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It is not high learning that is needed, but solely devotion to humanity, faith in Masters, in the Higher Self, a comprehension of the fundamental truths of Theosophy and a little, only a little, sincere attempt to present those fundamental truths to a people who are in desperate need of them. That attempt should be continuous. What the people want is a practical solution of the troubles besetting us, and that solution you have in Theosophy. Will you not try to give it to them more and more?—W. Q. JUDGE

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- (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 January 1943.

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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MORAL VERITIES—METAPHYSICAL ETHICS

“The problem of true Theosophy and its great mission are, first, the working out of clear unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men; and second, the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life, as shall offer a field where they may be applied with most equitableness.”

Such was the instruction given by a Master in the very early days of the Movement to all aspirants to Theosophical knowledge and to the service of its Cause. It indicates the method by which the injunction that “Theosophy must be made practical” can be carried out. That method should fulfil the condition laid down by the same great Teacher that Theosophy should be “disencumbered of useless digressions, in the sense of desultory orations and fine talk”; He immediately proceeds to amplify His teaching—“Let every theosophist only do his duty, that which he can and ought to do...”

One of the difficulties, whose influence is greater than suspected, is the self-evident nature of the truth conveyed in these ideas. The words quoted appear simple and carry conviction so readily that their import remains vague. What can be more simple than the facts (1) that each student should do his duty, (2) that Theosophy must be made practical and (3) that the way to impress the mass-mind of the race is to present it with clear ethical concepts?

Quiet reflection soon reveals to the earnest student that if he desires to be effective in the practice and promulgation of Theosophical teachings along the lines indicated in the letter from which the sentences quoted above are extracted, then he must be more definite. What is implicit in the advice to work out “clear and unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties”? Certainly Theosophic ethics are not different from those of the great religions; once Mr. Judge wrote, “Bud-

dhism, Christianity, and all the other religions teach the same morals, and literature is full of it.” Why have religions failed to enthuse and to energize their votaries to practise these ethics? Is it not because their philosophical basis is neglected? How can an orthodox Christian act according to “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you” when he is taught, let us say, to believe in vicarious atonement and forgiveness of sins? How can an orthodox Hindu act up to the truth that “exertion is greater than destiny” when a distorted view of the Law of Karma, *viz.* fatalism, is heard by him from birth, and when the mummery of the purohit is considered indispensable for saving his own soul, as well as those of his forebears? Why do Zoroastrians fail on so colossal a scale in observing their most oft repeated triad—Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds?

Not only is the study of philosophy neglected by the orthodox religionist; for him there is no impetus to sacrifice in the real sense inasmuch as whatever good he does is for gaining reward in the hereafter. Between his charity and well-doing and that of the person who is ardent in acquiring fame there is little difference. On the other hand, for the student of Theosophy the service of humanity in and through the U. L. T. provides an impetus, nay, an inspiration to his own betterment as a moral being with grave responsibility to the human kingdom. The person who aims at moral self-improvement to gain eternal heaven or freedom from *samsara* has not the force which flows unto

him who has a Cause to live and labour for. In this idea will be found the answer to the query why good Hindus who read the *Gita* daily do not practise its injunctions. They praise the *Gita* ethics as so grand and its philosophy as so deeply profound that they are not able to comprehend the latter and that mortal man is too weak to practise the former!

What are the fundamental doctrines of Theosophy on which rest the principles of universal ethics? One's preaching can become effective only in proportion as Theosophical ethics are practised. The Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* form a royal avenue to true ethics; so also do the three Objects of the Movement. Helpful it will prove to himself if the student will try to work out the interrelation between the metaphysical groundwork and the ethical growth thereon. But such effort should follow, naturally, the resolve resulting from the perception that applied Theosophy means change of one's personal disposition, change in one's personal habits, and the creating of a new personal character, in which the animal nature is substantially subordinated, human qualities are enhanced and divinity is made to radiate its light—in the small plain duties of life as well as in the promulgation of Theosophy, which always has a far-reaching influence however little might appear to be its actual physical-plane manifestation. The actual practice of certain ethical teachings necessitates some comprehension of the metaphysics to which they are indissolubly linked.

In our civilization what the *Gita* names "belief in the existence of another world" is absent from the ideation of the so-called civilized and is present in crassly superstitious forms in the masses, whose religious instincts are exploited by priests—be they padres or purohits, maulanās or mobeds.

To the student of Theosophy the existence and the nearness of the invisible worlds, psychic and spiritual, are facts and the teaching about them colours our moral perception to a very considerable extent—or ought to. Between the ordinary and the Theosophical understanding of ethical principles there is a vast difference. To glimpse the metaphysical basis, to see the necessity and the value of practising ethics and not to attempt

the task is fraught with deeper danger; Karma takes into account the neglect of knowledge possessed as also of its total absence. The ordinary man without knowledge of Theosophy is not guilty of non-application as is the student. The ideal which the aspirant should keep before himself for realization in his own life is painted in these wonderful words by W. Q. J.:—

We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and the good from other spheres from beyond the earth. This is not spiritualism at all, for it has no reference to the denizens of spook-land in any way. Let us then have great faith and confidence.

HAMLET

A STORY OF PSYCHIC UNBALANCE

As there is equilibrium in Nature, so there is equilibrium in man, and likewise between man and Nature. Sanity properly defined is that equilibrium. It is mental, moral and physical health. It is a right balance between all the human states and all the principles. Very few men in the present age possess such health and sanity. Most of us have only compromises. Certain average conditions are looked on as standard and normal, therefore healthy. Whatever departs much from these is called diseased, abnormal or subnormal. The principles in man, those instruments through which his soul works, both protect and manifest his Spirit-Power or Life-Force. Because of some past errors of thought and action, these instruments and defenders may be poorly connected in a man, and the result in the parts of his nature called psychic is comparable to the action of a loose-jointed physical body, in which bones or muscles sometimes slip out of place.

In general usage "psychic" and "psychism" are not clearly defined. They include both correct and partially incorrect or at least vague limited conceptions. They are made to refer not only to a division of man's nature and to some of his

important powers and principles, but also to many life-phenomena. Each of these uses is proper enough, yet it is well to see that the psychic powers and principles largely make up in fact man's nature as a human being; likewise that they are the means by which human nature operates and manifests itself. And it should also be understood that the life-phenomena referred to, both subjective and objective, result from the interrelations and activities of the principles and powers. The phenomena give evidence of the existence and characteristics of the Psychic as a great Department in Nature and in man. Much of the confusion is due to the limited concepts of what psychic phenomena are. Many things actually such are not so named; for example, what people call "brain storms" and emotional "upheavals," either of enthusiasm, fear or anger, are psychic phenomena.

