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*There is no Religion Higher than Truth*

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## STUDIES IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

### UNITY: THE MOTHER OF ALL VIRTUES

“That which is neither Spirit nor Matter, neither Light nor Darkness, but is verily the container and root of these, that thou art. The Root projects at every Dawn its shadow on ITSELF, and that shadow thou callest Light and Life, O, poor *dead* form. (This) Life-Light streameth downward through the stairway of the seven worlds, the stairs, of which each step becomes denser and darker. It is of this seven-times-seven scale that thou art the faithful climber and mirror, O, little man! Thou art this, but thou knowest it not.”

It is only “with a mind clear and undarkened by personality, and an assimilation of the merit of manifold existences devoted to being in its collectivity (the whole living and sentient Universe),” that one gets rid of personal existence, merging into, becoming one with, the Absolute, and continuing in full possession of Paramârtha. (S. D. I. 54)

*The Secret Doctrine* is a book of practical Occultism; therefore its moral principles act as the soul of its metaphysics. The Magic it teaches is divine, and only those who take pains to purify and elevate their characters by acquiring knowledge and by taking the aid of its lofty metaphysics learn that Magic and become true philosophers as well as philanthropists.

The central principle of the Esoteric Philosophy is the Impartite Unit best named LIFE.

That One Life is the background of Nature and ever remains so. It is the source from which Nature springs, the medium in which Nature unfolds, the common link between all objects of Nature, the receptacle into which Nature dissolves into formlessness.

The relation between that Unit and the human

kingdom is the same and yet different from the relation between It and other kingdoms.

The One Life is omnipresent, therefore “ALL IS LIFE, and every atom of even mineral dust is a LIFE.” (S. D. I. 248)

The radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature—from Star to mineral Atom, from the highest Dhyân Chohan to the smallest infusoria, in the fullest acceptance of the term, and whether applied to the spiritual, intellectual, or physical worlds—this is the one fundamental law in Occult Science. “The Deity is boundless and infinite expansion,” says an Occult axiom. (S. D. I. 120)

The One Life is omnipotent also, *i.e.*, from within Its homogeneity emanate countless hetero-

geneous forms of Itself, and of these the human being is one. These emanations are different and in the Esoteric Philosophy they are called hierarchies of beings and kingdoms of nature. The human hierarchy and the human kingdom differ from other hierarchies and kingdoms. Therefore it is said:—

No Occultist would deny that man—no less than the elephant and the microbe, the crocodile and the lizard, the blade of grass or the crystal—is, in his physical formation, the simple product of the evolutionary forces of nature through a numberless series of transformations; but he puts the case differently. (S. D. I. 636)

How would the Occultist put the case?

Man is certainly *no* special creation, and he is the product of Nature's gradual perfective work, like any other living unit on this Earth. But this is only with regard to the human tabernacle. That which lives and thinks in man and survives that frame, the masterpiece of evolution—is the "Eternal Pilgrim," the Protean differentiation in space and time of the One Absolute "unknowable." (S. D. II. 728)

Therefore while *The Secret Doctrine* recognizes "the Presence of the Unseen Principle throughout all nature" it also teaches that "the highest manifestation of it on Earth [is] man." (S. D. II. 555)

Thus it becomes evident that the kinship subsisting between man and man is special and exceptional in comparison with all other entities of the different kingdoms of Nature. Man's kinship with his fellow men is not the same as his kinship, for example, with the animals; and the difference is not only one of degree, it is one of kind.

The manifestation of this kinship is the Law of Brotherhood. Whether we recognize its existence or are ignorant of it, the Law of Brotherhood continues to function. As in the case of other laws of nature the knowledge of its existence and of the mode of its functioning is useful. The obtaining of knowledge about the Law of Brotherhood is necessary, for to it is related the fundamental principle of Theosophical ethics. Why should a human being practise Brotherhood? Says our book (I. 120):

In the Catechism, the Master is made to ask the pupil:—

"Lift thy head, oh Lanoo; dost thou see one, or countless lights above thee, burning in the dark midnight sky?"

"I sense one Flame, oh Gurudeva, I see countless undetached sparks shining in it."

"Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light which burns inside

thee, dost thou feel it different in anywise from the light that shines in thy Brother-men?"

"It is in no way different, though the prisoner is held in bondage by Karma, and though its outer garments delude the ignorant into saying, 'Thy Soul and My Soul.'"

The first virtue of metaphysical morality is Brotherhood—the actual practice of the truth learnt by the mind that between man and his "Brother-men," in essence and in substance there is kinship—nay, identity. Different religious creeds begin with different virtues—love, faith, charity, purity, harmlessness etc.; while these may and do awaken an indirect recognition of the Law of Brotherhood, Esoteric Philosophy and its Wisdom-Religion directly call upon the student-practitioner to be a brother to all his "Brother-men." This is not the culmination but the starting point in Theosophical discipline. Brotherhood is the mother of all virtues.

The practice of Brotherhood does not imply nonrecognition of outer differences of mind, character and body. Just as unity in diversity makes the order of nature, so identity in differences marks the human kingdom also. The differences, however, disappear in the process of evolution; their remains and residuum make a grand unity.

The flame and the countless undetached sparks shining as one human hierarchy are a fact; we are prisoners of Karma, and are so deluded by appearances into believing that differences are real, that we remain blind to the supreme fact that humanity is one. The practice of Brotherhood helps us to perceive that supreme fact; continuity of practice leads to recognition of the existence of Those who are Brothers—Units in a single Fraternity, sometimes called the "Wise Race that never Dies." Those Brothers have realized in Their own persons the supreme fact that humanity is one. The White Adepts of the Great Brotherhood are humanity's Great or Elder Brothers. They are of one mind and one speech; all of Them ideate and instruct alike; all of Them are engaged in the performance of but one duty, the act of one mighty sacrifice. They have assimilated "the merit of manifold existences devoted to being in its collectivity." (S. D. I. 54) Of the Brothers and the Great Brotherhood it can be said that Individuality is the characteristic of that Hierarchy, not of its separate units.

The student has to learn that the practice of Brotherhood originates in the word used above in the Catechism—"Brother-men." Right attitude and behaviour towards vast Nature will evolve out of the right practice of brotherliness towards all units in the human kingdom.

