

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



There is no Religion Higher than Truth

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BUDDHA AND MODERN INDIA

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Friends,

It is a pleasure and privilege to be in this historic place which arose out of the labours of the great and noble son of India—Raja Ram Mohan Rai. One of the purest, most philanthropic and enlightened men India ever produced, the Raja was not only a social reformer and a religious revivalist, but a spiritual potency of a high order. As holy as he was learned, he saw the root-cause of the fallen condition of our ancient India. He laboured constructively and in the Brahma Samaj is enshrined the fount of inspiration which can help many a son and daughter of India even to-day. But to understand the mission of Raja Ram Mohan Rai we must look at him against his proper historical background. He is one of those flowers on the Tree of Indian Evolution which blooms, now and again, to remind us, the children of the Motherland, of her hoary spiritual culture. Through him ancient Aryavarta proclaimed once again the message of the purity of religion which cleanses people from the pollution of sectarianism. We spoke of an historical background: during many centuries there has been ever and anon a conflict raging in our country between religious sectarianism and Universal Religion. Noble minds and enlightened hearts have arisen again and again to fight the evil of religious sectarianism, and to show the way to the

Universal Religion of Wisdom and Peace. Raja Ram Mohan Rai was one such man—one of those rare flowers whose immortal fragrance inspires us to rise above the narrowness of creeds and castes and classes.

In many respects the times and circumstances of Raja Ram Mohan Rai can be compared to those of the great Buddha. While the magnitude of the attack delivered against the evils which surrounded them was different and the methods pursued by them were also different, the evils were similar, if not almost identical. What was the evil that surrounded the Buddha? It was not to an irreligious people that the great Tathagata came, but to a people steeped in religious superstitions. There were both religious ignorance and religious orthodoxy—which invariably make a pair, and their progeny is equally and always the same, namely, superstition on the part of the masses which priestcraft exploits. There flourished in the time of the Buddha a religion which taught that there was God or Gods outside of man, and that to gain happiness in this world or peace in the other men and women should propitiate this God or these Gods; in other words Atman, the Self, was overlooked and that engendered other-dependence. Self-dependence was forgotten, other-dependence was widely practised. The Laws of Manu lay

down as a cardinal and fundamental principle that self-dependence brings bliss, other-dependence breeds misery. Now, this evil of depending on others for spiritual salvation crops up every time, for the priest ever flourishes in the world. And the priest is always with us because the spiritually poor are always with us; the function of the priest is to exploit the religiously ignorant and the spiritually poor. Just as the rich capitalist of to-day could not flourish if labourers did not exist to be exploited, so also priests would not exist if religious ignorance and superstition did not encompass the masses of men. While the priest is always with us, the Prophet, the Seer, and the Sage come to us at intervals. Thus a Mighty Thinker, a Mighty Compassionater, like Buddha, arises in the world when "adharma or unrighteousness flourishess and dharma or righteousness decays." You will remember the famous slokas of the *Gita* :—

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. (*Gita*, IV. 7-8)

But while a Krishna or a Buddha incarnates among men at long intervals, *Yuge yuge*, from age to age, there are lesser potencies, spiritual stalwarts all the same, who arise by reason of their own spiritual fervour. The divinity within man asserts itself, and in the very process of reincarnation, *i.e.*, evolution of the Soul through many lives, come to fruition such wise hearts as that of Raja Ram Mohan Rai.

While speaking of these two types of Divine Men, Helpers of Humanity, Gautama the Buddha and Raja Ram Mohan Rai, we find a very striking point of view on matters of religion in the message which each of them gave to his own day and generation. In the declaration of principles of the Brahmo Samaj we have an injunction that is worth noting: "No sect shall be vilified, ridiculed or hated." The mission of the Brahmo Samaj, as Ram Mohan Rai conceived it, was not to make a new sect, not to form a new religion, but to abolish religious ignorance and superstition and to bring men to self-dependence, to reliance on the Atman, the Self within. These words from the Brahmo Samaj Declaration bring to our minds almost identical words of the great Buddhist: "Honour thine own faith and do not slander that of others."

The mission of the Buddha was to deliver humanity from the pain of the Soul, the misery of the mind. He not only said that he had freed himself from the tyranny of the selfish self, he also asserted with all the strength of his mighty compassion that such freedom was possible for every man and every woman. Nay more, the Buddha not only

spoke of the possibility of attaining Wisdom and Peace, but further asserted that it was more natural for man, *manushya*, the thinker, to overcome evil and pain than to remain subject and slave to selfishness, ignorance and pride. Therefore he taught a Way of Life which not only hundreds but thousands adopted and followed, making India happy and prosperous. That Way of Life is what India needs to-day. For once again religious orthodoxy and religious ignorance have overtaken our country, and there is one more force of destructive character which we have to face. Side by side with religious ignorance there is the materialistic tendency of the modern mind which tries to laugh out of court philosophical idealism and religious mysticism. Between ignorant, degrading religious superstition and arrogant and brutal materialism the human Soul has little chance to show its own divinity, grace and strength.

There are certain fundamental aspects of the mission and message of Buddha which we sorely need in the India of to-day. The very first one is the one most needed: The evaluating of each man or woman by his or her own worth and not by outer caste or class, family or social status. All over the world humanity employs the method of evaluating people by outer marks and not by inner characteristics. How much money does a man possess?—is considered a question of greater importance than—What virtues are in his character? This also is the principle underlying the existing differences of castes in our India to-day. A Brahmana by birth is called a Brahmana though he be a rascal of the first water! Cringing sycophants born to Kshattrya parents are called Kshattryas while in reality they are cowards and belong to that caste which may rightly be called untouchable. The *Bhagavad-Gita* establishes that as a principle, but it was forgotten in days of the Buddha, as it is disregarded to-day even by some who recite the *Gita* every morning! The Buddha has taught us the art and the technique of evaluating man by his own inner worth. Turn to the canto of the Brahmin in the *Dhammapada*. Note verse 394 :—

O thou of evil understanding, what avails thy matted hair, what avails thy deer skin? Outwardly thou cleanest thyself, but within all is darkness.

