

AUM

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th September 1944.

VOL. XIV. No. II

## NOTICE

As a result of the recent paper control order of the Government, we are compelled to reduce the size of our periodical to 6 pages. We are applying to the authorities to give us exemption and to allow us to publish, in its usual form of 16 pages, this magazine which at present nourishes the mind-souls of many all over the world.—EDITORS.

### “KILL NOT, FOR PITY’S SAKE”

[ The following question and answer are reprinted from *Lucifer*, Vol. 11, p. 258, for May 1888.—Eds. ]

Q. Why do the noblest animals suffer so much at the hands of men? I need not enlarge or try to explain this question. Cities are torture places for the animals who can be turned to any account for use or amusement by man! and these are always the most noble.

A. In the *Sutras*, or the Aphorisms of the *Karma-pa*, a sect which is an offshoot of the great Gelukpa (yellow caps) sect in Tibet, and whose name bespeaks its tenets—“the believers in the efficacy of Karma,” (action, or good works)—an Upasaka inquires of his Master, why the fate of the poor animals had so changed of late? Never was an animal killed or treated unkindly in the vicinity of Buddhist or other temples in China, in days of old, while now, they are slaughtered and freely sold at the markets of various cities, etc. The answer is suggestive:—

....“Lay not nature under the accusation of this unparalleled injustice. Do not seek in vain for Karmic effects to explain the cruelty, for the *Tenbrel Chugnyi* (causal connection, *Nidāna*) shall teach thee none. It is the unwelcome advent of the Peling (Christian foreigner), whose three fierce gods refused to provide for the protection of the weak and *little ones* (animals), that is answerable for the ceaseless and heartrending sufferings of our dumb companions.”...

The answer to the above query is here in a nutshell. It may be useful, if once more disagree-

able, to some religionists to be told that the blame for this universal suffering falls entirely upon our Western religion and early education. Every philosophical Eastern system, every religion and sect in antiquity—the Brahmanical, Egyptian, Chinese and finally, the purest as the noblest of all the existing systems of ethics, Buddhism—inculcates kindness and protection to every living creature, from animal and bird down to the creeping thing and even the reptile. Alone, our Western religion stands in its isolation, as a monument of the most gigantic *human* selfishness ever evolved by human brain, without one word in favour of, or for the protection of the poor animal. Quite the reverse. For theology, underlining a sentence in the Jehovistic chapter of “Creation,” interprets it as a proof that animals, as all the rest, were created for man! *Ergo*—sport has become one of the *noblest* amusements of the upper ten. Hence—poor innocent birds wounded, tortured and killed every autumn by the million, all over the Christian countries, for man’s recreation. Hence also, unkindness, often cold-blooded cruelty, during the youth of horse and bullock, brutal indifference to its fate when age has rendered it unfit for work, and ingratitude after years of hard labour for, and in the service of man. In whatever country the European steps in, there begins the slaughter

of the animals and their useless decimation.

"Has the prisoner ever killed *for his pleasure* animals?" inquired a Buddhist Judge at a border town in China, *infected* with pious European Churchmen and missionaries, of a man accused of having murdered his sister. And having been answered in the affirmative, as the prisoner had been a servant in the employ of a Russian colonel, "a mighty hunter before the Lord," the Judge had no need of any other evidence and the murderer was found "guilty"—justly, as his subsequent confession proved.

Is Christianity or even the Christian layman to be blamed for it? Neither. It is the pernicious system of theology, long centuries of theocracy, and the ferocious, ever-increasing selfishness in the Western civilized countries. What *can* we do?

### COMMENT ON THE ABOVE

"Kill not, for Pity's sake!" Such was the cry of the Enlightened One. In descending and dark cycles of human evolution pity, mercy and compassion decrease and greed, wrath and egotism increase. The universal law of action is at once just and merciful, stern and tender; it has been called Compassion Absolute. Unity reigns supreme in Nature; and ever and always when this unity is disturbed the Law adjusts it, accurately—so that the disturbing force feels the just effects but at the same time acquires the opportunity to learn something about its own character and advance, which the mercy aspect of the Law provides. Evil comes into existence with the birth of self-consciousness in the human kingdom, after which Compassion Absolute is seen to express its power in a dual manner. This is appearance or Maya—to man the single act of Law which is Compassion Absolute appears dual, now beneficent and then maleficent, now stern and then bestowing "good luck."