## MEDIUMS AND YOGEEES

### WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO?

[ In the November issue of *The Aryan Path* was reviewed a recent publication entitled *Psychics and Mediums* which raises more than one important point for the student of Theosophy. Between pseudo-theosophy and spiritism there is little difference. The real teaching of Theosophy on the subject of mediums, lower psychism and higher spiritual powers is brought out in the following article reprinted from H. P. B.'s *Theosophist*, Vol. III, pp. 197-98, May, 1882. Also, it is an excellent commentary on the proposition that "mediumship is the opposite of adeptship; the medium is the passive instrument of foreign influences, the adept actively controls himself and all inferior potencies."—EDS. ]

A Yogee is a man who has prepared himself by a long discipline of body and spirit, and is thereby rendered capable of dealing with phenomena, and receiving occult communications at will, the theory being that he, so to say, paralyzes his physical brain and reduces his mind to complete passivity by one of the numerous modes at his command, one of which is the magnetization of the second set of faculties pertaining to and exercised by the spiritual or inner man. The soul is inducted by the body, and, in its turn, is used to liberate the spirit, which is thus placed into direct rapport with the object desired. For example:—A telegraph line at stations A, B, C, D, E, in ordinary cases, sends messages from A to B, B to C, and so on; but, when the several stations are connected, the message may be received direct at E from A without the intermediate stations being made aware of it. In the same manner, the nerves becoming passive, the "Yog" power controls the other faculties, and finally enables the spirit to receive a communication, which, in the other case, it cannot, because it must act through several mediums.

As the magnetic power is directed to any particular faculty, so that faculty at once forms a direct line of communication with the spirit,\* which, receiving the impressions, conveys them back to the physical body.† The spirit cannot grasp at the

\* Sixth principle—*spiritual soul*.

† In the normal or natural state, the sensations are transmitted from the lowest physical to the highest spiritual body, *i. e.*, from the first to the 6th principle (the 7th being no organized or conditioned body, but an infinite hence unconditioned principle or state), the faculties of each body having to awaken the faculties of the next higher one to transmit the message in succession, until they reach the last, when, having received the impression the latter (the spiritual soul) sends it back in an inverse order to the body. Hence, the faculties of some of the "bodies" (we use this word for want of a better term) being less developed, they fail to transmit the message correctly to the highest principle, and thus also fail to produce the right impression upon

communications it desires to receive, unassisted by the physical organization, just as, in the case of a lunatic, the spirit is present, but the faculty of reason is lost, and therefore, the spirit cannot make the man sane; or, as in case of a blind man, the spirit and reasoning powers are sound, but the faculty of sight is destroyed; hence the soul of the blind man cannot realize the impressions which would be conveyed to it by the optic nerves and retina.

The spirit is an immortal ether (principle?)—which cannot be impaired in any way, and, although it is, to a certain extent, subservient to the body and its faculties during the life-time of the body it is attached to, it can, through their agency, be so liberated in a higher or lesser degree as to be made to act independently of the other principles. This can be achieved by magnetic power or nerve power, if preferred, and thus the spiritual man be enabled to receive communications from other spirits, to traverse space and produce various phenomena, to assume any shape and appear in any form it desires.

the physical senses, as a telegram may have started, from the place of its destination, faultless and have been bungled up and misinterpreted by the telegraph operator at some intermediate station. This is why some people, otherwise endowed with great intellectual powers and perceptive faculties, are often utterly unable to appreciate—say, the beauties of nature, or some particular moral quality; as, however perfect their physical intellect,—unless the original, material or rough physical impression conveyed has passed in a circuit through the sieve of every "principle"—(from 1,2,3,4,5,6, up to 7, and down again from 7,6,5,4,3,2, to No. 1)—and that every "sieve" is in good order,—the spiritual perception will always be imperfect. The Yogi, who, by a constant training and incessant watchfulness, keeps his septenary instrument in good tune and whose spirit has obtained a perfect control over all, can, at will, and by paralyzing the functions of the 4 intermediate principles, communicate from body to spirit and *vice versa* direct.—ED.

The secret of the theory is this, that the Yogee possessing the power of self-mesmerisation and having a perfect control over all his inner principles, sees whatever he desires to see, rejecting all elementary influences which tend to contaminate his purity.

The medium receives his communications differently. He *wishes* for "spirits;" they are attracted towards him, their magnetic influences controlling his faculties in proportion to the strength of their respective magnetic powers and the passivity of the subject; the nervous fluid conveys their impressions to the soul or spirit in the same manner, and often the same results are produced as in the case of the Yogee, with this important difference that they are not what the medium or spiritist wishes, but what the spirits (elementary influences) will produce; hence it is that sometimes (in spiritism) a question on one subject is asked, and a reply of a different nature received, irrelevant to the point and more or less after the "Elementary's" disposition. The spiritist cannot at desire produce a fixed result,—the Yogee can. The spiritist runs the risk of evil influences, which impair the faculties the soul has to command, and these faculties—being more prone to evil than good (as everything having a great percentage of impure matter in it)—are rapidly influenced. The Yogee overcomes this, and his faculties are entirely within his control, the soul acquiring a greater scope for working them and keeping them in check; for, although the soul is their ruler, yet it is subservient to them. I will give a familiar illustration:—A battery generates electricity, the wires convey the current, and the mechanism is put in motion. Just so, the soul is the generator or battery, the nerves the wires, and the faculties the mechanism made to work. The Yogee forms a direct connection between his spiritual soul and any faculty, and, by the power of his trained will, that is by magnetic influence, concentrates all his powers in the soul, which enables him to grasp the subject of his enquiry and convey it back to the physical organs, through the various channels of communication.\*

If the Yogee desires to see a vision, his optic nerves receive the magnetic fluid; if an answer to a question is wanted, the faculties of thought and perception are charged by him; and so on. If he desires to traverse space in spirit, this is easily done by him by transferring the faculty of *will*†, and, as he may have acquired more or less power, so will he be able to produce greater or minor results.

\* Or—direct, which is oftener the case, we believe.—ED.

† From the physical to the: Spiritual body and concentrating it there, as we understand it.—ED,

The soul of the medium does not become the generator. It is not the battery. It is a Leyden jar, charged from the magnetic influence of the "spirits." The faculties are put in action just as the spirits so-called, make them work from the jar they have charged with their own currents. These currents, being magnetic, take after the invisibles' own good or evil disposition. The influence of a really good spirit is not left upon the earth after death, so that, in reality, there are *no* good spirits, although some may not be mischievous, while others may be full of real devilry. The question arises, how the influences of the bad ones are left behind, when the soul exists no more on earth after death? Well, just as light from the sun illumines an object, which reflects certain invisible active rays, and these, concentrated in a camera, produce a latent image on a photographic plate; in like manner the evil propensities of man are developed and form an atmosphere around him, which is so impregnated with his magnetic influence that this outer shell (as it were) retains the latent impressions of good or evil deeds. These, after death, are attached to certain localities, and travel as quick as thought wherever an attractive influence is exercised the stronger, they being less dangerous as less attracted to men in general, but more to spiritists who attract them by the erratic power of their will, *i.e.*, their own ill-governed magnetic power. Have not many experienced coming across a man unknown to them, whose very appearance has been repulsive, and, at the sight of whom, feelings of distrust and dislike spring up in them spontaneously, although they know nothing of or against him? On the other hand, how often do we meet a man who, at first sight, seems to attract us to him, and we feel as if we could make a friend of him, and if, by chance, we become acquainted with that person, how much we appreciate his company. We seem lost in hearing him speak, and a certain sympathy is established between us for which we cannot account. What is this, but our own outer shell coming in contact with his and partaking of the magnetic influences of that shell or establishing a communication between each other.