In the whole of this canto the Buddha gives us actual virtues and qualities by which we can discriminate between the good and the evil, between the apparent and the real, between the showy shadow and the spiritual force. The Tathagata himself, on more than one occasion, showed us by his own example that the inner man was to be considered, and not just the outer show. Look for example at the treatment he meted out to Upali, the barber, and Devadatta, his own royal cousin. When Upali of the barber caste asked the Master :

"Lord, is Nirvana also for such as me?" the answer was: "Yes, of course, the Dhamma is for all, and Nirvana also." But do not make the mistake that people sometimes do make; do not overlook that opulence is in itself no more an obstacle than poverty. That he himself, the Great Buddha, was born a Prince and yet he attained. Ananda, the favourite disciple, was a cousin as royal by birth as Devadatta. The latter was not, however, of royal heart as Ananda was. The inner life, the motive of the hidden heart, the spring of ideation which colours the whole of our life—it is that which determines the worth or the worthlessness of man. It is the cultivation of the inner reality of soul-life that the Buddha taught. It was this inner attitude, this Soul vision, that made India magnificently great and gloriously prosperous in the days gone by. One phase of that glory and grandeur was shown forth by the Bhikkhus who followed their Guru and who served the country after the Master departed. Another phase of the splendour of the inner and spiritual life manifested in the Empire of Asoka, the beloved of the people.

Thus, in modern India, we need not have a new religion but the old Way of Life which Buddha taught, which Krishna taught before him, and which other Teachers have taught elsewhere. The Way of Life which the Buddha taught can be traced in two places: in the precepts and the sermons he has left behind, and secondly in the example he set, the experiences he went through and the actions he performed. As we just saw, one of the most striking things of the message and in the life of the Buddha was the uttermost disregard of the outer paraphernalia of religion and the uttermost care in the due observance of the discipline of life. "What avails thy matted hair? What avails thy deer skin?"—and yet he was most strict with himself in observing the discipline of life and he made strict rules for the Bhikkhu to adopt and to follow. But the principle was control of the mind, control of the senses, and only to help and facilitate this inner discipline, suitable aids from without.

The Way of Life which Gautama, the Buddha, taught may best be described as Direct Action. In his own life he practised this method. What do we mean by direct action? We can best illustrate this by an example or two in the life of the Great One, and by his very mode of presenting the teachings to the public of the India of 600 B. C. We are deliberately taking this example because it illustrates the principle of direct action which the Buddha employed.

In his youthful days, as a Prince, he wanted to know something about the world of peoples—the great world outside the palace. What did he do? He did not seek information from some companion; he did not ask for a report from some courtier. He

ordered his chariot: "Channa, yoke my chariot; I shall ride and see beyond." You all know the story of what he saw—pain and sorrow, decay and death. This is what we call direct action. Next, what did he do? Another example of direct action: "These will befall me: death will overtake me, decay in me will ensue; why should it be so?" He did not send for soothsayer, he did not consult priest; there is not any record of his having talked the matter over with his royal father or his beloved queen. He used his method of direct action and began to think out the answer to the problem that directly presented itself to him, the problem of pain, suffering, death. When he found that his search for the answer was being impeded and hampered by the life of the palace he took his weapon of direct action in his hands and he marched out of his palace with the noble and world-honoured resolve:

. . . . I

Who ache not, lack not, grieve not, save with griefs
Which are not mine, except as I am man;
If such a one, having so much to give,
Gave all, laying it down for love of men,
And thenceforth spent himself to search for truth,
Wringing the secret of deliverance forth,
Whether it lurk in hells or hide in heavens,
Or hover, unrevealed, nigh unto all:
Surely at last, far off, sometime, somewhere,
The veil would lift for his deep-searching eyes,
The road would open for his painful feet,
That should be won for which he lost the world,
And Death might find him conqueror of death.

So much for his own action in his own life.

Now turn to the grand Message which he delivered. Buddhistic metaphysics have taxed giant minds: the doctrines of the twelve Nidanas and the five Skandhas are erudite and profound philosophical truths; but in preaching his message to the people he did not begin with such complex metaphysics. When he came to the five bhikkhus at the Deer Park near Benares, and when he set into motion the wheels of the Chariot of Righteousness, what did he say, how did he begin? He knew what they themselves, those five bhikkhus, were troubled about—the aches of life, the round of birth and death, and the escape from these. He also knew that every home had its own Kisagotami, the woman who had lost her babe and came to the Master to bring it to life, and suffered agony while learning the lesson that death comes to all. To the problems of humanity—the meaning of human inequality, of human competition and avarice, and of human suffering, he gave a direct answer. What did he preach to the people for forty-four years? To his own bhikkhus he taught many secrets and much of esoteric lore. He said on one occasion:

As the leaves in my hand are few in number and far more are the leaves on the tree above, even so, oh Bikkhus, what I have perceived and not communicated to you is far more than what I have communicated to you.

But to the world? It was always the direct answer to their direct problem. Sorrow and suffering do exist and they are rooted in *kama*, *tanha*, *trishna*. Uproot the thirst of lust and greed, and sorrow and suffering will cease.

Now this modulus of tackling our mental and moral problems, our everyday life problems, by direct action, is a habit very much needed in our modern India. Ignorant people with religious zeal and fervour pray to some god or gods when problems arise and when their safety and steadiness of life are threatened. So-called educated people have recourse to dubious and questionable ways, and somehow manage to muddle through their troubles and problems till death comes as a deliverer and a friend. Very few people face and handle and tackle their problems to their solution. So also in our mental and moral life. How many people question their own habits and customs or their own morals or the correctness of their own mental view-points? Not only politically are we slaves and servile, but in other walks of life also. And applying Buddha's axioms and principles we can go further and say that our very political slavery is but an effect and a result from our social and religious slavery; and we are slaves to outer customs because we are slaves to our own personal habits; if we are slaves to religious orthodoxy, bigotry and sectarianism, it is because we are the slaves of our own passions and of our own mind. Free yourselves from the inner and subjective slavery of the narrow mind, the mean heart, and all other freedoms will naturally follow.

So the Buddha's Way of Life which we need to copy in modern India is the application of the method of direct action. But it must not be applied to others; it must be applied to ourselves. And in making that application we must proceed from the innermost principle of our constitution, the mind, the first and most natural instrument in and through which the Soul acts. Thus we shall secure for ourselves rules of conduct which will produce a healthy integration between our inner, psychological and spiritual nature on the one hand and our outer, physiological and material nature on the other. Thus also we shall solve the problems of religious differences and communal clashes; for once we live according to the teachings of the great Buddha we shall live the Universal Religion of Man.

For many centuries past the message of the Buddha has ceased to work its miracle in our India. Buddhism exists mainly in superb caves and rock temples like Ajanta. But even these are replete with a vitality that can inspire the heart and charm

the mind. Have you ever thought, my friends, what any good Buddha image is saying to you as you sit in front of it and try to hear its message? For though India has forgotten the greatest of her sons *He* has not forgotten the Motherland. Continuously *He* smiles with gentle love through every statue and image and picture—the smile which reproaches the wicked and the ugly, the smile which encourages the good and inspires the aspiring Soul. And while *He* smiles listen to *Him* and you will hear *Him* say :—

Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them !

Behold how like the moon, reflected in the tranquil waves, Alaya is reflected by the small and by the great, is mirrored in the tiniest atoms, yet fails to reach the heart of all. Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent !

Of teachers there are many; the MASTER-SOUL is one, Alaya, the Universal Soul. Live in that MASTER as ITS ray in thee. Live in thy fellows as they live in IT.

Thou hast to saturate thyself with pure Alaya, become as one with Nature's Soul-Thought. At one with it thou art invincible; in separation, thou becomest the playground of Samvritti, origin of all the world's delusions.

All is impermanent in man except the pure bright essence of Alaya. Man is its crystal ray; a beam of light immaculate within, a form of clay material upon the lower surface. That beam is thy life-guide and thy true Self, the Watcher and the silent Thinker, the victim of thy lower Self. Thy Soul cannot be hurt but through thy erring body; control and master both.

Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal.

The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE.

THE FAILURE OF PRAYER

The question of the efficacy of prayer for the healing of the sick and for rain was raised by Dr. W. R. Inge, the former Dean of St. Paul's, at the Modern Churchmen's Conference held at Oxford last month. *The Daily Telegraph*, London (August 22nd) in its report makes no comment on Dr. Inge's remarks. It would seem that prayers for rain are going out of fashion in some of the churches because the idea that laws of nature can be modified at any time by divine intervention is felt to be one of the least satisfactory philosophies. So much for rain. What about prayers for the sick? Dr. Inge says: "We know something about microbes; how can they be affected by our prayers?"—in other words, God is bested by a microbe! Dr. Inge referred to a proposal once mooted to test the efficacy of prayer as regards the sick, by subjecting a special ward in a hospital to intensified prayers by a large body of the faithful, the other wards being left to the general prayers of the church. Dr. Inge asked:—

Supposing those who offered petitions for the recovery of the patients in a selected ward were not actuated by any wish to "tempt God," would any result follow of which a physician or a life insurance company ought to take notice? Is the husband of a loving and prayerful wife a "better life" from the point of view of the insurance than a man who has no Christian relatives anxious for the prolongation of his existence?

Dr. Inge did not believe the answer would be agreeable to the old-fashioned believer. He may have been prejudiced by the fact that he still survives, despite the prayers of a lady who wished for his death and wrote him she had been successful in two other cases! Be that as it may, we can but admire the courage of such a prominent Churchman in expressing what to many must seem heretical views. He surely must be aware of where these views must logically lead, but we wonder if his superiors are.

Father Woodlock, S. J., preaching at Oxford, is certainly so aware, and entirely dissented from Dr. Inge's remarks saying with much reason:—

The honest "plain man" was shocked at the duplicity involved in the practice of the modernist clergy who reverently recited the Creed before God in worship at the altar as a preamble to a rejection of the articles of the same Creed in the pulpit.

If the efficacy of prayer be doubted as regards the healing of the sick and for rain, then prayers for the King and Royal Family, the Houses of Parliament, Bishops and Curates and all the congregations committed to their charge—in fact the whole Book of Common Prayer—must go overboard. This may be excellent for humanity, but what about the Established Church? The

Personal God is not omnipotent, and an Impersonal Deity cannot be associated with the idea of prayer.

Dr. Inge would probably not assent to this, yet, after all, what is his God but Immutable Law? From a report in *The Manchester Guardian* (August 22nd) we take the following:—

If then we frankly give up the desire to alter physical laws, what are we to say about prayer for spiritual things? We thought that spiritual law was less rigorous, but was this only our ignorance? If we knew all should we find the same inexorable law as in the physical world? We believed that the system under which we lived was not a soulless mechanism but a great system of ends—a system of vital purposes which had a freedom and elasticity far greater than the analogy of natural sciences would lead us to suppose. Nature appeared mechanical because it was uniform, but how if the uniformity were due simply to the steadiness and even operation of the Divine will which did not need to change because it never made a mistake? Natural law was God's way of doing things.

Apply this to the mental, moral and spiritual worlds, and you have the Law of Karma, and hence the uselessness of personal prayer. The Theosophical doctrine of prayer is exhaustively treated in *The Key to Theosophy* (Section V), by H. P. Blavatsky.

Admitting the growing Western emphasis on the philosophy of Immanence (*Vedanta Kesari*, September) Mrs. Rhys Davids attributes it rather to the Gospel according to St. John and to Neo-Platonism than to Indian Vedantic literature. The editorial note claims for the latter part of the credit for drawing the West's attention to its long-ignored Neo-Platonic heritage.

Neither writer recognizes the role of Madame Blavatsky in this leavening process, though it is in no small measure due to her work that the possibility of Self-realization through self-transcendence is increasingly accepted. Her books abound in citations and proofs that Deity—Life, Spirit, Consciousness—is immanent in the Universe, is the Universe.

The fact of her influence however is accepted by those who are familiar with facts and not blinded by dogma and preconceived notions. Mr. Leslie J. Belton, for example, Editor of the Unitarian organ, *The Inquirer*, writing in *The Aryan Path* for September on "Inter-Religious Fellowship" includes among factors of chief importance in bringing about the change which "softened the asperity of Christian judgment of other religions" "the valiant efforts of H. P. Blavatsky, who, as early as 1877, in the second volume of *Isis Unveiled*, testified to the value of the comparative study of religions and who persistently strove for the realisation of the second object of her movement, *viz.*, The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study."

VICE AND ILLUSION

One of the first tests met by the student of Occultism is distinguishing between Truth and Illusion. Recognizing in hypocrisy an unforgivable sin against the highest ideal which we can formulate for ourselves, we find that illusion, however sublimated and elevating in its seeming effects, becomes a grave danger if not an insurmountable barrier between us and our goal. Because illusion presents at times a seemingly good side, it is the more treacherous. It is a form of lie that leads to every kind of active vice. If we would lead clean lives, we must know ourselves, for only he who can accurately appraise himself is proof against illusions. The spiritual aspirant cannot compromise—Vice and Illusion go hand in hand as surely as do Spirituality and Truth.

Things and people are not what we think or would have them, and herein lies our test. It takes a courageous soul to face Truth, and especially Truth about ourselves.

Professor Gilbert Murray not long ago delivered a brilliant address on this vital question of Vice and Illusion. (*Philosophy*, July 1936) He demonstrates the enormous part illusion plays in our lives, both inner and outer. No government could undertake a successful war without resorting to so-called "propaganda"—especially that designed to foster hatred of the enemy; few officers could instil the necessary courage into their men if they revealed their often hopeless situation. And a little study of the Greek Philosophers soon reveals that "it is not so much their intellectual exactitude that moves us; it is their burning faith, their obstinate and heroic self-deception."

"Faith"—blind bigoted belief, we should prefer to call it—casts its thick veil of illusion on its devotees in every sphere, some religionists even going so far as to believe that they have established confidential relations with God Himself. The megalomania and arrogance and intolerance so induced "especially in religion" have led to "cruel persecutions and savage wars."