Cruelty cannot but be absent on non-man-bearing globes. Evolution by Natural Impulse means that the Force and the forces of Nature run on smoothly like a flowing river to meet the Ocean of Spirit; or It and they conjointly blaze like a flame which tapers heavenwards in a single point—the symbol of the Impartite Self. But on man-bearing globes, like this Earth, cycles

of night produce mischief and evil. How beautiful is a starlit night even in a forest; but a night in the city? Its garish lights help man to foul and dark deeds. Robbers and profligates misuse the cycle of rest to the disadvantage of the whole population.

Degradation of the concepts of true Religion lead to the ills of animal and even human sacrifice, as is revealed by a study of history from the view-point of Occultism. Time and again Masters of the Law of Compassion Absolute have taught—"Kill not, for Pity's sake." Like other truths of the Mighty Art this also becomes lost because men, instead of using the power of their minds, allow themselves to be carried away by the force of their blood. Animalism becomes rampant as humanism decreases; and cruelty usurps the place of Compassion.

Such an era, where cruelty has the upperhand and shuts the gates of mercy on mankind is the present one. Among the expressions of cruelty that are flourishing, that against the animal kingdom deserves special attention from all practitioners of Occultism who aspire to tread the Path which leads to Those who are "Masters of Their Own Mercy"—a phrase used by H. P. B. and which needs reflection. In her article "Have Animals Souls?" reprinted in Vol. IX of this magazine, H. P. B. says:—

Fishing, shooting and hunting, the most fascinating of all the "amusements" of civilized life—are certainly the most objectionable from the standpoint of occult philosophy, the most sinful in the eyes of the followers of these religious systems which are the direct outcome of the Esoteric Doctrine—Hinduism and Buddhism.

H. P. B. also answered a question on the subject which we reprint above and which, especially written for Christian readers, points to the degradation caused by "the pernicious system of theology." Among Hindus also false religious views maintain, even today, the degrading practice of animal sacrifice. Gross misunderstanding of the very term *yagna* has led to gross mischief, one form of which is the killing of animals. Among the Muslims also the evils of misunderstood *kurbani* persist. It is one of the missions of the modern Theosophist to spread knowledge about

the correct attitude for man to hold towards the animal kingdom.

Vivisection may be likened to those priests who officiate at animal sacrifices; with this slight difference, that while the former torture and kill beasts in the hope of saving the human body from diseases, the latter butcher animals for saving the soul and ensuring its prosperity. They both are learned butchers, as those who kill cows and hogs for the market are unlearned ones. We need not expatiate on the evils of vivisection; ghastly as they are from the point of view of ordinary morals, they are far more terrible in the light of the science and philosophy of Occultism. The same may be said of the debasing religious practice of animal sacrifice. But there are still among the students of Theosophy those who do not fully understand the significance of meat-eating, which involves destruction of Forms of Life. The claim that meat-eating has "indeed become a vital necessity" H. P. B. designates as "the tyrant's plea." At the end of her article she says:—

The writer is not simple enough to imagine, that a whole British Museum filled with works against meat-diet, would have the effect of stopping civilized nations from having slaughter-houses, or making them renounce their beefsteak and Christmas goose.

H. P. B. may not expect civilized men and women in general to renounce their meat but what about Theosophists? What about aspirants to Chelaship? What about devotees on probation? What do they make of this statement of W. Q. Judge?—

When I am annoyed by an ungovernable animal, I am reminded that the brutes would not oppose man if man understood and entered into his true relations with all things. The brutes are unconsciously aware of the general human opposition, which they see focalized in each human being. When I am in harmony with all things, men *cannot* and brutes *will not* oppose me. In underrating instinct, the brute is more true than is the man, to the unwritten Law.

And, again, what about this Rule which H. P. B. quotes?—

No animal food of whatever kind, nothing that has life in it, should be taken by the disciple.