Popularly, however, the expression psychic phenomena is chiefly applied to the extraordinary or the abnormal. For this is the point to be particularly noted: it is the abnormal, the weird, the wrongly-called "supernatural"—it is what science ignores or does not explain—that is especially referred to, by custom, in the word psychic. This limitation in meaning is indeed unfortunate, though even so the word covers a wide range of experience and a very important tendency in humanity. The fascination, often hypnotic, exerted by the weird and the uncanny is a source and an abiding-place of superstition, excessive emotionalism and strange fears. Naturally too it has always been—never more than now—a rich pasture for commercially minded mystery-mongers and "psycho-" specialists under many names.

The welter of ignorance thus indicated can be removed and men's minds enlightened as to Psychism by a study of the Theosophical teachings in regard to the sevenfold division of man's nature. In that teaching Psychic is a big general term for all of man's elements except the very highest or purely spiritual, and the very lowest or purely physical. Men have therefore higher psychic phases of life and lower phases. It is thus the Psychic in humanity which undergoes evolution in the long course of experience, which either remains mortal and transitory or becomes pure

and lasting, according as it moves downward to undeveloped matter or upward to Spirit, according as it follows unwisdom or wisdom. Most men of today know little of the higher psychic phases; they live too largely in the mere physical and its close companion, the low psychical.

There is also in Theosophy another and a special use of the term psychic. It is a name in particular for the fourth or middle division of the seven in man—for the principle or section that hangs in the balance, the one that sways between good and bad, true and false.

In this special Theosophic meaning, the drama *Hamlet* may be called "psychic"; for in the behaviour of that middle balance principle in the chief character the action is centred and the tragedy is found.

Without opposing directly any of the arguments for or against the sanity of Hamlet, a Theosophist may say that in insanity there is some actual disconnection between organs and functions of the brain; that insanity is of course Karmic; and that its cause is really moral. In the man Hamlet the middle principle tips in some actions far over toward uncontrol. Yet it soon recovers its balance. The unbalance is a kind of temporary insanity. In a man whose principles are not firmly connected (and are thus comparable to the loose-jointed physical body), the middle balance principle, always changeable, is especially unstable; his mind is wavering, easily open to outside influences high or low; he may have daring flights of fancy, sudden gusts of passion, moods of exalted enthusiastic action, or times of drooping melancholy and doubt which check any action. Such a man lives chiefly in his lower psychic nature, and fails to control it, for in will he varies between violence and laxity; the physical in him is a close adjunct to the lower psychical, the ethical impulses are inconstant and the operation of the purely spiritual is almost choked. Possibly not enough attention has been directed by critics to the phases of Hamlet's life that may be called ethical.

The special touchstone given by Theosophy as a test for insanity is the degree of a man's selfishness, his intensity of personalism. Hamlet is certainly not an altruist, yet he is not especially

selfish in the way that might be expected. The fact that his uncle has supplanted him as heir to the throne seems not to be the chief element in the melancholy that veils him at first. He has had a strong confiding filial love for his father and mother. The father has suddenly gone. Astonished that the mother so promptly married the uncle, he distrusts them both. His self-love is less wounded than his filial love. This feeling affects him much throughout the play and fills him with dismayed wonder. He does not think of fighting for his legal rights but wishes, against his mother's and his uncle's desire, to withdraw to his university again where he may continue to live in quiet. These facts, made evident at the very first, before he has seen The Ghost, show traits that should be observed. He is a student, a thinker, a dreamer. He prefers passiveness to action.

A question as to what throws his middle principle somewhat out of gear and leaves it undirected by Will from his higher nature, is answered as the drama proceeds. The shock to his filial love causes the first unbalancing, namely, the undue melancholy. The shock given by the coming of his father's Ghost carries him into amazed terror. The revelations of the father's death by murder, of the uncle's other vile treachery, of the mother's weakness, mental and moral—these plough up all his solid foundations. On this terrific overturning comes the command "Revenge!" But before obeying that command, while he is hesitating about it, while his soul is harrowed by suffering, he forms a relation with Ophelia which soon creates much added mental disturbance and unbalance.

In this relation he moves farthest over the border toward insanity. Unhappy at home, he has gone to her at first because she is winsome and may give him comfort. He loathes the proved sensuality of his mother; Ophelia seems sweetly pure. When later she obeys her father's hasty command to give Hamlet no more time, he is hurt by the unexplained change and coldness in her. Brooding over all these heart-shaking experiences, his feelings rise at times almost to frenzy. At one such moment, with thoughts distraught and clothes awry, he privately seeks

her out to learn what indeed she is—can he trust her, can she be what he needs? He gets the answer from her blank face, her silent lips, her fright. With such response to his moment of sick longing for help, how can he regard her as more than a weak child? He leaves her in great grief, in lingering silence, slowly seeing that he does not wish to woo her further. Ophelia's own grief at the father's command which deprives her of her lover, is now intensified by pity for that lover as mad—mad for love of her.

This leads Polonius and the King to test Hamlet as to that possibility. With characteristic double-dealing, of which Ophelia is fully aware, they place her where they can watch Hamlet unexpectedly come upon her. But he soon suspects and assures himself that he is being overheard and tested. In a flash he determines to turn the test on her for at least truth-telling. Bluntly he asks, "Where's your father?" "At home, my lord," she sweetly answers. Stung to fury by her lie, and by the contemptible behaviour of the two men, feeling his own folly, and hers, and all the world's, he rails at her in terms that bow her down like a reed before a storm. His private hurt is so great that he would ease it by thrusting the injustice of it partly on her.

For some time thereafter Hamlet feels chiefly rage and disgust for Ophelia and her father; while the poor little weakling girl shudders off into the melancholy caused by blighted affections. Then soon comes the startling death of her father through her one-time lover. After this her melancholy rapidly passes into actual insanity. There can be no question that her reaction to these blows is intensely personal. "Blighted affections" means just that—single-eyed concentration on one's self, one's dreams of marriage and one's beloved. The mind has no other object, the soul no broader outlook. There is no capacity to resist disappointment.

Thus with Ophelia is proved the Adept teaching that insanity springs from some form of concentrated selfism. From this point of view, Ophelia's manner of death may seem to have symbolical colourings. As she falls into the water (matter), her wide feminine garments puff out with air and support her for a time, she scattering

her flowers and songs and dainty graces till the clothing is water-soaked and drags her down—the sense attractions in her and for her pulling her finally into the sense-element (matter) from which they first came. Her death is pitiful, but the contracted little soul-life she has led is more so. The perception of this weak extreme passivity makes admiration of such a woman impossible. To describe her as worthy of great praise and to be much stirred by her death are philosophical errors into which many critics have fallen.