It [the Illusion of faith] has probably produced more hatred of man against man than any other cause, except the struggle for life itself. This is granted. But the problem that troubles us is that in a number of cases, religious, philosophical or civic, the element of Illusion which we were inclined to condemn so unreservedly, turns out to be good. The world would be a poorer place without it.

How can we assent to this? It is of the nature of compromise and may easily be extended to an approval of the doctrine that the end justifies the means.

Regarding such social evils as drink, drugs, sensuality and cruelty, Professor Murray finds that illusion and self-deception play a more important role than mere animal gratification. The nervous, sensitive or shy man finds his courage ebbing before an ordeal and takes a stimulant to steady his failing nerves.

These things, while their effect lasts, transmute the world. That is why they are beyond price, irresistible. It is not that they give the victim pleasure: it is that, whereas without them he may have been poor, unsuccessful, disliked, ill-thought-of, contemptible, disappointed, after taking them he becomes a sort of celestial being, his illusions fulfilled, and his megalomania satisfied. They have made for him a new heaven and a new earth.

In the case of the sex instinct, physical craving plays its part, no doubt, but "on the basis of the physical instinct there is reared an immense superstructure of illusion, of self-flattery, of mutual flattery, curiously like the illusion produced by drugs." And illusion plays its part also with the gambler and the so-called "sportsman."

All these vices aim at creating a high degree of what psychologists call "positive self-feeling": at rescuing the man from his troubles, anxieties, failures, humiliations and fears, and so transmuting his whole environment. The drugs make him serene and at peace with the world. The sexual conquests make him an admired and beloved being, unique among his fellows; the gambling habit makes him bold, adventurous, and rich: the slaughter of beasts and men, and all the various exercises of tyranny, make him feel that he is a great man, towering above the herd that trembles before him. And then, in all of them alike, this sweetness or pride or glory turns out to be only an illusion.

There are those on whom the prospect of a world devoid of illusion may not smile, to whom the falsehood of self-deception seems still a necessary protection from the burning rays of Truth, but no one asks us to undertake a task too difficult for us. The Kshatriya soul must be ready and able to stand alone, self-reliant and self-dependent, unmoved by the sophistries of priests, politicians, dictators and cowards extolling illusion which their hypocrisy leads them to rechristen "idealism." But if vice and sin result from illusion or ignorance, as Professor Murray says, there can be no question in the mind of the aspirant as to its place in his life. We must seek the remedy of this soul-cancer in self-examination, conscious, cautious and fearless till, face to face with the Inner Self no smiles nor falsehoods nor sophistries can deceive, we stand cleansed and enlightened.

Professor Murray's final words deserve notice :-

We must put Truth always first and not second; and wherever it can be ascertained, base our lives upon it. In the immense uncharted region where exact truth is

unattainable and men guide themselves mostly by approximations and metaphors, we must be on our guard against our own undetected illusions, and knowing that we cannot escape from them altogether, at least try to make sure that they do not deaden our consciences or our common sense. Let us seek Truth, as much Truth as we can find; let us at least never betray it; but Truth itself compels us to recognize that in the end of the account MAGNA EST ILLUSIO ET PREVALEBIT.

This last note does not ring true. If, do what we may to seek out Truth and mould our lives on its unbending laws, illusion is great and must endure, why struggle? Why seek a better life? No. There is Truth. Veil after veil will lift, and there shall be veil after veil behind, but each veil we tear away brings us nearer to the Goal. And there dawns a day when, because of efforts continued through many births, having become more than men, we lift the final veil and at the Entrance of the Supreme Abode from which there is no return, the Throne of Krishna-Christos, lit neither by sun nor moon nor fire but by the Light of the Supreme Spirit we shall know that Truth because we shall have become embodiments of IT.

Slow is the process. Life after life the work must be undertaken, often without apparent guidance or help. Yet if the search is not intermittent but persistent, if our determination is rooted in conviction and not the passing flash of an emotional enthusiasm, that last veil "must lift for our deep-searching eyes, the road must open for our painful feet."

Says H. P. B. (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 40):—

As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality;" but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya.

The greatest of all illusions which is the root of the world's most besetting evils, is our *ahankara*-egotism—the illusion which leads us to regard ourselves as separate and apart from other aspects of Nature. We have to free ourselves from this notion of separated existence. What is the human self? What the nature of the human soul?

Like Professor Murray, Mr. Ralph Tyler Flewelling, Editor, *The Personalist*, enters a strong plea for unswerving truth and fidelity to the soul's integrity. Man *has* not a soul but *is* one and as such is not to be "saved by intellectual 'isms' or

beliefs of any kind except as those beliefs get into action, become embodied in actual living." Lip profession of faith is not only useless, it is disintegrating to the soul. There is no more insidious illusion than that which leads us to believe that believing with the mind can take the place of believing with the life, and secure for us salvation. Mr. Flewelling points out that the word "salvation" according to its root-meaning signifies being in a state of health.

Salvation is then a term of life . . . *Saving* a soul is *being* a soul. That is, salvation exists in individuals when they are functioning spiritually, when they are actually achieving lives of love, of mercy, of justice, of honesty, of self-sacrifice, of altruism, of truth. Such a life is possible only in the atmosphere of spiritual ideals . . . Salvation is then never a fixed term but a process of becoming and its essence is life.

Moral corruption spells spiritual death as surely as does physical corruption bring about the death of the body. But moral corruption is not always so easily discernible. Dissimulation, intentional or involuntary, too often clouds our vision, and the disease passes unnoticed till the consequent disintegration of character brings a man face to face with that society of which he is an integral part, and which, because he spreads his foul disease, cuts him off and throws him out. To a civilization honeycombed with hypocrisy, deception and lies, be they enthroned in the state or the church, the school or the home, salvation is not possible, does not exist. Mr. Flewelling appreciates the fundamental unity of the human family. He sees that as in a great living organism no unit can either suffer or profit alone, so interdependence is a fact in Nature. What is lacking in the world today is co-operation.

Apparently, we have not yet learned that the universe is an organism closely related part to part and that disease in one portion of society is certain to affect the whole. It is as useless to expect general well-being in the world, with one ill-treated suppressed nation, race, tribe, continent or individual left in it, as it would be to expect abounding health in a body one of whose members is being destroyed by cancer. Furthermore, the world is so constituted that no nation or race or individual can achieve his own highest self-expression without the cooperation of all the rest.