The medium is also influenced by his own spirit sometimes, the reaction of his nerves magnetizing some faculties accidentally, while the elementary spirits are magnetizing the other senses; or a stray current reaches some faculty which their magnetism has not reached, and this leads to some of those incomprehensible messages, which are quite irrelevant to what is expected, and a frequent occurrence which has always been the great stumbling block at all séances.

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# THE GATES OF HELL

## LUST—ANGER—GREED

In the *Bhagavad-Gita* Kama, Krodha and Lobha are called the Gates of Hell. Kama is lust; Krodha is anger; Lobha is greed. As Hell is a state experienced by human consciousness, many people enter that condition while living on earth. H. P. B. informs us that "the Esoteric Doctrine knows of no Hell, or place of punishment, other than a man-bearing planet or earth"; she goes so far as to describe our earth as "the greatest of all Hells." (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 79)

The *Gita* also calls them the gates of Tamas, Darkness, Inertia, Delusion. The light of knowledge, the motion towards righteousness and the perception of his own abject condition are absent when a man is filled with lust or anger or greed. Most people suffer from a temporary rising of these vices and it is ordinarily recognized that when so attacked a person is disabled from reasoning, even from cerebrating. We use many common phrases that show our recognition of this fact: "He was so infatuated that he lost his mind"; or "He was so angry he could not speak"; or "He was so greedy to possess the thing that he made himself ridiculous"—and so on. These vices are mobile; they spring from Rajoguna but they move in the direction of Tamas—deep darkness, deepening ever more, till man loses his humanity, and becomes a demon for whom nature has fashioned the Cimmerian Hell called Avitchi—a state of uninterrupted loneliness, the exact opposite of Nirvana.

Man at his present stage of evolution is not innately ignorant; he has transcended the inert stage; he has attained the Rajasika state, *i. e.*, he is able to move; in other words, he is in a position to choose the direction in which he will go. On one side there are Temptation and Hell; on the other, Test and Heaven. To resist Temptation is to attract Test.

Our civilization has surrounded man with so much false knowledge that he has forgotten the very existence of Wisdom within himself. In that increasing body of false knowledge there is something said about Lust, Anger and Greed. But as modern knowledge does not recognise Soul as an immortal entity, independent of the physical body, it ignores any possibility of a Hell into which that soul may wander, get entangled and ultimately become lost. Theosophy teaches that Hell is a reality and that human consciousness experiences it by yielding to temptation and passing through any of its three gates. Nay more, Theosophy teaches that unless a man resists temptation and overcomes Lust, Anger and Greed, he cannot approach the Portals of Test

through which Heaven or Svarga and Nirvana is attained.

Modern knowledge does not take Lust, Anger and Greed very seriously. It makes excuses for them; it condones them in such a fashion that people are tempted to indulge in them. Thus, in civilized society sex-force manifesting as lust is not looked upon as an unnatural evil, but as something natural, to be winked at. Again "ladies and gentlemen may feel wrathful but let them not make an exhibition of irritability," unless they can shape it to a form called "righteous indignation." Greed is the very basis of our commercial civilization; to stab a neighbour in the back and rob his pocket transforms a small shopkeeper into a man of big business. Our civilization has erected gates of Hell in every street of every city and has disfigured even "god's green country."

It becomes necessary for the student of Theosophy to revise his estimate of these vices. We must train ourselves to look upon them as veritable Gates of Hell. We must recognize that we are living surrounded by this Hell and must acquire inner stamina to resist its Temptation. One of the early tendencies of the student is to make excuses for his own particular weakness. If lust is in him he speaks of it as a natural weakness of the body not so bad as anger and greed. If he is irritable in temperament he denounces, with all the force of his anger, lust in others, as also greed and covetousness of the selfish and the worldly; anger is bad, yes, but those others are terrible! The greedy student takes shelter by saying that of course greed is to be overcome, but after all it is not so sinful as lust or loss of temper. In a dozen ways we can fool ourselves and we do! It means we fall prey to temptation. Every failure for which an excuse is made brings us nearer to another failure. But every failure recognized as such and the knowledge acquired to eradicate its source within us will lead us toward success. No use regretting the past; "look not behind or thou art lost"; it is our present attitude and action that project our future and it is well to take note of how far we overcome our weaknesses.

It is necessary to perceive that all three vices are *equally* bad. Further, that each one of them unfolds the remaining two: *e. g.*, a man of lust gets angry when frustrated and greedy when successful. Even more, each of the vices produces its own distinct progeny: *e. g.*, anger begets self-justification which begets self-esteem, and self-esteem the ambition to rule, which in its turn creates obstinacy, and so it goes. Finally, because these three are not distinct and separate vices but a triad they give birth to a whole brood of other vices, and the Hell to which these three are gates is full of this brood. No wonder in the second chapter of the *Gita* we come

across the grave warning of how this triad causes the loss of all.

The Theosophical student who has shielded himself with true knowledge has to learn to ward off temptation which even temporarily pushes him toward any of these gates of Hell. We have to retain a very clear picture of our actual position. Mr. Judge has described it :—

“ We are now in Rajasika regions, sometimes lifting our fingers up to the hem of the garment of Satwa, ever aspiring, ever trying to purify our thoughts and free ourselves from the attachment to actions and objects.”

Attachment to actions, objects and longings are the tempters; they push us to the gates of Hell. To free ourselves from this attachment we must awaken aspiration, learn to feel the Self within the self—our own Higher Self, the Self of the Masters of the Great Lodge, the Self Universal, for the three are one. Such true aspiration draws us to the Portals of Test, passing through which we come upon the Path of Adeptship. The end is Nirvana Supreme, also a state to be experienced by human consciousness while living on earth.

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## SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THEIR ATTAINMENT

One of the questions which a Theosophist is apt to ask, and to ask with some earnestness and intensity, is, How can I make progress in the higher life? How can I attain spiritual gifts? For the phrase “ spiritual gifts,” which is a rather loose-jointed expression, we are indebted to Paul, the Apostle and Adept, who thus wrote to the Corinthian Church: “ Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” Among the “ gifts ” which he goes on to enumerate are these—wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, the speaking of divers tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. And while the Apostle urges the Corinthians to “ covet earnestly the best gifts,” he yet proceeds to show them a more excellent way, namely, the supreme law of love. “ Now abideth,” he says, “ faith, hope, charity ( or love ), these three ; but the greatest of these is charity.” Spiritual gifts, then, however desirable their possession may be, are plainly not, in the opinion of this good Adept, on the highest plane, not the supreme object of human attainment, or the most excellent way of reaching human perfection. They may doubtless properly be regarded as evidences of advancement on the higher planes of thought and spiritual life, and may be coveted and

used for the benefit of others ; but they are not in themselves the chief object of human desire. For man’s supreme aim should be to become God, and “ God is love.”