Hamlet's behaviour in the grave scene is just such an unreasoning outburst as an unbalanced psychic nature may be guilty of when it is surprised, grieved and personally offended. Previous to this for some time Ophelia and the feeling she had stirred in him have been partially put aside, his mind preoccupied by that command "Revenge!" still not obeyed, and by the complications caused by the delay. Due to his absence he has had no recent news of the girl he had loved. Just after his return he is idly philosophizing beside a newly dug grave, when he is wildly startled by learning that the approaching mourners and the grave are for Ophelia. He sees her brother leap into the grave in excessive lament. Then the old half-forgotten love sweeps violently over him. Disgusted by that artificial sorrowing, he flies into a passion and even jumps into the grave to fight with the brother in a mad contest as to whose grief is greater and worthier. This is the least sane act of the unbalanced Hamlet.

Yet all these mental agonies of disappointment and grief connected with Ophelia pass with little lasting effect. Such experiences come in course of nature to every man; but for Hamlet they are rather obstacles and byways in his path. They do not constitute the chief line of his mental action. They leave him still facing his permanent problem: The Ghost laid upon him a command as a duty, he accepted it as such, he has not fulfilled it. Why?

It is very important to perceive that The Ghost is not a mere shadowy wraith, or a mere picture in the minds of several persons. The Elder Hamlet was murdered, thrust out of life before his time. In Theosophical teaching the physical aspects of men in the first stages after death are in general called Kamarupas; but the

Kamarupas of those murdered, either by accident, by law or otherwise, differ from the rest. Such beings are not dead to the same extent. The Force in Nature named Cohesion which held their principles together in physical life still holds them together in their Kamarupas, and must do so till their particular portions of that Force are ended by natural exhaustion. Hence the Kamarupa of King Hamlet is strongly cohesive and can materialize to living men, as he does to the Watch and to the son, in the form of the armed King—a form indicative of the feelings with which he materializes.

There is of course some dramatic embroidery attached to the story by traditional superstition; yet the statement may be unhesitatingly made that The Ghost of King Hamlet is a genuine materialization of that Kamarupa to living eyes. All that this being lacks is his physical body, the instrument through which his principles could still function; but a Kamarupa is not able to function or to affect physical earth-life except through some living physical man. Since his physical instrument is all that the ex-King has lost, his character is just what it was before his body died. His mind remains the same collection of theological, feudal and other race beliefs prevalent in his day. As a living man and as a king, he seems to have been the usual proud, aristocratic, commanding type, unquestioningly accepting his rank, its emoluments and his own deservings. His codes of honour are those customary. Hamlet the son from childhood has been imbued with all these beliefs and has never much questioned them, but his egoic nature is more given to philosophy and learned pursuits. King Hamlet when alive had thought punishment the only proper return for any dishonour shown him. Lately, as a Kamarupa, he has been brooding over the wrongs he thinks he has suffered by being unjustly deprived of continuing life on earth and of his possessions. The rankling sense of injustice and the knowledge of his brother's treachery and his wife's falsity rouse all his lower-desire principles into full activity. He sees only two things—the revenge he wishes and the son as the one in physical life who should execute the revenge.

This all-potent desire is what enables him to

materialize to those alive, and his demand on the son for vengeance, though not ranting, is imperious and compulsive. Revenge means, of course, killing the brother-uncle-king and seizing the throne.

But such a demand for vengeance is in itself wrong. It is almost wholly selfish and therefore against Nature's law. When one remembers, as a student of Theosophy must, that each man is not only his father's son, or a member of a family, but is an independent Ego and a sevenfold being with his own virtues and vices and his own Karma manifesting on each of seven planes, one sees that such an act of revenge cannot affect a man only externally, as is commonly assumed. The thought and act of murder must reverberate through the whole and therefore affect the entire life and nature of the one who kills. The knowledge and vision of Atma, or the Higher Self in every man, is the true ethical standard. According to that knowledge and vision, revenge and murder are never right; and the Voice of that Self is heard as "qualms of conscience" in any man not quite deafened by wrong-doing.

What, then, from the higher-soul point of view, is Hamlet's relation to that Kamarupa and its demand? During the actual interview, though he is in shivering fear, he is convinced that the Apparition is the living remainder of his father, able to move, speak and declare the truth. He fully accepts at that time The Ghost's word. His quick agreement in the first excited moments is a natural outcome of his filial affection and of his beliefs by education, such as the false sense of honour which requires murder for murder. But also his own mind has long been full of suspicious resentment toward his uncle. Hence while The Ghost is speaking Hamlet has little or no power to feel that the demand for vengeance may be questioned, or to see what the Kamarupa embodies and would instil into him. His resentment throws him wide open. He is not then or later exactly obsessed by the Kamarupa, but he remains throughout the play constantly under its influence.

Previously, though possessing native goodness, Hamlet has grown selfish through indulgence of the intellect. Prevailing mental, he has gratified

himself by years of continued university study and life, absorbed himself in that, instead of becoming at home the chief companion and the counsellor, hence the guard, of his beloved father against the designing uncle and the crafty time-serving Polonius. He has thus become passive toward actual life, remote from it. Though he admits much sin in his past, he is not striving to grow better. The prime mover in him is not Spirit but the lower intellectual mind. Well trained in logical analysis, he is yet slow to discriminate between his wrong and right motives or to analyze the subtleties of his thought ethically. Also, he is incapable of taking a practical masterful position in the court (probably the uncle counted on this weakness); and just as incapable of perceiving the real cause of his dilatoriness and hesitation. Thus as the days pass, though he proves that the Kamarupa is genuine and gives true information, yet he does not progress far enough morally to perceive that its demand for vengeance is unrighteous, is merely conventional, and that his promise to take vengeance by the conventional means of murder has put his whole life on a false basis through a mistaken concept of duty.

Instead of seeing this, Hamlet shares and cherishes the resentment expressed by the Kamarupa, and thus fails to detect the danger in such "commercing with the dead." He does not comprehend that, in the general ignorance concerning the dead, a man's confidence and obedience in such an experience may prevent due attention to practical duties in the world of the living. Though he has a sense of being part of a nation, his thought, like the Kamarupa's, is much more to get revenge than to clear away the court wickedness and serve the Danish people. Nowhere in his talks or the Kamarupa's, is there definite recognition of obligation to them. King Hamlet, like other kings of his time, had lived for his own satisfaction and glory. His son's patriotism is no higher.

But through all his misunderstandings and omissions, Hamlet does have "qualms of conscience" regarding the vengeance. Far within—too far for him to interpret them for what they are—his higher Egoic Self is sending them out in a struggle to enlighten him. His hesitations and

delays are partly due to these admonishings of his Higher Self which he does not comprehend. They are in fact blurred by a slackness of mind in him, by a strong averseness to action, which is the other reason for his delays.