This is pure Theosophy. It is pragmatic Brotherhood, not the watery wisdom of drivelling sentimentalism. It is practical Occultism *in actu*, as opposed to those occult arts which separate man from man, nation from nation and race from race. Our interests and aspirations are the interests and aspirations of all, while our soul's integrity can be maintained only in proportion to the altruistic interest we take in that Great Orphan Humanity of which we are a part. If illusion, delusion and fraud spread like poisonous gas to kill men's souls, the remedy must be sought in clean living, true thinking and pure loving.

THEOSOPHIST AND BUCHMANITE

The ship's engines ground out our last hours at sea.

"What are you reading so attentively?" I asked my anæmic, timid neighbour hidden behind his thick spectacles.

"An exposition of the Oxford Movement come to revitalise Christianity," he answered. "I find it very inspiring."

"Tell me about it."

Enthusiasm lighted his eyes.

"It is an association whose aim does no violence to the mind and relieves man of all struggles. We turn our life over to God and let Him guide and help. No more fears nor responsibilities. A few minutes of silence a day in the company of other group members brings to each God's instructions as well as His solution to our problems. These we note down, discuss, and then we confess our sins to one another, thus cleansing our souls from all impurity. This sharing of our weaknesses brings comfort and confidence and a deeper feeling of brotherhood. And the guidance of God becomes the rule of life." He sighed contentedly.

"Have you received guidance to convince you?" I enquired.

"Yes, that is why my wife and I are *en route* to a strange land. We have no money, no plans, but we have faith and rely on God."

"Can you tell me before we go any further, what, where, who is God? And why if he guides men is everything so topsy-turvy?"

Excitement shook the little man's frame. Stopping to reflect over so blasphemous a question, he nervously buried his nose in his book.

"God is God—that's all," he muttered, after a while, somewhat piqued.

"This won't take you far," said I. "Especially if you hand over your responsibilities to a gigantic but imperfect man. How can you trust somebody of whom you know nothing? Would you give your money to an unknown and unknowable banker?"

"I don't see how you can make such a comparison." He was shocked.

"Our spiritual savings are far more valuable than money—why then treat them more lightly? A man who ventures on a stormy sea without compass is a fool."

"But faith in God will help him."

"Will it? Faith based on knowledge. But not God. Faith in one's own divine nature and powers. It is within himself through his thoughts and feelings that man attains divinity. He weaves his own destiny and carries the responsibilities of all his actions without possible escape."

The little man fidgeted, murmuring, "But Jesus

came to redeem us."

"Jesus came as all other Teachers to help Humanity to redeem itself. Vicarious atonement is a gross and palpable distortion of a spiritual truth—the redemption of man through the power of his own Spirit, a reflection of the Universal Spirit."

"But what is that, if not God?"

"Certainly no personal Being. Deity is life: It is impersonal. Persons and beings are but aspects of the Impersonal Life. Impersonal life is also impersonal law. We through our power of free will bring ourselves into conflict with the Law of life which is no respecter of persons, grants no privileges."

"According to you, then, even confession is useless?"

"Worse than useless, pernicious. Be logical; how can confession do more than soothe your conscience and dull your moral perception? Can it wipe out the act? You confess to another sinner. By talking of your sins you revivify them. Temptation increases with thought, still more with speech. A confessor is a potential enemy. He will not always judge with compassion or understanding. Who has the vision to detect your underlying motives? Is it not wiser to bear courageously the results of our mistakes and learn from them? The abandoned sin then becomes a stepping-stone to further progress."

"But where then is help?"

"Help comes as help is extended from within. What you call God's instructions may be the voice of your higher consciousness or of your earthly desires. Can you discriminate if you do not question?"

"We do question—each other."

"How can another see more clearly in you what he does not recognize in himself? Why not try to understand for yourself?"

"Man is weak; he cannot stand alone," he sighed.

"For the sake of your manhood, can't you abandon this Christian misconception of man's being a worm? It is this teaching which has made possible the power of priests and political leaders, while the masses remain in ignorance and misery. No, man is his own god, the only one he'll ever know. What greater vision could you have than that of Perfected Man? In man's innermost heart is that Voice which is of the Silence uniting the most distant luminary with the tiniest blade of grass."

"This is too much for me," said my friend. "I feel as if all the stars of heaven were whirling round my head. You will excuse me," he added, looking at his watch.

He disappeared. I never saw him again.

THE LISTENER, THE LEARNER AND THE LABOURER

OUR THREE MEETINGS

Most persons trained in the modern school of thought have a tendency to self-opinionatedness that is hard to shake. They move complacently through life, accumulating mental deposits that becloud the intellect and hinder constructive thought. A contact with Theosophy is a novel experience to such. Having come to hear the echoes of their own opinion they do not like the voice which contradicts them. Many "blow out" of the lecture hall as suddenly as they "blew in."

But a few continue—those who are seeking. Even for them it is a mental quake. And however slight each shock, when it is felt at many, almost at all, points of belief, the cumulative effect is strong. It causes a disquietude about the prevailing values of this habit or that opinion. It acts as an awakener, and thus the spring of questioning previous beliefs and views starts on an eventful journey. Will it reach somewhere safe to sea?

Conservatism hates to be disturbed, and it asserts itself trying to silence the voice of enquiry. It becomes malignant and tries to pick holes in the philosophy which challenges its cherished beliefs. It becomes cunning and uses reason to invent questions not with a view to satisfying the mind, but with the desire to falsify any teaching not in favour of the one acknowledged. Theosophy is not for such. A few more retire at this stage. But for the earnest newcomer who loves truth, every avenue to understanding is open.

All this work is accomplished by the Sunday public lecture of the U. L. T. It challenges the listener who, if not earnest and sincere, stops coming; he who perseveres, becoming more and more regular, develops the power to question rightly. He soon becomes something more than an interested listener. He questions his past bases of thought and does not mind their stability crumbling. For the first time perhaps, he tries to see reason in its true perspective. Reason, however, cannot arrive at correct solutions from false premises, so that correct premises have first to be discovered. The enquirer though interested and earnest feels diffident and confused. He finds that, for his own satisfaction, the philosophy must be vigorously questioned. Not in any mood of scorn, but in the attitude of the explorer who but dimly senses the realm beyond. The listener has ripened into a questioner.

He now attends the Wednesday Question-Answer meetings. He often is puzzled about the way to frame his question. He asks himself: "With what attitude and motive? And about what topic shall I question?" Knowing that

answers are given impersonally, it would be in the fitness of things if the personal element be absent from the question. The motive for asking is to get elucidation, which implies that the questioner prepares himself to receive the answer at its intrinsic value—as a light to be utilized to light up his own problems. The first public question is asked with diffidence and shyness; but the act means something more than it outwardly is. It means that the mind has come into its own.