But let us look at the matter a little more closely. In the first place, what is a “ gift ”? What is the common acceptation of the word? Clearly something given to or bestowed upon a recipient, not something which a man already possesses, or which he may obtain by a process of growth or development. The latter, strictly speaking, would be a “ fruit,” not a gift. A tree which has been producing nothing but leaves and branches for many years finally breaks out into blossom and fruit. No new “ gift ” has been conferred upon it ; it has simply reached a stage of development in its natural growth where certain powers, inherent in the tree from the beginning, have an opportunity to assert themselves. In the same way the transcendental powers possessed by the Adepts are not gifts ; but the natural result of growth in certain directions, and the necessary efflorescence, so to speak, of the profound development in their cases of those spiritual potentialities which are the birthright of all men.

Taking this view of the meaning of the word, I think most Theosophists will be ready to admit that the phrase “ spiritual gifts ” is a misnomer. There are and can be no gifts for man to receive. Whatever the student of the higher life is, he is as the result of his past labours. Whatever he may become in the future will be due to his own efforts. He may develop his latent faculties and in time become an Adept, or he may drift along the currents of life without aim or effort, till he finally sinks into oblivion. His destiny is in his own hands, and is in no way dependent upon “ gifts.”

Bearing in mind, however, the manifold nature of man, the subject may be looked at from another point of view. For all practical purposes man may be said to consist of body, soul and spirit, the soul being the true ego, and the spirit one with the Supreme. And regarding these for the time as separate entities, it is perfectly true, as James, another apostle, puts it, that “ every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.” Every aspiration of the soul for spiritual things, every resolve of the man to lead a purer life, every helping outstretched hand to a weaker brother, every desire for the truth, all hungering and thirsting after righteousness :— these and like yearnings and strivings of the soul have first of all come from above, from the Divine within. In this sense they may be called “ gifts,”— gifts from the higher nature to the lower, from the spiritual to the human. And this action of the above upon the below is seen in those humane attributes, or

qualities, or virtues—whatever one may be pleased to call them—which Paul in another place enumerates as the “fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”

Looked at from either of these points of view, how can we attain spiritual gifts? The answer would seem to depend upon what we are really striving for. If the extraordinary powers of the Adepts have captivated our fancy and fired our ambition, then we must possess our souls in patience. Few, if any, of us are at all fitted for a “forcing” process. We must be content to wait and work; to grow and develop; line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, till, ages hence perhaps, we come to the full stature of the perfect man. If, however, wisely recognizing our limitations, we strive instead after what may be termed the ordinary manifestations of the spirit, two obvious lines of conduct suggest themselves.

Every impulse from above, every prompting of the Divine within, should meet at once with a hearty welcome and response. If you feel as if something urged you to visit some sick or afflicted neighbour or friend, obey the suggestion without delay. If the wish to turn over a new leaf comes into the lower consciousness, don't wait till next New Year's before actually turning it over; turn it now. If some pathetic story of suffering has moved you, act on the emotion while your cheeks are still wet with tears. In short, put yourself at once in line with the Divine ways, in harmony with the Divine laws. More light, more wisdom, more spirituality must necessarily come to one thus prepared, thus expectant. How can a bar of iron be permeated with the earth's magnetism if it is placed across instead of in line with the magnetic meridian? How can a man expect spiritual gifts or powers if he persists in ignoring spiritual conditions, in violating spiritual laws? To obtain the good, we must think good thoughts; we must be filled with good desires; in short, we must *be good*.

And this practical suggestion is to fulfil faithfully and conscientiously every known duty. It is in and through the incidents of daily life, in work well done, in duties thoroughly performed, that we to-day can most readily make progress in the higher life,—slow progress, it may be, but at any rate sure. These are stepping stones to better things. We advance most rapidly when we stop to help other wayfarers. We receive most when we sacrifice most. We attain to the largest measure of Divine love when we most unselfishly love the brethren. We become one with the Supreme most surely when we lose ourselves in work for Humanity.

DIES NON.

[The foregoing article was first printed by Mr. Judge in *The Path*, for February, 1889.—EDS.]

## ANIMAL SACRIFICE

In connection with the fast of Pandit Ram Chandra Sharma in protest against animal sacrifices in the name of religion, *The Modern Review* presents in its October issue a number of arguments against the cruel practice. It is pointed out that what men should sacrifice is the beast in themselves.

The Supreme Spirit has no attribute which craves the flesh and blood of innocent beasts for Its gratification.... To think that the Supreme Spirit requires anybody to kill any animal at any altar or elsewhere is a superstition. It is revolting to our feelings....

The note concluded with an English translation of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's Bengali poem inspired by Pandit Sharma's fast, from which we quote a few lines:—

They bring *himsa* (the lust of blood) to the temple in the guise of *bhakti* (reverential love),

They do not shrink from making worship blood-drenched....

The cry of the frightened beast, torn from its mother's breast,

Makes noiseful the yard of the Mother's Temple.

Making the killing of the powerless an offering of worship—

This shame of the Motherland thou wilt wipe away....

Cruel is the hope of merit from slaying

The creature who is helpless and unable to defend himself.

Thou wilt at the cost of thy own life

Rescue him from the hands of those who are greedy of religious merit—

I make known my salutation to thee.

Only a section of the Hindu community practises and supports animal sacrifice. Many famous pandits have opposed it on scriptural authority. The great Buddha worked against it over two millenia ago. Certainly no place where animals are slaughtered is worthy of the name of temple. From the occult point of view all rites which involve the shedding of blood attract depraved, evil influences to the spot where they are performed.

He who is not actively kind is cruel.—Ruskin.

Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.—H. P. B.

## REFORM OR REVOLUTION

The cycles must run their rounds. Periods of mental and moral light and darkness succeed each other as day does night. The major and minor yugas must be accomplished according to the established order of things. And we, borne along on the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its minor currents. . . . Can you turn the Ganga or the Brahmaputra back to its sources; can you even dam it so that its piled-up waters will not overflow the banks? No; but you may draw the stream partly into canals, and utilize its hydraulic power for the good of mankind. So we, who cannot stop the world from going in its destined direction, are yet able to divert some part of its energy into useful channels.—MAHATMA K. H., *U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 29*

Genuine mass reform must always wait upon the gradual infiltration of ideas into the public consciousness. It cannot be imposed from without. Social or moral legislation that outruns popular conviction is foredoomed to failure. Prohibition enforcement in the United States was a gigantic fiasco because, being premature, it aroused the resentment of the majority. Before it was attempted, temperance education had been making steady progress. Who can say that in a few years general support might not have made the prohibition experiment a success?

Reformers of social evils, particularly in the West, are all too ready to "rush in where angels fear to tread." The wisdom of this course is contested in *The Indian Social Reformer*. (September 7) It brings out that the strength of reform has never lain in numbers or material resources but in ideas penetrating the great mass of intelligent opinion. Mr. Natarajan gives a striking application of the principle that reformers, to be effective, cannot in their action outrun too far the understanding and sympathy of those they want to help. He says:—

The leaders were endeavouring to change the mind of the people as the first and most necessary step to change the custom which they followed. They themselves shrank from breaking the custom before society was ready to follow their lead.