Active and keen Hamlet's mind is—on the surface; and it delights in using these qualities of itself. But back of the surface is a layer of thick passivity, a heavy sluggishness and inertia, a resistance to change. Most men have to contend with much of this mental inertia. In Hamlet his Will in the outer life is quick, even violent. But within the outer shell his Will often remains swamped in that deep layer of psychic sluggishness. The monitions of the higher Egoic, the Conscience, struggling to stir that heavy mass, to make it less dense and unreceptive to the spiritual, do not have much power. The reason is that in past lives, as in the present, they have been too little obeyed to permit their free action now; hence there is a mental deposit of torpidity.

Caring much intellectually about philosophy, Hamlet has not grasped its deeper phases that are morally regenerating. He has been content to abide by the prevalent religion and the prevalent ethics. Such inactivity in the higher reaches of thought, such psychic sluggishness, is due to the lack of practical application of what his intellect has stored, to the failure to put it into service for others and for his own growth in ethical understanding. Of such practical application, especially for others' benefit, the drama gives almost no evidence. This failure, now and previously, to make useful what he knows, is the reason why the Ego has such difficulty in leading Hamlet to question the moral rightness of that murderous revenge he has promised. The egoic monition does cause him to hesitate—only that—for even when he finds the King in prayer, there is no impulse toward mercy. Sensing hypocrisy, he feels merely an added motive for a still fiercer revenge, a "more horrid hent." Thus, instead of recognizing any prompting of his own higher nature, he blames himself furiously—"unpacks his heart with words"—for his slackness, his puzzling procrastination and seeming incapacity. Or, understanding his deeper self so little, he at one time droops into mourning over this inaction, or

again flies into sudden often unwise action.

That procrastination affects him almost from the beginning, as soon as The Ghost is gone. Even in the very first wording of his eagerness to do something, his vehement impulse is weakened by intellectual analyzing and his student-like search for his "tables" (his note-book) to set down his conclusions about his uncle, his country and the wretched situation;—to set them down for what? Some activity in the future?

The companions of the Watch beg him to explain about The Ghost. In defending his privacy he flashes into the plan of "putting an antic disposition on" (playing insane), which involves just that,—action in the future, delay in the present; because, not knowing what to do, he feels incapable, and because, under the effect of his conscience and his inertia, he really does not *wish* to do. This immediately passes into self-pity,—“The time is out of joint” indeed; but “O cursed spite, that ever *I* was born to set it right.” Thus, though perceiving a need for action but unable to decide what action, he pauses, lets days slip by while he plays the antic, philosophizes and broods. Gradually he comes to excuse all this to himself by harbouring doubts of The Ghost and its word, by believing he should get better proofs, “grounds more relative than this.” For many weeks he thus drifts and dives alternately; drifts into love for Ophelia, bringing about her mental undoing; dives into the Play Scene, which gives strong proof by exactly “catching the conscience of the King,” finds as a consequence the aptest opportunity for his revenge (while the King is at prayer), but puts it by, thinking to make his vengeance even more complete. Then immediately afterward, in angry excitement with his mother, he plunges into a sudden unplanned action that swiftly puts out of life the eavesdropping Polonius. After such blundering, perhaps with a feeling of self-contempt, he permits the frightened King to send him out of the country as a dangerous person.

Only once does the higher monition pierce through these blinding clouds successfully,—that is when his very life is threatened. Then, by quick action, he learns that the King has really sent him to his death, manages to escape and get back;—but not without committing his guards (his former

friends!) to *their* death, an act unnecessary and unjustifiable. His conscience as to right and wrong is now nearly silenced. Still farther he passes into incompetence; his life, purpose and opportunity are frittered away. The action of the play reflects that weakness, but with no loss of interest, for this wasting into impotence is the tragedy.

Once more, near the close, the higher monition warns him of grave danger to his life and could save him; but this time he does not obey. He refuses to listen to the "divinity that had shaped his end" before. At this point a vicious intrigue by the King is proceeding successfully, entangling Hamlet in its deadly folds, and soon by mistake enwrapping the Queen and others. Then Hamlet sees what has happened, and at last satisfies himself by rushing upon the King and forcing the death. So impotent is his revenge, so worthless!

Regarding him and the other chief persons as once living beings and this story as in some measure their actual story, a Theosophist shrinks at the Karma it depicts in that present and hints at for the future. Wasted lives, vitiated characters, lost opportunities, repetitions and agonies to come, because so little of that present has been understood and corrected. Yet there is no fatalism in the drama. Hamlet is never once compelled by any outside force to a given line of action. He always has the power of choice, and the chance that every living man has to sweep away his temptations and to act on his higher intuitions.

The stage history of *Hamlet* shows that this play was always popular, for various reasons, with both actors and audiences. In the nineteenth century it was praised by some German and English critics as the greatest accomplishment of Shakespeare. If it is accepted as the greatest, it must be so because it presents the problems of a vast number of men. What are those problems? First and foremost, psychic sluggishness or mental

inertia, blinding their discrimination, silencing their higher voice, stifling their better aspirations; then, the intellectualizing of life and imagining that to be the highest attainment; also, the insistence on revenge by punishment or death as the means of redressing wrongs; further, and perhaps worst, the brooding on the dead and being misled by their influence actual or supposed; all of this being Karmic, all due to men's present and past habitual careless disobeying of their higher monitions, to their following the conventional and selfish instead of the freshly vital and serviceable to their fellow-men in general.

Around us constantly are men struggling under these errors, needing to be understood and encouraged, and when possible advised and guided. The fact is instructive that those critics who originally stated that high estimate of this drama, found in it a picture of themselves. Search into their lives proves them to have been of the Hamlet type, their minds brilliant, unstable, their course of action not much more firm or truly intelligent than Hamlet's own, and their ends perhaps no richer in soul-values than his. In fact, the everyday-ness of the problems presented in this play is what endows it with its most compelling power. Aside from the special effects of the old period and fashion, it is on the level of the character and the needs of general humanity, and thereby holds its special rank.

This practicability for men's everyday lives may often not be recognized consciously, yet it does carry a measure of its advisory power to those who feel a kinship with Hamlet. If they are spiritually intelligent enough to enter really into the deeper causes and effects of his character, they may benefit much by the half-hidden instruction. Practical application to actual life was what Shakespeare's Adept Inspirers always wished to encourage. They would naturally, therefore, give some particular esteem to *Hamlet* as a drama.

ASTROLOGY—IS IT SCIENCE OR FRAUD?

There is much talk in the West today about Astrology. It is called a science by its devotees and nonsense by science. What has Theosophy to say on the subject? Has it a contribution to make to the discussion which will show the scientific aspect and disclose the false? Can it show humanity that there is a real and a false use of astrology and warn it of the dangers of the latter and the value of the former?

Writing in *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. B. tells us:—

Astrology is a science as infallible as astronomy itself, with the condition, however, that its interpreters must be equally infallible; and it is this condition, *sine qua non*, so very difficult of realization, that has always proved a stumbling-block to both. Astrology is to exact astronomy what psychology is to exact physiology. In astrology and psychology one has to step beyond the visible world of matter, and enter into the domain of transcendent spirit.... Were we to record the failures and ridiculous blunders of astronomers, we are afraid they would outnumber by far those of the astrologers. I. 259-60

The Theosophical Glossary gives us information as to what this science is.