And does it not acquire greater significance from the idea she puts forward in these words?—

Every kind of animal tissue, however you may

cook it, still retains certain marked characteristics of the animal which it belonged to, which characteristics can be recognised. And apart from that, every one knows by the taste what meat he is eating. We go a step farther, and prove that when the flesh of animals is assimilated by man as food, it imparts to him, physiologically, some of the characteristics of the animal it came from. Moreover, occult science teaches and proves this to its students by ocular demonstration, showing also that this "coarsening" or "animalizing" effect on man is greatest from the flesh of the larger animals, less for birds, still less for fish and other cold-blooded animals, and least of all when he eats only vegetables.

There is a great deal of superstition about vegetarian diet not being really nourishing and the consequent necessity of eating meat. Such superstition is rooted in ignorance and a little dispassionate enquiry would show how ludicrous that notion is. The craving for meat is a kamic tendency and it is very different indeed from the *necessity* for meat for certain bodily ailments. Under the excuse of the latter many are falling prey to the former.

Then there is the weakness: why make yourself a nuisance or conspicuous by not eating what all eat? These and similar arguments do not answer the important point about pity—the brutalizing effect on our human nature of destroying Forms of Life or getting them destroyed.

What does actually happen when a cow or a pig, as a highly organized Form of Life, is butchered? What when a cold-blooded Form of Life is murdered? What does such wanton destruction do in the Astral Light? What does the blood that streams forth at the killing of animals provide for the debasing of the psychic atmosphere? In *Isis Unveiled* (II. 567) H. P. B. states that "blood begets phantoms, and its emanations furnish certain spirits with the materials required to fashion their temporary appearances." The student needs to study the whole passage from which only a sentence is quoted and try to make some application of the common saying—"Blood will have blood."

In the *Karnaparva* of the *Mahabharata* Krishna says to Arjuna:—

Abstention from injury to animals is the highest virtue. One may even speak an untruth, but one should never kill.

Blake, the mystic and poet, expressed a profound truth of Occultism when he wrote:—

Then Cherish Pity, lest you drive an Angel from your door.

# PORTRAITS OF THE THREE QUALITIES

## DIGESTED FROM "THE BHAGAVAD GITA"

Spring is not seen, but its results on trees are evident. Similarly is the Soul, though unseen, separate from the attributes (Gunas). The sun causes many things such as the fading of the stars, the fire in Suryakanta, disappearance of darkness and the opening of the lotus, and yet the sun is untouched by any of these phenomena. So is the Soul inside the body, the fount of real power and unconcerned with actions. It is the light of the Soul, which discloses the Gunas. It is the prowess of the Soul, which increases them and yet the Soul is unconcerned. When wisdom brings the realisation of this, the man is said to be beyond Gunas (*Gunatita*).

—Dnyneshwari.

The Tamasic man is ignorant and indifferent, with but small capacity. He is rash and heedless, having little common-sense, or power of judgment and discrimination. His whole concern is with mean, petty things, or else he is attached to one object as though it were the only thing in life. His knowledge and interests are confined to effects and symptoms, and he ignores causes. He is vain, foolish and fearful. He tends to become depressed and gloomy and will get satisfaction from self-mortification, because of pride and hypocrisy, or from the desire to hurt another person by such actions. He puts false values on things, mistaking wrong for right.

He is half-asleep, lazy, idle and dull. He does not care what he eats or how it is prepared. He will undertake to do a thing without considering the consequences, or whether he has the capacity to carry it out. If he gives anything in the way of presents or favours, he does so to the wrong people, or scornfully, and without considering as to whether it is the right time and place. He carries out what duties he has to do in a slovenly way, and his religion does not even follow the letter of the law, but is a matter of omitting as much as he can "get by with." He is drawn to spiritualistic practices, which encourage passivity and stupefaction of the soul.