To a mind that is out to ask the why and the wherefore of things, there is no lack of subjects for questions. The recondite and the abstruse loom large in the mind of the beginner: also, there is a tendency to go after interesting tit-bits. Thus one is apt to lose the substratum of the philosophy, the fundamentals that trace the pattern of life from the One to the many. The mind then, requires training along new lines—a training that prevents it from flying off at a tangent at the slightest provocation. The questioning, both inner and outer, should cease to be sporadic and become systematic. It should be constructive—not brilliant and showy. It must therefore be directed to the elucidation of the basic propositions first, to the examination and assimilation of the vital principles that govern the laws of being, such as Karma and Reincarnation, and so on. One useful exercise is to reduce one's own difficulties and life problems to impersonal questions so that the answers received may be reflected upon and used in a practical way.

This questioning stage helps to satisfy the intellect about the consistency and the worth of the philosophy. That satisfied, should the enquiring still be persisted in? Questions, like all good things, can be abused, if carried to an excess. If asking is the only trouble that a student will take, there will be little of enlightenment, and a set-back may follow. This stage has proved dangerous to many. To overcome this tendency the student learns not to ask a question, until he has endeavoured to secure answers in the textbooks. If he learns anything at the Wednesday meetings it is that the student on the platform does not answer the enquirer; Theosophy answers questions. This dual impersonality is an awakener in itself. If, therefore, others in the Lodge know how to answer his questions, he himself can and should learn to do the same.

No more an enquirer he has become a student, ready to derive real benefit from the Friday study class. At this gathering he may become impatient if he does not quickly come upon those items and topics in which *he* is interested and with which *his* life problems are concerned. He learns patience,

and if he is earnest, soon discerns that at the class thoughts are presented and teachings are explained which are practical and touch his life intimately.

To make applications correctly of the simple facts of his own Divinity, of the Law of Responsibility or Karma, of learning from life implicit in Reincarnation, and so on, he needs something more. He needs an intimacy with these fundamental ideas of Theosophy. Then he sees that to really learn he should begin to repeat intelligently what he studies and so he volunteers to do platform work and willingly consents to perform what looks a simple exercise—reading from the devotional books. In accepting this task the student, especially the very “learned” and the “more intelligent,” develops humility. To read aloud the grand words of Holy Writ is a sacred task, and if he is devoted and faithful and humble he performs a real magic act unbeknown to himself. Gradually he progresses to other exercises on the platform and learns the magic of “the pupil-teacher—one who has no right to dogmatise,” says H. P. B., but who serves Theosophy which is “the philosophy of the rational explanation of things and not the tenets.”

Study and platform work produce their holy results in his own life; the Lodge has become his spiritual home; he has found a cause worth living for. He has become fortune’s favoured soldier. Will he join the Army?

PSYCHISM AND SCEPTICISM

The Reverend Herbert Crabtree, a Unitarian minister, after a four-year investigation of psychic phenomena, especially those of Spiritism, avers that under suitable conditions the phenomena do occur. (*The Inquirer*, 4th, 18th and 25th July) He testifies to the actuality of the phenomena themselves—materialization, apportionment, direct voice, etc. He writes: “I could not but feel that their significance was very great. But nobody of importance bothers.” He believes that much which modern scepticism has banished as superstitious is probably based on actual fact.

Here is a supernormal faculty at work which presents a serious challenge to any materialistic philosophy, and which demands, and deserves, the fuller attention of all who are concerned with the deeper problems of life and the supreme issue of human destiny.

But he says:—

I have learned only too well that to exhibit even a mild interest in this subject is to be regarded by many as a person of ill-balanced judgment, whilst to profess a positive, though maybe qualified, sympathy with it is to be pronounced a credulous and pitiable simpleton.

Mr. Crabtree has not much hope of early scientific acceptance of these matters. For one reason, “the behaviour of some so-called psychic researchers has been so deplorable that many

mediums, for excellent reasons, will not now submit to ‘scientific’ tests.” “Furthermore,” he adds, “I fear that the present temper of science is not sufficiently sympathetic to be productive of confidence in this matter.”

The last statement contains the crux of the position. The well-known English scientist, J. W. N. Sullivan, writing in the September *Aryan Path* “On Superphysical Phenomena,” named the chief reason for resistance to the acceptance of supernormal phenomena, *i. e.*, “that they would upset our most deep-rooted beliefs.”

Any “explanation,” however extravagant and even downright silly, is preferred to such a complete overhauling of one’s philosophical beliefs.

“Ends and Sayings” in the September *Aryan Path* brought out that the scientist is no less circumscribed in his thinking than the religionist, by the beliefs that he holds. If psychic phenomena will not fit into his preconceived scheme, so much the worse for the phenomena.

Mr. Crabtree remarks that neither philosophy nor religion seems to have “anything very convincing to say amid the welter and confusion of current interests and perplexities.” Therefore he adds:—

We attach some importance to our claim to be free, and we ought to welcome experimentalism in religion as we do in science.

But he seems to be overlooking the fact which Mr. Sullivan points out:—“We have so many investigators apparently engaged in proving over and over again what has been proved before.” “They remain perpetually taking the first step.”

A careful study of the ancient Esoteric Philosophy would lead such free thinkers, not nominal but real, as Mr. Crabtree, to proceed further with their research; especially he and his like should familiarise themselves with the ten fundamental propositions of Oriental Psycho-Philosophy which H. P. Blavatsky puts forward in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 587) published in 1877: Mr. Crabtree makes an important remark on which these ten propositions throw great light. He says:—

It is part of the hypothesis of these phenomena that there is in the human constitution, intermediate between body and mind, an extremely attenuated substance usually termed “ectoplasm.”

Ectoplasm to which he refers and which he would prefer to rename and call psychoplasm is but one of the manifestations of that intermediate constituent which in Sanskrit is called Linga-Sarira, and Astral Body by Madame Blavatsky.

This study of the old Esoteric Philosophy will also throw a flood of light on the Bible. We say this in response to Mr. Crabtree’s remark that

It is impossible to avoid the reflection that much which modern scepticism has banished as superstitious is probably based on actual fact. The New Testament especially demands restudy in the light of this conception.

A CALL TO WORK

[The following article with the heading we use, together with the two reprints of W. Q. Judge from *The Path*, is taken from *Theosophy* for October, 1923. It was written with a distinct purpose in 1923 and the cycle is appropriate for sounding the call again.—Eds.]

H. P. B. has left us the token of her immortality. In making herself invisible by the veil of death she really performed the mighty miracle of being with us always, a Living Presence. Mr. Judge pointed to this perennial source of instruction and inspiration—the books and works of H. P. B.—but to receive their guidance and to embody their influence we have to depend on the purity of our own motive.