Let us see, then, what we can learn of this science, "the science that defines the action of celestial bodies upon mundane affairs" and "claims to foretell future events from the position of the stars." Present-day Science ridicules all suggestion that there is a psychic relationship between the planets and men on earth. Even the well-known fact of the effect of the moon on vegetation was denied outright by one of the leading British scientists the other day, and the Astronomer Royal's views on Astrology are well-known. It is interesting to turn to *Isis Unveiled*. There we learn that Father Kircher taught in the seventeenth century

a complete philosophy of universal magnetism.... The sun, moon, planets, and stars he affirmed are highly magnetic; but they have become so by induction from living in the universal magnetic fluid—the Spiritual light. He proves the mysterious sympathy existing between the bodies of the three principal kingdoms of nature. I. 208-9

Proctor admits that "The heavenly bodies *do* rule the fates of men and nations in the most unmistakable

manner, seeing that without the controlling and beneficent influences of the chief among those orbs—the sun—every living creature on the earth must perish." He admits, also, the influence of the moon, and sees nothing strange in the ancients reasoning by analogy, that if two among these heavenly bodies were thus potent in terrestrial influences, it was "... natural that the other moving bodies known to the ancients, should be thought to possess also their special powers." Indeed, the professor sees nothing unreasonable in their supposition that the influences exerted by the slower moving planets "might be even more potent than those of the sun himself." I. 259

Are we, then, at the mercy of the planets and stars? Are we caught in a vast clockwork Universe, moved hither and thither without our will? Who are we? What are they? Will a knowledge of Astrology, the psychological aspect of Astronomy, the physical, help us to understand the meaning of life? Or must we go beyond both to the Occult Science, and start our research into the subject with this as a basis?

It is the Spiritual evolution of the *inner*, immortal man that forms the fundamental tenet in the Occult Sciences.—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 634

What are the Stars? As man is not merely the body we see but also the presiding spirit within the body, so the stars and planets are but the bodies of the spiritual Beings within.

"The Sun is the heart of the Solar World (System) and its brain is hidden behind the (visible) Sun. From thence, sensation is radiated into every nerve-centre of the great body, and the waves of the life-essence flow into each artery and vein.... The planets are its limbs and pulses...."—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 541

There are only seven planets (*specially* connected with earth), and twelve houses, but the possible combinations of their aspects are countless. As each planet can stand to each of the others in twelve different aspects, their combinations must, therefore, be almost infinite; as infinite, in fact, as the spiritual, psychic, mental, and physical capacities in the numberless varieties of the *genus homo*, each of which varieties is born under one of the seven planets and one of the said countless planetary combinations.—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 573 f. n.

Every active power or force of the earth comes to her from one of the seven Lords.—*The Secret Doctrine* II. 29

The Sun, Moon, and planets being the never-erring time measurers, whose potency and periodicity were well known, became thus the great Ruler and rulers of our little system in all its *seven domains*, or "spheres of action."—*The Secret Doctrine* II. 621

It is the knowledge of the natural laws that make of seven the root nature-number, so to say, in the manifested world—at any rate in our present terrestrial life-cycle—and the wonderful comprehension of its workings, that unveiled to the ancients so many of the mysteries of nature. It is these laws, again, and their processes on the sidereal, terrestrial, and moral planes, which enabled the old astronomers to calculate correctly the duration of the cycles and their respective effects on the march of events; to record beforehand (prophecy, it is called) the influence which they will have on the course and development of the human races.—*The Secret Doctrine* II. 621

We see in history a regular alternation of ebb and flow in the tide of human progress. The great kingdoms and empires of the world, after reaching the culmination of their greatness, descend again, in accordance with the same law by which they ascended; till, having reached the lowest point, humanity reasserts itself and mounts up once more, the height of its attainment being, by this law of ascending progression by cycles, somewhat higher than the point from which it had before descended.—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 641

Turning to man we find:—

The descent and re-ascent of the Monad or Soul cannot be disconnected from the Zodiacal signs.—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 668

Like each of the seven regions of the Earth, each of the seven First-born (the primordial human groups) receives its light and life from its own especial Dhyani—spiritually, and from the palace (house, the planet) of that Dhyani physically; so with the seven great Races to be born on it.—*The Secret Doctrine* II. 29

The star under which a human Entity is born, says the Occult teaching, will remain for ever its star, throughout the whole cycle of its incarnations in one Manvantara. But *this is not his astrological star*. The latter is concerned and connected with the *personality*, the former with the *INDIVIDUALITY*.—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 572

The chief features of one's life are always in accordance with the "Constellation" one is born under, or, we should say, with the characteristics of its animating principle or the deity that presides over it.—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 638

There is an interrelationship between the Sun, the planets, the stars and Man (and the earth). Why such a relationship exists is shown by the following quotation:—

The one Cosmic atom becomes seven atoms on the plane of matter, and each is transformed into a centre of energy; that same atom becomes seven rays on the plane of spirit, and the seven creative forces of nature, radiating from the root-essence...follow, one the right, the other the left path, separate till the end of the Kalpa, and yet are in close embrace. What unites them? KARMA. The atoms emanated from the Central Point emanate in their turn new centres of energy, which...begin their work from within without, and multiply other minor centres. These, in the course of evolution and involution, form in their turn the roots or developing causes of new effects, from worlds and "man-bearing" globes, down to the genera, species, and classes of all the *seven kingdoms*.—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 635

The second point is that, though "there is a predestination in the geological life of our globe, as in the history, past and future, of races and nations, *this is closely connected with what we call Karma.*" (Italics ours) *The Secret Doctrine* I. 641

Thirdly, that "the invisible tablets of the Astral Light," "the great picture-gallery of eternity"—holds "a faithful record of every act, and even thought, of man, of all that was, is, or ever will be, in the phenomenal Universe." *The Secret Doctrine* I. 104

The destiny of every man and the birth of every child, whose life is already traced in the Astral Light—not fatalistically, but only because the future, like the PAST, is ever alive in the PRESENT." *The Secret Doctrine* I. 105

The key to the value of a knowledge of astrology is the Law of Karma. We are self-produced beings.