The Rajasic man is the restless, over-active type, with a strong possessive spirit, always running after this, that or the other thing. He is overwhelmed by all the vast variety of things in the world, all of which he wants very intensely, but he does not see clearly among all these what to do and what to omit, nor can he distinguish be-

tween what is of value and what is harmful. He is always starting something fresh, though he will avoid doing what is likely to cause him pain and annoyance. The pleasures that come from sense activities appeal to him most, but he does not recognize that they generate pain. He likes his food too highly seasoned, and suffers from indigestion and other ills in consequence. He tends to make a burden of his work and leisure activities, and is always looking for what he is going to get out of them, or how he is going to appear to other people. If he does a generous act or performs a sacrifice, it is for show, and the same hypocrisy makes him perform ostentatious austerities for the sake of the respect and fame they bring. If he gives a present or does a favour, he expects a return or at least some feeling of spiritual benefit from it, otherwise he does it with reluctance. In his religion he looks to some god or gods or power outside who will help him to get his desires, regardless of the effect on other people.

The Sattvic man is attracted by knowledge and harmony, and his innate wisdom shows in the very clarity of his physiognomy and his way of speaking and acting. His character is steadfast, bright, calm and happy. His natural bent is to carry out rightly whatever is necessary, as it should be done, without worrying over its results, and without self-interest or conceit. He has the power of seeing the unity underlying all the apparently separate things of life, and is able to decide what ought to be done and what not, and when and how to begin any task. He can see the dangers of any position and what will hinder and what will help in getting free from it. He can

recognize that what may be painful at first may really lead to the true source of happiness, and he has the steady perseverance in his devotion that enables him to control hindering mental and physical reactions.

He chooses well-flavoured, nourishing, protective foods, which also steady and tranquillize the mental faculties. If he gives a gift he makes sure the recipient is worthy, and that the time and place are right, and—he does not expect a return. In his religion he turns to spiritual powers higher than himself, and carries out his acts of devotion religiously because he feels them essential, and without expecting to be rewarded for it. His discipline is concerned with reverence paid to such higher beings, spiritual teachers and wise men, and with self-purification and adherence to the principles of chastity, rectitude and harmlessness. In speech he disciplines himself to truthfulness and a gentleness that causes no anxiety in other people. He reads noble, elevating writings diligently. Mentally he inculcates in himself serenity, mildness of temper, the power of silence, self-restraint and absolute straightforwardness of

conduct. He is the personification of unselfishness and faith.

The characteristics of the man who is above the three qualities are perfect equal-mindedness, discrimination and control. He accepts the fact of the inertia of Tamas, the restlessness of Rajas, the harmony of Sattva, and takes them as they come without identifying himself with them. Pain and pleasure, blame and praise, disgrace and honour, hate or friendship leave him with an equal mind. Wealth has no attraction; his values are not worldly. He does only what is necessary, in the attitude of concentrated devotion to the Spirit of all things, that is, he acts for and as the SELF. His discrimination is absolutely pure and clear, his self-control resolute. Neither the charms of sense reactions nor any notions of like and dislike affect him. He avoids crowds, eats moderately, keeps his body, speech and mind under dispassionate control, turning his meditation always to Spirit. Without any sense of egotism, pride or possession, he can maintain calmness at all times. He is the embodiment of the Supreme, selfless, serene, sorrowless, desireless, with compassion given to all beings alike.

## THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITION

Deity, in Theosophy, manifests as Universal Life but also as Absolute Law, Law eternal and uncreate. Deity is Law and *vice versa*.

I am the embodiment of the Supreme Ruler, and of the incorruptible, of the unmodifying, and of the eternal law, and of endless bliss. (*The Bhagavad Gita*, XIV. 27; Theosophy Co. Edition, p. 104)

Thou art the supreme inexhaustible Being, the end of effort, changeless, the Supreme Spirit of this universe, the never-failing guardian of eternal law. (*Ibid.*, XI. 18, p. 81)

One universal and immutable Law operates throughout the entire cosmos. It is known as the law of periodicity or of cycles. Its cosmic manifestation is the succession of Manvantaras and Pralayas, the periodic emergence of universes from subjectivity into objectivity, and their reabsorption once more into the unknown Root.