What do Theosophists, belonging to any organization or to none, desire to achieve? The programme of the Masters is clear and unequivocal—study of Their philosophy, service of Their humanity. Study and service are the two wings of the immortal bird of time; on them we soar to spiritual heights; on them we return to earthly toil, “true to the kindred ties of heaven and home.” When suffering dogs the feet of poverty causing wars of hatred in the spheres of economics and nationalism, good men fall down in despair; this because they look at material effects and are blind to spiritual causes. Though the rank materialism of science is dead, it has reincarnated in a rank super-materialism whose goddess is Psyche. Though churchianity has received death-blows, sacerdotalism still survives. Though the Laws of Reincarnation and Karma have become popular as theories and words, the Law of Brotherhood is not understood and accepted, and all three are materialized. If the world at large suffers through this, the Theosophical Movement, alas! has not been free from its ill influence. Yet the cycle is auspicious.

We reprint two articles,—“The Theosophical Society” and “The Future and The Theosophical Society,” by W. Q. Judge in *The Path*, Vol. VI, with confidence that they will give hope to the down-hearted, inspire the wounded, and encourage the crest-fallen in the Theosophical world. They are meant to serve as a bugle call to all to renew the Holy War against their own lower natures, and also against the prevailing false notions due to untheosophic directions in the world of creeds—scientific, social and religious.

If earnest hearts in whom the fire of Theosophy has been burning, or who have merely known of its existence, will but ponder over the teachings of these two articles, a way out will be found.

Individuals equipped with the true knowledge are the prime requisite. Not organizations, but

living men and women who will study and reflect with the definite view to teach and to help—that is the need of the Movement to-day. Individuals doing this, however separated by space, will be united by the beneficent energy of study. A unity of hearts will precipitate and produce a unity of hands, for as each individual studies and applies and lives Theosophy he will become a magnet to which will be attracted others whose inner natures are ready.

Let us then take to the serious study of the philosophy of the Masters, never forgetting, not for a day over-looking, that we are preparing ourselves to feed hungry minds, to soothe suffering hearts, to uphold the hands which are aching with the pains of monotonous drudgery. Therefore we must have the knowledge and sympathy and strength that comes from within. *Theosophical education will produce solidarity.* To be true to the movement we must be true to ourselves and then, presently, we will “all labour together transmitting the same charge and succession, and saturate our time and our era” with the Message of the Masters.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The death of H. P. Blavatsky should have the effect on the Society of making the work go on with increased vigour free from all personalities. The movement was not started for the glory of any person, but for the elevation of Mankind. The organization is not affected as such by her death for her official positions were those of Corresponding Secretary and President of the European Section. The Constitution has long provided that after her death the office of Corresponding Secretary should not be filled. The vacancy in the European Section will be filled by election in that Section, as that is a matter with which only the European Branches have to deal. She held no position in the exoteric American Section, and had no jurisdiction over it in any way. Hence there is no vacancy to fill and no disturbance to be felt in the purely corporate part of the American work. The work here is going on as it always has done, under the efforts of its members who now will draw their inspiration from the books and works of H. P. B. and from the purity of their own motive.

All that the Society needs now to make it the great power it was intended to be is first, *solidarity*, and second, *Theosophical education*. These are

wholly in the hands of its members. The first gives that resistless strength which is found only in Union, the second gives that judgment and wisdom needed to properly direct energy and zeal.

Read these words from H. P. Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy*:—

“If the present attempt in the form of our Society succeeds better than its predecessors have done, then it will be in existence as an organized, living, and healthy body when the time comes for the effort of the XXth century. The general condition of men's minds and hearts will have been improved and purified by the spread of its teachings, and, as I have said, their prejudices and dogmatic illusions will have been, to some extent, at least, removed. Not only so, but besides a large and accessible literature ready to men's hands, the next impulse will find a numerous and *united* body of people ready to welcome the new torch-bearer of Truth. He will find the minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings, an organization awaiting his arrival which will remove the merely mechanical material obstacles and difficulties from his path. Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish. Measure it by comparison with what the Theosophical Society actually *has* achieved in the last fourteen years without *any* of these advantages and surrounded by hosts of hindrances which would not hamper the new leader. Consider all this and then tell me whether I am too sanguine when I say that, if the Theosophical Society survives and lives true to its mission, to its original impulse, through the next hundred years—tell me, I say, if I go too far in asserting that this earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now!”

“Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.”

THE FUTURE AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

In 1888 H. P. Blavatsky wrote:*

“Night before last I was shown a bird's eye view of the theosophical societies. I saw a few earnest reliable theosophists in a death struggle with the world in general and with other—nominal and ambitious—theosophists. The former are greater in number than you may think, and *they prevailed*—as you in America *will prevail*, if you only remain

staunch to the Master's programme *and true to yourselves*. And last night I saw . . . The defending forces have to be judiciously—so scanty are they—distributed over the globe wherever theosophy is struggling with the powers of darkness.”

And in the *Key to Theosophy* :

[Here is quoted the extract which appears in the previous reprint.—EDS.]

Every member of the Society should be, and many are, deeply interested in the above words. The outlook, the difficulties, the dangers, the necessities are the same now as then, and as they were in the beginning of this attempt in 1875. For, as she has often said, this is not the first, nor will it be the last effort to spread the truths and to undertake the same mission as that taken up by Ammonius Saccas some centuries ago—to lead men to look for the one truth that underlies all religions and which alone can guide science in the direction of ideal progress. In every century such attempts are made, and many of them have been actually named “theosophical.” Each time they have to be adapted to the era in which they appear. And this is the era—marked by the appearance and the success of the great American republic—of freedom for thought and for investigation.

In the first quotation there is a prophecy that those few reliable theosophists who are engaged in a struggle with the opposition of the world and that coming from weak or ambitious members will prevail, but it has annexed to it a condition that is of importance. There must be an adherence to the programme of the Masters. That can only be ascertained by consulting her and the letters given out by her as from those to whom she refers. There is not much doubt about that programme. It excludes the idea that the Society was founded or is intended as “a School for Occultism,” for that has been said in so many words long ago in some letters published by Mr. Sinnett and in those not published.

Referring to a letter received (1884) from the same source we find: “Let the Society flourish on its moral worth, and not by phenomena made so often degrading.” The need of the west for such doctrines as Karma and Reincarnation and the actual Unity of the whole human family is dwelt upon at length in another. And referring to some of the effects of certain phenomena, it is said* “They have to prove. . . constructive of new institutions of a genuine practical brotherhood of Humanity, where all will become co-workers with Nature.” Speaking of present materialistic tendencies, the same authority says:

* See *Lucifer* for June, 1891, p. 291.

* *Occult World*, p. 101.

"Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy—therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. . . . The same causes that are materializing the Hindu mind are equally affecting all western thought. Education enthrones scepticism, but imprisons spirituality. You can do immense good by helping to give the western nations a secure basis on which to reconstruct their crumbling faith. And what they need is the evidence that Asiatic psychology alone supplies. Give this and you will confer happiness of mind on thousands This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come and which will push the age towards extreme atheism or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans."