If the Dhyani Chohans and all the invisible Beings—the *Seven Centres* and their direct Emanations, the *minor centres of Energy*—are the direct reflex of the ONE Light, yet men are far removed from these, since the whole of the *visible Kosmos* consists of "self-produced beings, the creatures of Karma."—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 635

Just as we have produced ourselves in the far past, so now we are producing ourselves. "We produce CAUSES, and these awaken the corresponding powers in the sidereal world." *The Secret Doctrine* I. 124

It is this aspect of the teaching which can make a knowledge of astrology valuable. No past

can harm us if we, first of all, realise that it is our own creation and that therefore we cannot blame God or Devil or our fellow-man for it. It is not the Stars and Constellations that bring us trouble and sorrow; they are but, as it were, the writing on the wall. Secondly we must see the present acts, thoughts and feelings as writing on the wall of the Future. We do not have to passively submit to the influence of the Stars, nor do we need to try to fight it. We need to *use* it. Though the Stars tell us that we are in the dark cycle of Kali-Yuga there is much we can do, not so much with it as *in* it. It is the internal aspect of the Cyclic law that is important.

Yes; "our destiny is written in the stars!" Only, the closer the union between the mortal reflection MAN and his celestial PROTOTYPE, the less dangerous the external conditions and subsequent reincarnations.
—*The Secret Doctrine* I. 639

The danger of trying to find out what is to happen in the future in more or less detail, is that we tend to live in hopes (or fears) of that future and become slothful as to the present. We tend to take a negative attitude to life instead of using what knowledge we have as a mariner uses the stars—to guide his course. And since the secret knowledge of the science of astrology is still secret it is well to bear in mind an adaptation of Item 5 of *Isis Unveiled*.

Arcane knowledge misapplied, is sorcery; beneficently used, true magic or WISDOM.

[Below we reprint four extracts which will facilitate the reader's understanding of the subject.—EDS.]

ASTROLOGY

[Reprinted from *The Theosophist* V. 213, June 1884.—EDS.]

In the last number appeared the review of an elementary work on Astrology. It may not therefore be unprofitable to say a few words in regard to the subject itself. The popular idea seems to be that the planets and the stars exercise a certain influence upon the destiny of man, which the science of Astrology can determine; and that there are means within the reach of that science which can be used to propitiate "the evil stars."

This crude notion, not philosophically understood, leads to two unscientific fallacies. On the one hand it gives rise to a belief in the doctrine of fatality, which says that man has no free-will inasmuch as everything is predetermined, and on the other it leads one to suppose that the laws of Nature are not immutable, since certain propitiatory rites may change the ordinary course of events. These two extreme views induce the "rationalist" to reject "Astrology" as a remnant of the uncivilized condition of our ancestors, since as a matter-of-fact student he refuses to recognise the importance of the saying, "Real philosophy seeks rather to solve than to deny." It is an axiom of the philosophic student that truth generally lies between the extremes. If one therefore proceeds in this spirit, he will find that there is yet not an unreasonable or unscientific hypothesis which can reconcile all these different views, and which, not unlikely, was what the ancients meant by Astrology. Although a study of this science may enable one to determine what the course of events will be, it cannot necessarily be inferred therefrom that the planets exercise any influence over that course. The clock indicates, it does not influence, the time. And a distant traveller has often to put right his clock so that it may indicate correctly the time of the place he visits. Thus, though the planets may have no hand in changing the destiny of the man, still their position may indicate what that destiny is likely to be. This hypothesis leads us to the question, "What is destiny?" As understood by the Occultist, it is merely the chain of causation producing its correspondential series of effects. One who has carefully followed the teachings of Occultism, as recently given out, concerning *Devachan* and future rebirths, knows that every individual is his own creator or his own father, *i. e.*, our future personality will be the result of our present mode of living. In the same manner our present birth, with all its conditions, is the tree grown out of the germ sown in our past incarnations. Our physical and spiritual conditions are the effects of our actions produced on those two planes in previous existences. Now it is a well-known principle of Occultism that the ONE LIFE which pervades ALL connects all the bodies in space.

All heavenly bodies have thus mutual relation, which is blended with man's existence, since he is but a microcosm in the macrocosm. Every thought, as much as action, is dynamic and is impressed in the imperishable Book of Nature—the *Akasa*, the objective aspect of the UNMANIFESTED LIFE. All our thoughts and actions thus produce the vibrations in space, which mould our future career. And astrology is a science which, having determined the nature of the laws that govern these vibrations, is able to state precisely a particular or a series of results, the causes of which have already been produced by the individual in his previous life. Since the present incarnation is the child of the previous one, and since there is but that ONE LIFE which holds together all the planets of the Solar system, the position of those planets at the time of the birth of an individual—which event is the aggregate result of the causes already produced—gives to the true Astrologer the data upon which to base his predictions. It should be well remembered at the same time that just as the "astronomer who catalogues the stars cannot add one atom to the universe," so also can no astrologer, no more than the planet, *influence* the human destiny. Perhaps the following beautiful passage from that exquisite work of Bulwer Lytton's—*Zanoni*—may help to make the meaning still clearer:—

For the accomplishment of whatever is great and lofty, the clear perception of truths is the first requisite—truths adapted to the object desired. The warrior thus reduces the chances of battle to combinations almost of mathematics. He can predict a result if he can but depend upon the materials he is forced to employ.

This necessitates a consideration of the element of clairvoyance necessary to constitute a true astrologer.

The ancient *Rishis*, to condemn whose books without a hearing was till recently a general practice, had by observation, experiment and deep occult knowledge, taken account of all conceivable combinations of various causes and determined with mathematical precision almost to infinitesimal point their effects. But yet, since the cosmos is infinite, no finite being can ever take cognisance of *all* the possibilities of Nature; at any rate they

cannot be committed to writing, since as *Isis Unveiled* says:—"to express divine ideas, divine language is necessary." Recognising the truth of this most important but unfortunately often neglected axiom, they laid down as the first condition of success in astrology a pure life, physically, morally and spiritually. This was intended to develop the psychic capacities of the astrologer who could thus see in *Akasa* the combinations, not alluded to in the written works, and predict their results in the manner beautifully illustrated in the above extract from *Zanoni*. In short, true Astrology is a mathematical science which teaches us what particular causes will produce what particular combinations, and thus, understood in its real significance, gives us the means of obtaining the knowledge how to guide our future births. True, such astrologers there are but few: but are we justified in condemning the science of electricity because there may be very few real electricians? We must not at the same time lose sight of the fact that although there are numberless combinations which must be determined by the psychic vision of the astrologer, there are yet a very large number of them which have been determined and put on record by the ancient sages. It is these cases which baffle us when we find that some astrological calculations prove correct while others are quite beside the mark.

ASTROLOGICAL

[Reprinted from *Lucifer* III. 68, September 1888.—Eds.]

Over the ambitious signature of "Magus" a correspondent asks in your July issue, "What is planetary influence and how does it act on man?" "Nemo" in his reply answers other questions but fails to answer this one.