O son of Kunti, at the end of a kalpa all things return into my nature, and then again at the beginning

of another kalpa I cause them to evolve again. (*Ibid.*, IX. 7, p. 65)

Those who are acquainted with day and night know that the day of Brahmâ is a thousand revolutions of the yugas and that his night extendeth for a thousand more. At the coming on of that day all things issue forth from the unmanifested into manifestation, so on the approach of that night they merge again into the unmanifested. This collection of existing things having thus come forth, is dissolved at the approach of the night, O son of Pritha; and now again on the coming of the day it emanates spontaneously. (*Ibid.*, VIII. 17-20, pp. 60-61)

Man, too, as a Pilgrim Soul, passing through the great cycle of Necessity, goes from life to death and back to life again.

Death is certain to all things which are born, and rebirth to all mortals. (*Ibid.*, II. 27, p. 13)

Each life of activity is followed by a period of rest, of Devachanic bliss and assimilation. When all the experiences of an incarnation have

been assimilated and built into the fabric of the soul, it returns once more to active life on earth. Thus periods of activity and of repose rhythmically succeed each other.

And they, having enjoyed that spacious heaven for a period in proportion to their merits, sink back into this mortal world where they are born again as soon as their stock of merit is exhausted. (*Ibid.*, IX. 21, p. 67)

Both I and thou have passed through many births, O harasser of thy foes! Mine are known unto me, but thou knowest not of thine. (*Ibid.*, IV. 5, p. 31)

Even within the span of a single life, man goes through the minor cycles of childhood, youth, manhood and old age.

As the lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, youth, and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same. (*Ibid.*, II. 13, p. 11)

There is also the Cycle of the great Avatars, when, at the proper period in the life of mankind, some high soul takes upon itself a body of flesh and voluntarily incarnates. This is sometimes for the benefit of a particular nation or race, but always to help on the spiritual progress of humanity.

I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bharata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness. (*Ibid.*, IV. 7-8, p. 31)

"Periods of mental and moral light and darkness succeed each other as day does night." During a cycle of degradation the true doctrine disappears for a time from among men, but like the sun it is sure to reappear. Periodically, the same eternal Wisdom Religion is restated in a form and language to suit the mind of the race and whenever the cycle for its reiteration dawns.

This exhaustless doctrine of Yoga I formerly taught unto Vivaswat; Vivaswat communicated it to Manu and Manu made it known unto Ikshwaku; and

being thus transmitted from one unto another it was studied by the Rajarshees, until at length in the course of time the mighty art was lost, O harasser of thy foes! It is even the same exhaustless, secret, eternal doctrine I have this day communicated unto thee. (*Ibid.*, IV. 1-3, p. 30)

Another name for the law of periodicity is Karma, the law of action and reaction. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Man, as a self-conscious being, is a generator of force, setting up causes on the various planes by his thoughts, feelings, words and deeds. The effects are bound to return to the centre from which the causes have been set in motion. Karma adjusts each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer.

Thou canst create this "day" thy chances for thy "morrow." In the "Great Journey," causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for rigid Justice rules the World. With mighty sweep of never erring action, it brings to mortals lives of weal or woe, the karmic progeny of all our former thoughts and deeds. (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 37)

The wheel of the Good Law moves swiftly on. It grinds by night and day. The worthless husks it drives from out the golden grain, the refuse from the flour. The hand of Karma guides the wheel; the revolutions mark the beatings of the karmic heart. (*Ibid.*, p. 30)

Learn that no efforts, not the smallest—whether in right or wrong direction—can vanish from the world of causes. E'en wasted smoke remains not traceless. "A harsh word uttered in past lives is not destroyed, but ever comes again." The pepper plant will not give birth to roses, nor the sweet jessamine's silver star to thorn or thistle turn. (*Ibid.*, p. 37)

The absolute universality of the operation of the Law of Cycles is seen in such common phenomena as Day and Night, Waking and Sleeping, Summer and Winter, Cold and Heat. All pairs of opposites are but manifestations of the ever-operating, beginningless and endless law of cycles.

These two, *light* and *darkness*, are the world's eternal ways. (*Gita*, VIII. 26, p. 62)

*The only decree of Karma—an eternal and immutable decree—is absolute Harmony in the world of matter as it is in the world of Spirit. It is not, therefore, Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we, who reward or punish ourselves according to whether we work with, through and along with nature, abiding by the laws on which that Harmony depends, or—break them.* —H. P. B.