Thus a pioneer social reformer, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, a friend and follower of H. P. B., who had worked indefatigably to remove the popular prejudice against the remarriage of widows, himself refused to sit at meals with a re-married couple. Another, the great Ranade, failed to marry a widow when the death of his first wife left him free to give such a practical demonstration of his convictions. A third, Justice Telang, also a friend of H. P. Blavatsky and contributor of a series of papers on the life of Sankaracharya in *The Theosophist* for 1879–80, got his own daughter married at a tender age, to the delight of the orthodox.

A superficial judgment would condemn all of these men as lacking in moral courage, but is it so? Mr. Natarajan denies it.

They felt that the time was not ripe for action. They

would prefer to go two steps taking the people with them to ten leaving the latter behind.

The fanatic always can be counted on for a drastic course. The wise man waits when judgment counsels waiting.

Which is the higher ideal, when the two courses are mutually opposed, to make one's own record clear by giving an immediate practical demonstration of every conviction, or to act moderately with due regard to existing popular prejudices in order to keep one's standing in the community and so be able to influence its other members for their good? It is really a choice between a selfish course and an unselfish one, between the sense of separateness and the conviction of brotherhood. If we compare the enlightened members of a community, having the power that right thinking confers, with an engine, and the rest of the community with the carriages, inert and depending on the engine to raise them to a higher level, the point will be clear. The engine can climb the grade at top speed by cutting loose and leaving the train in the valley, but to what end?

Take a man who lives in the southern part of the United States, where race prejudice is very strong. He is a believer in Universal Brotherhood, convinced that Negroes and Whites should be on terms of absolute equality. Will he help the course he believes in by adopting a Negro child? Such an action in the present state of the public mind in that section would mean an unhappy future for the child and social ostracism for himself, with all his influence in favour of fair and just treatment of Negroes completely lost. Negroes in the neighbourhood might even be treated worse instead of better because of his action.

The primary reason why the strength of reformers is less important than the strength of ideas is that effective and lasting reform is from *within*. If the custom that calls for reform is an expression of a moral defect, the damming of one channel will not dry up the stream but only make it seek another outlet. Moreover, the dark shadow of reaction follows innovations for which men's minds and hearts are not prepared. Verily, true reform is changing the Manas and Buddhi of the race.

## RIGHT LIVING

*Desire power ardently.*

*But the power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men.*

—LIGHT ON THE PATH

The lure of personal progress is a mighty temptation. In Theosophical study at every point we meet the warning, sometimes directly, mostly indirectly. The very subject-matter of study arouses the desire for growth. Ordinarily we speak of spiritual growth, and from there, as a starting point, we go on and on, thinking this and feeling that, saying and doing one thing and another—"for the benefit of the Soul"! Even when we remind ourselves that the great goal to which Theosophy points is not progress but service of humanity, we are coloured by ideas which tell us that to serve one must have knowledge and capacity; that the very service we are rendering—oh! so humbly!—is producing spiritual results in our own Soul awakening, and so forth. Because there is some basis of truth in such ideas we are glamourised and we fail to see that looking for results or noting such benefits we are surrounding ourselves with the smoke of self. In the process, unless we check ourselves, we lose sight of the goal, and progress becomes our objective. We have taken a turn to the Left.

The Desire for Power is one thing, that for powers is another. The Power to Serve is translated by us as possessing innumerable powers of body, *psyche* and *nous*. For real service, universal and impersonal, the power we have to unfold is that which shall make us appear as nothing in the eyes of men. Universal service means service of humanity, low and high, ignorant and educated, without making any distinctions. Impersonal service means service in which one's own personal self is not obtruded, not even its face shown; to put it in positive terms, service rendered by the spiritual soul, Buddhi Manas, and not by the material soul, Kama-Manas. The symbol of Buddhi-Manas is the heart, the hidden organ which serves the body from the moment of birth to that of death. Its very existence is not felt till some mishap interferes with its silent unobtrusive service.

It is natural that in serving the Cause of Theosophy we become known to this person or that association. Only the Great Adepts fully show forth the verity hidden in the statement that we should appear as nothing in the eyes of men. Their very Work would suffer and the performance of Duties belonging to their calling as Divine Magicians would become impossible. A Master once wrote:—

How could your world collect proofs of the doings of men who have sedulously kept closed every possible door of approach by which the inquisitive could spy upon them? The prime condition of their success was that they should never be supervised or obstructed. What they have done they know: all that those outside their circle could perceive was results, the causes of which were masked from view. (U. L. T. PAMPHLET No. 29, p. 7.)

One of the reasons why the rule says to the disciple to covet the power of appearing as nothing in the eyes of men is that the lure of *egotism-ahankara* is his most dangerous foe. It is a subtle foe. Being the exact opposite of "to appear as nothing in the eyes of men," the pride and conceit issuing from egotism have the *appearance* of humility. Our egotism hides itself only from us; it shouts vehemently of its existence to all the world.

Every earnest student of Theosophy has to discipline himself and adopt a few exercises for daily living so that he may acquire knowledge and spread it for the benefit of others; also with a view to setting an example of right living. The rules of Discipline to be adopted should be determined by each for himself. In the Theosophical literature a vast number of practical teachings are offered; but neither H. P. B. nor Mr. Judge has drawn up a programme saying to the aspirant—do this, don't do that. Every devoted student finds himself confused and like Arjuna says: "Thou, as it were with doubtful speech, confusest my reason: wherefore choose one method amongst them by which I may obtain happiness and explain it unto me."

In selecting rules for our own discipline we reveal our discrimination and discernment which belong to Buddhi Manas and also their opposite—egotism—which belongs to Kama-Manas. Though Theosophy has pointed out in a hundred places that *the fight is in the mind*, that *the foe is egotism*, the application of that instruction often slips by us. We repeat the metaphysical teaching—evolution is from within without—but in practice we more often reverse the order and think of the body instead of the mind. This is the beginning of Hatha Yoga. The Kingly-Science, Raja-Yoga, advocates purity of mind and morals and to watch for the development of that purity as showing forth in the cleanliness of the body and the control of the senses. Again, many students reverse the process and think that bodily cleanliness will cleanse the moral nature, pure food given to the body will develop soul powers, etc. No clean mind will keep its body unclean, but many clean bodies carry within them very unclean minds. Every sage protects his brain against the fumes of alcohol, but every total abstainer does not become a sage.

One of the salient features of real Raja-Yoga practice is that at every time and at every turn it

enables the practitioner to observe the rule of appearing as nothing in the eyes of men. If we were to remember this when choosing our practices of Discipline we should save ourselves from many pitfalls.

In his wonderful book of Occult Instructions, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, W. Q. Judge writes:—

The Masters have said that the great step is to learn how to get out of the rut each one has by nature and by training, and to fill up the old grooves. This has been misconstrued by some who have applied it to mere outer habits of life, and forgotten that its real application is to the mental grooves and the astral ones also.