This is the great tone running through all the words from these sources. It is a call to work for the race and not for self, a request to bring to the west and the east the doctrines that have most effect on human conduct, on the relations of man to man, and hence the greatest possibility of forming at last a true universal brotherhood. We must follow this programme and supply the world with a system of philosophy which gives a sure and logical basis for ethics, and that can only be gotten from those to which I have adverted; there is no basis for morals in phenomena, because a man might learn to do the most wonderful things by the aid of occult forces and yet at the same time be the very worst of men.

A subsidiary condition, but quite as important as the other, is laid down by H. P. B. in her words that we must "remain true to ourselves." This means true to our better selves and the dictates of conscience. We cannot promulgate the doctrines and the rules of life found in theosophy and at the same time ourselves not live up to them as far as possible. We must practise what we preach, and make as far as we can a small brotherhood within the Theosophical Society. Not only should we do this because the world is looking on, but also from a knowledge of the fact that by our unity the smallest effort made by us will have tenfold the power of any obstacle before us or any opposition offered by the world.

The history of our sixteen years of life shows that our efforts put forth in every quarter of the globe have modified the thought of the day, and that once more the word "Theosophy," and many of the old ideas that science and agnosticism supposed were buried forever under the great wide dollar of present civilization, have come again to the front. We do not claim to be the sole force that began the uprooting of dogmatism and priestcraft, but only that we have supplied a link, given words, stirred up thoughts

of the very highest importance just at a time when the age was swinging back to anything but what the reformers had fought for. The old faiths were crumbling, and no one stood ready to supply that which by joining religion and science together would make the one scientific and the other religious. We have done exactly what the letter quoted asked for, led the times a step "to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans."

But we can never hope to see the churches and the ministers coming over in a body to our ranks. It would be asking too much of human nature. Churches are so much property that has to be preserved, and ministers are so many men who get salaries they have to earn, with families to support and reputations to sustain. Many "houses of worship" are intimately connected with the material progress of the town, and the personal element would prevent their sinking the old and glorious identity in an organization like to ours. Congregations hire their priests at so much a year to give out a definite sort of theology, and do not like to be told the truth about themselves nor to have too high a standard of altruism held up to them in a way from which, under the theosophical doctrines, there would be no escape. They may all gradually change, heresy trials will continue and heretical ministers be acquitted, but the old buildings will remain and the speakers go on in new grooves to make other reputations, but we may not hope to see any universal rush to join us.

Our destiny is to continue the wide work of the past in affecting literature and thought throughout the world, while our ranks see many changing quantities but always holding those who remain true to the programme and refuse to become dogmatic or to give up common-sense in theosophy. Thus will we wait for the new messenger, striving to keep the organization alive that he may use it and have the great opportunity H. P. B. outlines when she says, "Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish."

WILLIAM BREHON

Was it a hint? or was it a warning? or was it both? In bold type the following lines were printed (p. 67) immediately following the article "The Meaning of a Pledge" in *Lucifer* III, September 1888.—EDS.

ON CERTAIN FRIENDS

"I found them blind, I taught them how to see,
And now they know neither themselves—nor me."

WILLIAM BLAKE.

SAYINGS OF ROBERT CROSBIE

Each thought stirs to action some form of life ; according to the nature of the thought is the nature of the life stirred and guided, the permanence of the thought-action depending upon the energy put into it.

Words and sentences do not always have the same meanings—the point of view alters them.

Every little assertion of “personal ideas” is a hindrance.

We learn to know our ability by using it to the limit.

Advice can be given, but knowledge is acquired.

All our vacillations, fears and despondencies arise from a personal attitude.

Man is more than his experiences, his conceptions, or philosophy.

The point of view from which we regard things determines the kind and quality of action.

Theosophy is *sui generis*, and must be so taken if benefit is to accrue from it.

There are different kinds of “devotion,” some of them to the personality !

There is but one way to progress—to cultivate the *feeling* that produces the work.

The personality has had home life and connections as its paramount stamping-ground, and is more apt to give full play to its disposition there than elsewhere.

Most people identify the power to perceive with the act of perception and thus lose right comprehension and application.

Nervous tension is corrosive and destructive.

Impersonality isn't a diplomacy which masks ambition.

SIX YEARS GONE

[In this last number of our sixth volume it is opportune to reprint Mr. Judge's editorial in *The Path* of March 1892.—Eds]

Six years have gone into the void since the *Path* was started, and we are still in the middle of eternity. Doubtless other ages have had their magazines with their articles, their hopes and fears, their subscribers, their complainers, their friends. This journal has had the usual complainers, but can

best and most easily remember that its friends are numerous.

The original programme has been adhered to, the propelling motive is the same, the guiding object remains in view, the policy outlined has not been departed from. The *Path* has no party to placate, no ulterior aims to forward. Hence its independence is secured, since it bows the knee to no man, to no authority, although it seeks and will so seek to abide by the rules of the Theosophical Society as well as those prescribed of old for conduct and for intercourse.

In its pages attempt has been made to present the common-sense of theosophy, because it knows that, sadly enough, many theosophists cease to use their natural common-sense when dealing with the movement and its literature. One will say “Theosophy tells me to give up my duties and my family ties, to neglect my friends and to live in morbid mental condition,” while Theosophy looks sadly on and wonders why men and women will thus misconstrue.

These six years have witnessed the rise and fall of some men and women, but the last year now finished has had to chronicle the departure of our great leader, our friend, our champion, adept in all the noble arts of righteous war—H. P. Blavatsky. It was as if a mighty tower had fallen, causing the whole theosophic body corporate to quiver for a space. That was but momentary, for the great forces that had held the tower in place at once transferred themselves throughout the whole range of the Society, informing it with added energy, new zeal and greater strength.

So this year, while seeing such a catastrophe, saw also but three short months afterwards the whole Society welded together under one working plan, with a single method, a Constitution in all its sections modelled on brotherhood and following the plan of the American Section which this journal always advocated. To our feelings the death of the body called H. P. Blavatsky was a shock and loss, but for our true progress, for the health of our real nature, it was a gain because it makes us stand alone. Man was born alone, must stand alone, die alone,—so he must needs be strong.

Thanks, then, comrades, for your help, your appreciation, your judgment and suggestions. The year is past in form, 'tis true, but still it is with us. We need no resolves for the future, for we never touch it ; we need no regret for the past, for we have not lost anything, but have the gaining eternally of experience. Adieu, twelve months, the path still stretches on and ever upward !

THE U. L. T. 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 given to Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local lodges. There are no dues of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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