Not being myself a Magus I will not assume to fully describe planetary influence, since to do so would lead us into realms quite beyond our comprehension. But we will get a better idea of the subject by recollecting that the ancients always considered the "ambient"—or entire heaven—at birth, as being that which affected man, and that planets were only the pointers or indices showing when and where the influence of the "ambient"

would be felt. The modern astrologers, following those great leaders, but unable to grasp the enormous subject, reduced the scheme to the *influences of planets*. They have thus come to leave out, to a great extent, influences cast by powerful stars, which often produce effects not to be sought for under planets: "When such stars have rule nor wise nor fool can stay their influence." The planets were held, rightly as I think, to be only foci for "the influence of the whole ambient," having however a power of their own of a secondary nature exercisable when the ambient influence was weak.

When London was burnt a mighty star—not a planet—had rule, and Napoleon was prefigured by a star also, his fall being due in fact to the aspect of the heavens *as a whole*, and not to the ruling of Wellington's signifier. A slight accident might have thrown the power of the latter out of the horary field. Similarly, the cyclic vicissitudes of this globe will not be shown by any planetary scheme, but by certain *stars* that fix the destiny of poor Earth. When they have their day and term the wise man will be unable to rule his own stars or any others.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

New York, July 27th, 1888.

KARMA AND STARS

[Reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum* for July 1890, p. 11.—EDS.]

Ques. *If all our sufferings in this life are caused by the misdeeds of a former life, how can any combination of sidereal influences at birth affect our fate?*

W. Q. J.—A thorough acquaintance with the doctrine of Karma and with what is actually claimed for Astrology by those qualified to speak, would result in an answer to this question. Astrology is not soothsaying nor card-reading; reading omens is soothsaying; reading cards is a form of divination; Astrology is neither of these. All that is claimed for it is that the whole assemblage of stars indicate, as being a vast machine or clockwork, just exactly what is the state or condition of any one spot in the whole

mass. Is this any more absurd than to say that a watch-maker can tell from the movements of a watch just where the hands will be at any particular moment, and likewise from the hands alone where the different cogs and other parts are within? If common minds, and ignorant as well as venal practitioners of Astrology, make a stock of their imitations, wrong conceptions, and base uses of it, that is no reason why the *Forum* should sweepingly denounce Astrology. As well denounce real Christianity because of the base coinage labelled with its name. Taking now the oft-made assertion that "Karma governs all worlds up to that of Brahma," we reply to the question that our Karma and the stars are inextricably linked together, for if we had no Karma there would for us be no stars. It is just because the Karma of any being at birth is fixed from his prior one that the great clockwork of the skies shows unerringly to the sage—but not to the dabbler nor to the modern abusers of Astrology—the Karma or present fate of the being. But if, as so often done by even the best of Theosophists, we separate any part of our universe from any other portion, putting one under the influence of Karma and another not, then of course such questions as this one cannot be answered. The doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion are naught if not all-embracing, are useless and misleading if not applicable to the greatest as well as the very least of circumstances or worlds; and so we answer that not only do sidereal positions *indicate* our Karma, but even the very clouds, the wind, and the hour of the day or night in which we may be born, do the same.

STRAY MEMORANDA

ON ASTROLOGY—FROM R. C.

[Reprinted from *Theosophy*, IX. 89, for January 1921.—EDS.]

Do planets as such have influence upon us?

We make ourselves the slaves of planetary influences. I once knew a man who was a very nice man,—very nice and as honest as any of us. He stayed home one day—Oh, I forgot to say that he followed the stars, or perhaps they chased

him, and he had it all figured out for every hour and every day of the week and every month of the year. He got sight of some conjunction that intimated to him that he was going to break his leg next day. Well, he just thought he would get ahead of that! So he stayed at home. His wife asked him to put up a curtain; he went up on a step-ladder, and you know the rest. There was an "influence" that was very, very bad, you see; but what made it? What precipitated it? His own special attitude, of course. He had no reason to break his leg, for you can have no attraction for a thing you don't think about, whether you like it or don't like it. Either way of thinking about a thing affords the attraction for that thing. His thinking about it was what precipitated the mishap.

The logic of the "special attitude" can be seen working out even with animals. I remember a little mongrel dog one day going along on the other side of the street. On the side of the street where I was, a lot of other dogs—good-natured, good-looking dogs—were all playing together. This little fellow was going along all right, minding his own business, when he suddenly caught sight of those other dogs. He trembled and sat down and rapped his tail on the sidewalk. Bye and bye he got the courage to take a few steps more; then, he looked over and sat down and rapped his tail some more. A few more steps, and he would sit down again; and so he went on. Now, those dogs didn't notice him at all in the first place. Then, all of a sudden, they saw him and made a rush for him with one accord. He would have been all right if he had gone on and minded his own business; but by his fear he attracted the "influence" and the things that he feared.

ASTRAL ODOURS

Dr. L. P. Jacks writes in his *Confessions of an Octogenarian* of his own investigations of spiritism and psychic phenomena. One incident which he reports is of special interest:—

I have never seen a ghost—which does not prove that nobody else has—but think I can claim to have *smelt* one. Not, however, the ghost of a human being. Mine was the ghost of a cigar. It happened as follows.

My father-in-law, Stopford Brooke, was a great smoker of Manila cigars, a dozen a day being a moderate allowance. Now the smoke of Manila cigars has a strong odour quite distinct from that of other brands, and Brooke's study was always saturated with it. Well, one night in 1917, I sat up late in my own study, the rest of the household having retired, completing a difficult chapter in *The Life of Stopford Brooke*, on which I was then engaged. I finished my work about 1 o'clock and was about to put out the lights and go to bed, when quite suddenly the room became filled, almost overpoweringly, with the unmistakable odour of Manila cigars. It lasted some minutes and then went as suddenly as it came.

Dr. Jacks told his experience to a scientifically minded sceptic. He was sure that the window which Dr. Jacks remembered was closed had inadvertently been left open and that a policeman on his beat, smoking a Manila cigar, had passed the lonely house far off the beat of any policeman. We sympathize with Dr. Jacks's verdict on the attitude of scientific unbelief:—

Fools have been divided into two classes: those who believe everybody, and those who believe nobody. The latter strike me as the more foolish.

The occurrence reported by Mr. Jacks is on the footing of any psychical phenomenon of sensuous type. These can be variously produced. Scent is correlated with sound and colour and all are in terms of vibration as far as regards their immediate cause. The Astral Light, which preserves the record of sensations no less than of thoughts and deeds, doubtless played its part in Dr. Jacks's phenomenon. Mr. Judge mentions specifically that through it odours can be carried thousands of miles. There are three ways by which such a record can reach the brain. It may be objectivised and received as a direct physical sensation; it may be perceived in the Astral Light by the inner sense of smell, or it may be a stimulus from within which causes the olfactory nerve to report to the brain, thus throwing the inner image without.