Psychic ruts and grooves of thought are the cause of outer tendencies and habits. By modifying old grooves and making new ones we purify ourselves. This is an inner process and in undertaking that task one will avoid parading oneself before kin and friends. Writes Mr. Judge:—

One eats meat, another does not. Neither is universally right, for the kingdom of heaven does not come from meat, or from its absence. Another smokes and another does not; these are neither universally right nor wrong, as smoke for one is good and for another is bad; the true cosmopolitan allows each to do in such matters as he likes. Essentials are the only things on which true occultism and Theosophy require an agreement, and such temporary matters as food and other habitual daily things are not essentials. One may make a mistake, too, of parading too much his or her particular line of life or act. When this is done the whole world is bored, and nothing effective or lasting is gained except a cranky impression.

Practical Occultism consists in carrying on the fight on the field of mind and the victory there obtained will precipitate smoothly and harmoniously into the world without. The Theosophical aspirant is apt to err as Christian monks, Muslim faquirs and Hindu yogis have erred in the past. "Come out from among them and be yet separate" is an Occult injunction; our Theosophical Masters have also said "Come out of your world into ours." This does not mean that we shall move our body from one place to another, but that we shall move our active mind away from old grooves and make it furrow new soil. To move the body before the mind results in Hatha Yoga; the Great Buddha Himself fought in the mind ere He moved His body from the palace to the jungle, and again fought in the mind ere He moved His body from under the Bodhi tree to the plains of human service.

One of the earliest exercises of practical Occultism, highly appropriate to our cycle, which the aspirant can and should undertake, is to build his own home by earning his own livelihood and thus secure for himself the right to live his own Theosophical life without let or hindrance. Right livelihood is one of the steps of the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism. It offers marvellous scope for self-training as for Theosophical service. It also enables the student to carry on without drawing attention to himself. To be in the world but not of the world is easy if one takes the way of the beggar; there are millions of them in India. But a parasite is not a spiritual servant of humanity. Home is the place where the student can practise Theosophy and right asceticism and do it all and appear as nothing in the eyes of men—provided it is his own home. Occultism looks upon marriage as a sacrament, because, among other reasons, it can and should be used to create a new home, a centre from which to radiate Theosophical influence in steady silence for the good of the world. Marriage is sometimes looked upon as bondage; students should look upon it as an opportunity to build one's own home. An Englishman proudly calls his home his castle because he can shut himself up from the world. An aspirant has to learn to make his home a castle where his discipline is observed, not for self-growth, personal benefit and mental peace, but for the service of all. To learn to be neighbourly is the first practical step on the path of Universal Brotherhood. What better place is there for preparing ourselves in silence and secrecy than home, so that we may give ourselves to the Great Service? "It is men not ceremony-masters, we seek, devotion not mere observances," wrote Mahatma K. H.

"To appear as nothing in the eyes of men"—that is one of the secrets taught by example by all great teachers. H.P.B. appeared less than nothing to the world. The world's derision influenced some of her friends and colleagues who failed to see who or what she was behind the appearance. Is it not strange that after hearing one of the most marvellous pieces of spiritual instruction Arjuna asked, "What, O Keshava, is the description of the wise and devoted man who is fixed in contemplation and confirmed in spiritual knowledge? What may such a sage declare? Where may he dwell? Does he move and act like other men?" It did not occur to Arjuna that such a Man was standing in front of him! Why? Because Krishna the Sage made Himself appear as nothing in the eyes of men. Sages appear in the world of mortals but how many understand the meaning of the appearance? In a poem entitled "Krishna," Æ, who has just passed away and who was a friend and admirer of W. Q. Judge, sings:—

I paused beside the cabin door and saw the  
 . . . King of Kings at play,  
 Tumbled upon the grass I spied the  
 Little heavenly runaway.

The mother laughed upon the child  
 Made gay by its ecstatic morn,  
 And yet the Sages speak of It as of the  
 Ancient and Unborn.

Who was Krishna—Aja, Unborn, or Govinda the shepherd? Who was He, Achyuta—the Immortal “who fallest not” or the boy who “stole” curds and broke pots in Brindaban? Who was He when He danced with the Gopis, and again when He led Arjuna and the Pandava army to War? Did He not set the example for us to follow? Does He not speak, in the Voice of the Great Silence—“The Power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men”?

## THEOSOPHY AND POLITICS

In the November number of *The Aryan Path* Mr. V. R. R. Dikshitar of the Madras University contributes a very interesting study of the indigenous religious movements in India during the last quarter of the 19th century. Among them he counts the Theosophical Movement and comments upon it thus:—

“There was still another movement of this period to which a passing mention has been already made. This was what we may term the original Theosophical Movement founded in New York by H. P. Blavatsky and her colleagues Col. H. S. Olcott and W. Q. Judge. The first two were sent to India as a committee by the Theosophical Society. Its temporary union with the Arya Samaja movement we have already noticed. Like the Arya Samaj, it began purely as a moral and spiritual movement which later became religious and political. Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott were not mere propagandists of Hinduism but were friends of all oriental religions, and both, especially Col. Olcott, laboured for Buddhism and inaugurated a fine progressive movement in Ceylon. There is a very important pronouncement by these two leading Theosophists against mixing Theosophy and Politics:—

[Mr. Dikshitar extracts from an important document which we print in full here.]

The tenacious observance by the Founders of our Society of the principle of absolute neutrality, on its behalf, in all questions which lie outside the limits of its declared “objects,” ought to have obliterated the necessity to say that there is a natural and perpetual divorce between Theosophy and

Politics. Upon an hundred platforms I have announced this fact, and in every other practicable way, public and private, it has been affirmed and reiterated. Before we came to India, the word Politics had never been pronounced in connection with our names; for the idea was too absurd to be even entertained, much less expressed. But in this country, affairs are in such an exceptional state, that every foreigner, of whatsoever nationality, comes under Police surveillance more or less; and it was natural that we should be looked after until the real purpose of our Society’s movements had been thoroughly well shown by the developments of time. That end was reached in due course; and in the year 1880, the Government of India, after an examination of our papers and other evidence, became convinced of our political neutrality, and issued all the necessary orders to relieve us from further annoying surveillance. Since then, we have gone our ways without troubling ourselves more than any other law-abiding persons, about the existence of policemen or detective bureaux. I would not have reverted to so stale a topic if I had not been forced to do so by recent events. I am informed that in Upper India, some unwise members of the Society have been talking about the political questions of the hour, as though authorized to speak for our organisation itself, or at least to give to this or that view of current agitations the imprimatur of its approval or disapproval. At a European capital, the other day, an Asiatic, whom I suspect to be a political agent, was invited to a social gathering of local Theosophists, where, certainly, philosophy and not politics, was the theme of discussion, but where this mysterious unknown’s presence was calculated to throw suspicion over the meeting. Again, it was but a fortnight or so ago that one of the most respectable and able of our Hindu fellows strongly importuned me to allow the Theosophical Society’s influence—such as it may be—to be thrown in favor of Bills to promote religious instruction for Hindu children, and other “non-political” measures. That our members, and others whom it interests, may make no mistake as to the Society’s attitude as regards Politics, I take this occasion to say that our Rules, and traditional policy alike, prohibit every officer and fellow of the Society, AS SUCH, to meddle with political questions in the slightest degree, and to compromise the Society by saying that it has, AS SUCH, any opinion upon those or any other questions. The Presidents of Branches, in all countries, will be good enough to read this protest to their members, and in every instance when initiating a candidate to give him to understand—as I invariably do—the fact of our corporate neutrality. So convinced am I that the perpetuity of our Society—at least in countries under despotic or to any degree arbitrary Governments—depends upon our keeping closely to our legitimate province, and leaving Politics “severely alone,” I shall use the full power permitted me as President-Founder to suspend or expel every member, or even discipline or discharter any Branch which shall, by offending in this respect, imperil the work now so prosperously going on in various parts of the world.

