves? "They (the Atlanteans) built great images, nine yatis high (27 feet)—the size of their bodies," states one of the "Stanzas" from the Book of Dzyan. H.P.B. explains: "One has but to examine the heads of the colossal statues, that have remained unbroken on that island, to recognize in them at a glance the features of the type and character attributed to the Fourth-Race giants."

All this may be regarded as fiction by modern archaeologists and geographers; to the Occultists it is history. Modern science has today accepted many facts that at one time it refused to believe; and the time may not be far off when it will be forced to the conclusion that in other respects too it is Esoteric Philosophy that is right after all.

In the Spring 2001 issue of Dharma Life (published by Windhorse Publications for the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order), Subhuti argues that democracy's power to improve society is limited; higher values must be spread by individual example. Democracy is widely upheld as the ideal form of government, and most would agree. It has, however, limitations "which lie in the moral, and even spiritual, quality of the electorate," says Subhuti:

A democracy is as good as its people and tends, in the modern world, to promote a moral and cultural mediocrity....It is often said that for a democracy to work effectively there must be an educated electorate that knows and understands the issues of the moment and can evaluate arguments in political debate. But this is not enough. With such knowledge each citizen can simply fight his or her own corner, pushing for his or her own interests, asserting his or her own rights. Democracy remains then merely a system for orderly negotiation and adjudication between competing interests. That is a considerable advance, likely to make it harder for any one factional interest to predominate entirely. However, it offers little more in terms of cultural, moral and spiritual value, unless citizens want more....

We must especially argue that for democracy to be an effective means to a better society, individual citizens must take themselves in hand. They must set themselves moral standards and try to live for something beyond gratification, acquisition and comfort. We must encourage each to reflect on the ultimate meaning and purpose of our human existence and to try to live in accordance with a higher ideal. This requires all to work on themselves, changing their own lives, their minds and their hearts, for the better.

Once democracy has been successfully established, it is this moral and spiritual change that is going to bring about a better society. Reform henceforth must be reform of the individual. Economic development, technological advance and organizational effectiveness can achieve only so much. They cannot stem the tide of trivia nor rescue us from mediocrity and meaninglessness....

Dr. Ambedkar once said, "The greatest thing the Buddha has done is to tell the world that the world cannot be reformed except by the reformation of the mind of man and the mind of the world." This should be our fundamental message, too.

A sound social morality or true democracy can rest only on the spiritual concept of the unity of all life and the brotherhood of humanity. The concept of universal brotherhood is dynamic; its energy flows as a steady, beneficent stream for the good of all. On the other hand, the idea of partial brotherhood of a group or nation, as a separate from or opposed to the rest, can wreak havoc as a destructive force. The foremost thought in a true democracy should be not of rights but of duties.

In Britain, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has been running a powerful campaign against hunting foxes, deer, mink, hares and other animals for sport, as it is "cruel and unnecessary." At the same time, reports New Scientist, campaigners opposed to animal testing came close to closing down one of the country's largest contract-research companies, which test drugs, pesticides and other chemicals on animals. Both the hunting and testing activists have a large Web presence.

Alternatives to using animals in laboratories are now being tried with success. U.S. doctor Jerry W. Vlasak, now in India, advocates the need to replace the use of animals in medical education as well as in research experiments carried out for testing the compatibility and effectiveness of new medicines. Speaking to reporters, Dr. Vlasak, M.D., who is a diplomat on the American Board of Surgery as well as a Fellow at the American College of Surgeons, said that the process of modernization of medical education in the U.S. has done away with the use of animals. In fact, all medical schools and prestigious medical universities are now employing modern "non-animal methods" for instruction and hands-on experience which are less expensive, more accurate and more humane.

Disclosing that around 12 million animals were being killed annually in the U.S. for dissections, etc., Dr. Vlasak said that there is simply no need for this. The new wave of computer software is cost effective, provides accurate models of human systems and allows multiple use. He informed that stressed animals used for experiments provide unreliable results, besides wasting time, money and personnel. Also, every medicine has to be ultimately tested on humans as tests on animals cannot accurately predict the effect on humans.

Pointing out that a string of medical breakthroughs have been achieved without using animals, Dr. Vlasak drew attention to the fact that many industries, too, are thinking twice before using animals for testing their products because of the growing concern of consumers in this regard.

A glowworm shines so long as the light-bringer has not arisen. But when the shining one has come up, its light is quenched, it glows no longer. Such is the shining of the sectarians. So long as the rightly awakened ones arise not in the world, the sophists get no light, nor do their followers, and those of wrong views cannot be released from ill.

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