"The race mind is changing by enlargement"

—W. Q. J.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

It is right to resist, as Mr. Adam Gowans Whyte does in *The Riddle of Religious Education and a New Solution* (Watts and Co., London) the pressure which is being brought by Churchmen for more intensive religious instruction in the English schools. And Mr. Whyte does well to stress the "urgent need for cultivating in our citizens of the future a broad outlook on the subject of religion." He proposes to explain to the children "the essential doctrines and practices of the great non-Christian religions," Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Confucianism, etc. But where is he to get his material?

On the historical side the syllabus could be compiled from the works of leading scholars, and on the modern side it would form a compendium of the interpretations by the existing religious bodies in all countries of the meaning their faiths should hold to those who believe in them and practise them.

That is only a less weak reed to lean on than the prejudiced reports of missionaries. Would Mr. Whyte advise any one seeking information about Christianity to go to its priests, or directly to the Sermon on the Mount? The comparative study of religion is hedged about with difficulties unless the clues offered by Theosophy are availed of. The *Vedas* especially need the key to read them correctly, but

no religious work now extant can be understood without the help of the Archaic wisdom, the primitive foundation on which they were all built.

The object of such study H. P. B. gives in proclaiming it "the duty of all Theosophists to promote in every practical way, and in all countries, the spread of *non-sectarian* education." It is to bring home the lesson of Universal Brotherhood, which rests upon the fundamental unity of all and which is the basic teaching of that Archaic Wisdom.

The identity of the soul and spirit, of real, immortal man...once proven and deep-rooted in our hearts, would lead us far on the road of real charity and brotherly goodwill. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 36)

Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, in a letter on "Truth and Value" in *The New English Weekly* for 27th August, explains by implication one of

the *Yoga Aphorisms* of Patanjali which has puzzled many a student. That aphorism states that "the work of the ascetic is neither pure nor dark, but is peculiar to itself."

Dr. Coomaraswamy upholds the superiority of truth, considered absolutely, over values, which always represent the pairs of opposites and vary with the evaluator. He sets on a higher plane than the religions, which take account of values, "metaphysics (which, like Socrates' daimon, 'that vulgar fellow, cares for nothing but the truth.')

But he shows the pitfall hidden in the premature repudiation of values. It has sometimes been argued, both in East and West, he writes,

that it does not matter what I do, right and wrong being only matters of preference. The catch lies, of course, in the words "I" and "preference"; since for so long as we hold that "I am the doer" and for so long as we entertain any *preferences* whatever we cannot shake off the burden of responsibility.... The Buddha affirms very vigorously that there is an "Ought to be done" and an "Ought not to be done," but in the Parable of the Raft he points out that a man who has reached land at the end of his voyage does not carry the ship about on his back but leaves it on the shore.

Paul sums up well the position of the true ascetic when he writes (I. Cor. 6: 12):—

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

And it is true, as Dr. Coomaraswamy concludes, "that we must be judged, at last, not by what we have done or not done, but what we are."

The power of mind over matter has long been recognised in modern science. One aspect of it, namely, the injurious effect of mental and emotional disturbances upon the body, is now coming to the fore. In an article in *Fortune*, "Stomach Ulcer—Wound Stripe of Civilization," the origin of stomach ailments is traced directly to the mind. A most intimate connection has been discovered to exist between the state of mind a person is in and his stomach. The latter's secretions increase in volume and become more acid when the mind is agitated, fearful, angry or anxious. Thus, ulcer of the stomach (so frequently seated in the upper

duodenum), which Medical Science had until comparatively recently considered a local disease caused by hyperacidity and other physiological conditions, is now described as a "psychosomatic" disorder brought on by psychic causes and its cure entrusted to the psychiatrist in preference to the general practitioner.

Thus is medical science coming nearer to the Theosophical position. Theosophy has always asserted that behind the immediate physical cause of any disease there is another cause, the inner one, involving both mind and feelings. Real health of the body will result only from a clean life and a sane and dispassionate mental attitude. The pressing need of our civilization, for overcoming stomach ulcer and the many other wounds of the body, is to recover the art of calmness ever present.

Under the heading "The Bright Shield of Continence" Commander Gene Tunney, U.S.N.R., former champion prize-fighter, deals in *The Reader's Digest* for August with the threat which social vice offers to military efficiency. Venereal disease accounted for 100,000 more casualties than bullets did among the American Expeditionary Force in the last war. It is increasing in the army today though army medical authorities are trying to offset with prompt prophylactic treatment the menace of commercialised vice. They even urge procuring prophylactic sets when going on leave, a practice vehemently condemned in reference to the British forces by Lt. Col. P. W. O'Gorman, I.M.S., in his pamphlet *Must We Encourage Sexual Vice?* Its implication, he declares, is "that promiscuity must be quite all right, only it must be done safely, for health's sake." And he pertinently adds, "Health of the body only—not of the soul."

Incidentally, Lt. Col. O'Gorman makes the further point that not only does providing contraceptives remove the fear of infection, a deterrent to many. It also brings in the power of suggestion to further weaken the will.

Official encouragement of wrong-doing is highly culpable, but Commander Tunney places major responsibility where it belongs, upon the individual himself. He calls on the champions of

democracy to exercise the self-control which the average prize-fighter imposes on himself for physical fitness for mere profit's sake. "*Sexual continence is the strongest weapon yet devised to combat venereal infection.*"

Doctors agree that continence is compatible with sound health and "some of the greatest contributions to our civilization have been made by men who practised continence."

And the risk of infection is not the only penalty. What, Commander Tunney demands, does the man who indulges in the "shameful desecration of ideal love,"

get that is one-thousandth part as precious as the thing he destroys? . . . Continence is the only guarantee of an undefiled spirit and the best protection against the promiscuity that cheapens and finally kills the power to love.

Both pamphlet and article lend point to Gandhiji's charge in *Hind Swaraj* that by enabling those who indulge in vice to escape the consequences doctors induce further indulgence. We may also draw the reader's attention to his important book—*Self-Restraint vs. Self-Indulgence*.

John Armstrong states in *The New Statesman and Nation* (5th September) that Science has shown us "a fundamental unity of all phenomena, however apparently diverse." In other words, as Mr. Armstrong puts it:—

Science has proved the thing postulated by philosophers in words, by architects, painters, and composers in constructed unities of form, colour and sound, by religious leaders in moral precept, by world conquerors in aggression . . . Reality has supplanted its symbols.

Now, Mr. Armstrong urges, "the human race is in a position for the first time to attempt the conscious expression of that craving [for universal unity], not in the form of an ant-heap but as the willing integration of individual and nation as a whole." Separative creeds stand like great rocks in the way of human unity. Mr. Armstrong truly writes that

what matters in religion is not the decrease of church attendance but the increase in the number of people whose view of the brotherhood of man is not obscured by any sectarian, and therefore separatist, dogma.

The Theosophical Movement affords the common platform on which such people can meet to make their good-will an effective force. It is wide enough for every man and woman who, belonging to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all.

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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.

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