*Supplement to the Theosophist, July, 1883, Vol. IV, p. 14.*

“They left politics severely alone lest it might imperil their work that was prospering in various parts of the world. The character of the Theosophical Movement underwent a change soon after the departure of H. P. Blavatsky from India in 1885. . . .

“A new turn was given to the original Theosophical Movement in 1893–4 when the late Mrs. Annie Besant came on the scene. She instituted a widespread propaganda on the greatness of Hindu culture and civilisation throughout the Indian Empire. She favoured Hinduism and ortho-

doxy on the one hand and nationalism and political democracy on the other—thus going contrary to the original programme of Mme. Blavatsky. Under her leadership what was a cosmopolitan spiritual movement became a nationalistic religious one.”

There is truth in the above remarks of Mr. Dikshitar. As Karma would have it, G. S. Arundale, President of the Adyar T. S., reprinted in full this same document on Theosophy and Politics in his official organ for September (p. 585). The editorial remark introduces the reprint thus:—

I reproduce a statement made by the President-Founder in 1883 and published under the above heading in *The Theosophist* (July Supplement) of that year. It is particularly interesting as showing the varying duties which seem to fall to the lot of different Presidents. Our late President, Dr. Besant, had very much to do with political activity, especially in India.

This remark of Mr. Arundale confuses the issue. He tries to justify Mrs. Besant's mistake of mixing up the pure waters of Theosophy with the hot wine of politics. Can the Great Masters have a varying policy on fundamental issues of thought or action? Is it possible that They thought in 1914 exactly the reverse of what They thought in 1884? The explanation of Mrs. Besant's change of mental attitude in this as in other Theosophical matters is simple: she did not hold to the Line of Instruction laid down by H. P. B. Just as under other influences Mrs. Besant taught "Theosophical" ideas diametrically opposed to those to be found in the writings of H. P. B., so also in matters of Theosophical policy Mrs. Besant adopted lines of action opposite to those of H. P. B. Not only did Mrs. Besant herself go astray but she misled very many who had faith in her and were devoted to her. Several of them having perceived the mistake have given a different turn to their lives and actions. Mr. Arundale and others should do likewise. Mr. Arundale cannot serve her memory in a better fashion than by exerting himself to undo the wrong she unwittingly did to the Theosophical Cause in this and other matters.

There are numerous statements of H. P. B., two of which were printed in Vol. I, No. 1 of this Journal, *i.e.*, for November 1930, which are unequivocal and go to show that neither the Theosophical Adept nor the Theosophical aspirant can have anything "to do with political activity" in India or elsewhere. All that the Adepts can do or the aspirant can attempt is also indicated and Mr. Arundale himself quotes the words of H. P. B. from *The Theosophist* of December 1883 (p. 80).

"Neither the Tibetan nor the modern Hindu Mahatmas, for the matter of that, ever meddle with politics, though they may bring their influence to

bear upon more than one momentous question in the history of a nation—their mother country especially."

Apropos of this, the life of the Buddha, the Enlightened One, also illustrates that politics is studiously eschewed by spiritual leaders of mankind. When Buddha visited Rajagaha, the metropolis of Magadha, King Bimbisara offered the rulership of his kingdom at His feet and requested that the Enlightened One should bring true happiness to the people of Magadha. If Buddha had any faith in political action as a power for human betterment He would have accepted the throne Himself or advised the king to introduce certain measures formulated by Himself. Buddha did neither but promised Bimbisara that He would preach the Dhamma first in the land of Magadha and later on in other countries. Bimbisara could easily perceive the wisdom of the Lord's promise and was satisfied. It is the cultivation of the spiritual nature of man that can bring about his true amelioration. It is for this very reason that He renounced the throne which was His by the right of birth.

Gandhiji's withdrawal from active political work was perhaps the result of his own experience that the serious business of the spiritual life cannot be carried on while one is engaged in playing the game of party politics.

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Félix Guyot discusses the doctrine of Karma in *Revue de France* of June 15th. His article is notable for its reasonableness and accuracy. "A man must fight his moral battles alone and unaided: he is his own legislator, tempter and judge and on him alone depends his reward or punishment." M. Guyot sees a fundamental difference between the ethics of Karma rooted thus in the individual and those of the West and Near East which "were and are based upon the obeisance to the commandments of one or more gods, who reward the virtuous ones and punish the sinners." In modern times deified abstractions like race and community have been largely substituted for the old gods; and because "science itself is nonmoral and indifferent to good and evil," M. Guyot blames the resulting "scientific morality" for the "confusion which undoubtedly plays a great part in the present chaos."

It would be well indeed for the West if the doctrine of Karma gained general acceptance there. The genuine conviction that "Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment" is the one self-compelling basis for right ethics.

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

An article by G. R. Stirling-Taylor on "History and Politics" in *The English Review* (September 1935) deals with the fanatic—well-meaning reformer or otherwise—who attempts to force change beyond natural evolution. Growth must be an extension of the previous line of development and present problems are best helped by a study of their past appearances in the evolutionary stream. The writer has not realized the periodicity in the return of events and his conclusion should be extended in scope, but it is worth quoting:—

It is the business of the scientist to collect facts as the basis of his research. Now history is the collection of the facts of human behaviour and human needs and desires; and therefore the first business of the scientific statesman is to go to that museum or library of information and examine the facts or data on which his decisions should be based. There is little or no evidence that the politician realizes or uses this most valuable source of knowledge. Just think of the monetary disasters we might have been saved if our statesmen had been sufficiently educated to read Alison's history of the financial crisis that followed the Napoleonic Wars. Then we should probably have been spared the ignominy of returning to the Gold Standard in 1925 only to leave it again in 1931. Again, how much more likely is it that the Americans would rescue their nation from its present economic peril if they would begin by carefully reading, for example, Mr. J. Truslow Adams' two recent volumes, *A History of the American People*. They would then understand that most of what is happening to-day has happened (in lesser degrees) many times before, and they would see how earlier remedies had succeeded or failed.

There is a hasty and entirely wrong impression that a practical man of affairs can get much more quickly to the true source of his problem if he examines the present facts which are before his eyes and does not waste time on the past. The present is assumed to be the latest word; which is true of course. But what is not true is that this latest word of the moment is equal in weight and permanence to the words of the ages, of which the present is only the last small speck of dust on the top of the monument of time.

It is the same shortsighted egotism that inclines, not only the politician, but also the scientist, the philosopher and the man in the street to the attitude of the conceited Greek before Troy. "We boast ourselves to be much better men than our fathers." Yet an unbiased study of past history and also, far more important, of the accumulated wisdom of the ancients soon shows that science did not first spring forth in Europe, a fledgeling of the eighteenth century, or even of the Renaissance, but that science, in all its three aspects, physical, psychical and spiritual, is to be found as far back as man himself. That is why Theosophists reiterate that their philosophy is nothing new, hatched from the brain of one or more individuals, but is "the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers" whose respective and independent evidence was used to test and verify the "propositions" of that Science of Life, passed on from a more evolved humanity than our own,

If Theosophists seem to some to dally at the task of righting the world, if they seem overmuch engaged in abstract pursuits, it is because they see the dire need for guiding principles, without which all efforts at reform are likely to be, like the remedy of the old adage, "worse than the disease." Aspiration is not enough; there must be knowledge to direct it.

Sir Herbert Samuel's Inaugural Address to the Liberal Summer School, Cambridge, 1st August, 1935, which is given in full in *The Contemporary Review* for September, concludes:—

We speak of the "tendencies of the time," of the "reaction against liberalism," of vast forces, economic and political, compelling the nations. These are merely words and phrases. The only reality is in human beings, ourselves and others like us; in our opinions right or wrong; in our actions and our inactions.

"There is a force that drives us on, and yet  
We are that force."

It is good when prominent thinkers point out the falsity of externalizing what is within. It is by projecting the dark image of his own lower forces that man has created the illusion of external compulsion, or else of a personal god, as finite and unlovely as personal man himself. By conceiving of God as outside him man has lost sight of his own divine wisdom and power and has bound himself in self-imagined, self-created ignorance and impotence. By ignorance of the essential unity of Life, a flame whose countless undetached sparks are the countless living beings, man has wrought disharmony and strife and, from that sense of separation, opposed himself to his fellow man. Because he has imagined this a world of chance and favouritism in which justice is external, fallible and man-made, he does not see that Law is within himself—as it is within all Life—and that his own Spiritual Self compensates and balances appropriate reaction to each action, good for good, evil for evil.

Indeed, we are that force that drives us on, but never till we recognize and base our whole living on that fact can we grow masters of our destiny. We reach that point, not by change of circumstance, but by a change of mind and heart, by the study of Right Knowledge and the practice of an uncircumscribed "Compassion."

Defenders of the hunt and scientific advocates of campaigns to destroy animal pests paint a gloomy picture of the earth overrun with predatory animals if nature is allowed to take its course and men abstain from killing. But nature has its own

methods of adjusting the balance among the various forms of life. A case in point is the epidemic of coccidiosis, a virulent disease which is said to be carrying off rabbits by the hundred thousand in England, where the cyclic peak of rabbit population was reached this year. *The Evening News* (September 20th) reports:—

This levelling up of the rabbit population by nature has happened before. Usually the rabbits increase to a peak number every six or seven years, when some disease reduces them again.

The economy of nature would not permit the crowding out, by a lower type of animal, of beings higher in the evolutionary scale, which would happen if rabbits, for example, increased unchecked. Says *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 277-78):—

The very *fact* that adaptations *do* occur, that the fittest *do* survive in the struggle for existence, shows that what is called "unconscious Nature" is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (Elementals) guided by High Planetary Spirits, (Dhyans Chohans), whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *verbum* of the unmanifested LOGOS, and constitutes at one and the same time the MIND of the Universe and its immutable LAW.

A flat world in which all inequalities among men have been ironed out is an impossibility, declares Lady Rhondda in *Time and Tide* (28th September). She does not oppose the abolition of caste which, she remarks, "after all survives in its worst form to-day only in India and England." She insists, however, that the only workable form of government is pyramidal and that the important thing is to provide for those fit to govern getting to the top, instead of giving power because of "family name, or riches, or the mere ability for climbing up."

We need not enter into defence of the Indian caste system as originally instituted, as the ideal social structure which it contemplated and for long years secured is well known to students of Theosophy. Lady Rhondda is right in her advocacy of a pyramidal form of government, but in the present state of society how can those fit to govern be brought to the top and kept there? That calls for the consent not only of the governed but also of the relatively more advanced souls to assume the thankless burden.

The prerequisites of fitness to govern include serviceableness, honesty, courage and wisdom, the characteristic attributes of the four strata of every society. Even in our degenerate days there are noble souls in incarnation who embody such virtues

and also show forth such others of the highest caste of old as tranquillity, purity, self-mastery and spiritual perception. But how many of our modern profit-seekers have the discernment to recognize such men or the humility to follow their lead? Their very qualities of purity and calm are at a discount in our age of license and turmoil. The willingness to sacrifice themselves may be assumed in those at the high stage, provided that that sacrifice will benefit the less developed crowd. But would it?

Take even a man who is living a noble and pure life and possesses some spiritual discernment. He would make a better ruler than the self-seeking statesmen at the helm to-day. Does anyone imagine he would be elected without compromising with his principles or, even if placed in office, tolerated in his attempts to put those principles into practice in the state? Under the law of Karma each country has the government that it deserves. If we want better rulers we must produce a higher average citizen.

How little moderns are justified in their assumption of superior knowledge is beginning to be suspected by more and more people. Thus the reviewer of Miss P. Kemp's *Healing Ritual* in *The Times Literary Supplement* (1st August) remarked that "some of us will be led to wonder whether, in spite of our greater 'practical' efficiency, we have not, from a philosophical point of view, been too ready to assume that our artificial departmentalism of thought and knowledge is in accordance with the nature of things." The book shows the Southern Slavs hedged about in their actions by a system of rigid taboos resting on theories of disease causation quite foreign to modern ideas. Very likely based originally upon facts, their traditional theories of the cause and cure of disease have become mixed with superstition; the folk-surgery is said to be more practical, the peasant bone-setters, taught by their predecessors, often possessing considerable skill.

Another *materia medica*, which, according to the Smithsonian Institution (U. S. A.), "was the distillation of the experience of centuries and probably reaches far back into earlier civilizations" is that of the Aztecs. A MS. of 1552, of which that Institution has just obtained a copy, establishes that centuries before the Spanish Conquest the Aztecs had collected flowers and herbs and developed a true botanical garden.

The early historian, Torquemada, wrote:—

Montezuma kept a garden of medicinal herbs and the court physicians experimented with them and attended the nobility. But the common people came rarely to these doctors... not only because a fee was charged... but also because the medicinal value of herbs was common knowledge

## 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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