

# THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL  
MOVEMENT, AND  
THE BROTHERHOOD  
OF HUMANITY



THE STUDY OF  
OCCULT SCIENCE AND  
PHILOSOPHY, AND  
ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XL—No. 12

October, 1952

**E**SOTERIC doctrines emanate from a source (Occultism) repudiated by science. Therefore, the rejection of these teachings may be expected, and must be accepted beforehand. No one styling himself a "scholar," will be permitted to regard these teachings seriously. They will be derided and rejected A PRIORI in this century; but only in this one. For in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the SECRET DOCTRINE has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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A H M

Man circumscribes his own conditions by the false ideas he holds in regard to life.  
—ROBERT CROSSIE

# THEOSOPHY

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## NEITHER DOUBT NOR ACCEPTANCE

EVER since the time of Pythagoras, probably, those who could be designated "theosophists" have been delighted when able to observe men in the process of freeing themselves from blind dependence upon credal doctrine. It is the quality of doubt, we sometimes say, which makes a man question whether the teachings he has been told to believe really should be taken as literal revelation. We know that doubt of the literal truth of medieval theological doctrines accompanied the Renaissance, and that it was only after the Renaissance that the concept of "free thought" began its swing upward on the arc of popularity. Yet Krishna, in *The Bhagavad-Gita*, speaking before the iron-like mind-sets of Kali Yuga had cast the subject-matter of religion into so many rigid molds, tells Arjuna to abjure doubt entirely.

Here is another paradox, perhaps one basic enough to warrant prolonged reflection by those who are striving to understand the true meaning of "the Theosophical Movement" of this or any other time. A paradox of this nature brings into focus an interesting subsidiary question: When one is "talking" or "writing" theosophy, is there not an obligation to proceed, in thought, from the propositions put forward by those universally regarded as Theosophical teachers? *The Voice of the Silence*, as well as *The Bhagavad-Gita*, advises the disciple to hold no traffic with doubt, and while it is easy to appreciate the premium value established for agnosticism in the public eye during recent centuries, the first task for the Theosophical student may be

to examine the psychological meaning of the warnings against doubt as found in these two great scriptures.

Doubt, of itself, is assuredly a negative quality. Both doubt and absolute acceptance clearly belong to the eternal "pairs of opposites," each representing an extreme in the oscillations of mind rather than a perception of reality. While in an historical setting such as that furnished by the parasitism of theological dogmas upon the psyche of the Western world, it is natural and inevitable that a period of belief should be followed by a period of doubt and skepticism, and while these two phases may be held to represent a cycle of transition which will finally make further penetration of reality possible, do we think that either the great "skeptics" or the great "believers" actually contribute to knowledge, *per se*? Skepticism seems rather to be a protection against one form of belief, in order to foster another negative, or precautionary, belief—a belief in unbelief, perhaps.

Should each man, in studying Theosophy, be bound by his own integrity to "doubt" or be skeptical of theosophic doctrines, *until* he tests each one as an hypothesis? We think not. It has been said that one is bound to "doubt," at least at first, and, conversely, it has also been said that one should not "doubt" until he has studied the intricacies of theosophic philosophy—after which he has *earned the right to doubt*, because he then has knowledge of what he is doubting. But both these approaches seem beside the point. The real point is that no Theosophic teacher has been concerned with the *personal nature* of the inquirer or disciple. Not that the personal nature of the aspirant is unimportant; rather, the personal nature is each man's personal business. If the inquirer is made to feel that his personal allegiance to certain teachings is *sought* by Theosophists he is furnished valid excuse for skepticism.

This attitude on the part of students also falls into the category of those conceptions of Theosophy which H.P.B. called "collective errors," in her article, "What Is Truth?" There are, indeed, theosophical doctrines, but in the purest and strictest sense, these cannot be given "allegiance." We may feel allegiance to groups and to persons, but an idea—we can only try to represent an idea as faithfully as we can. As we represent or embody the idea, we may also find ourselves enjoying congenial allegiances, but, in what has been so often and so clearly defined as the theosophic life, these are secondary developments along the way.

Perhaps one of the great difficulties confronting men engaged in corporate pursuits arises from the fact that allegiances are easily mistaken for the ends they were originally formed to serve. Thus a group becomes "institutionalized." The mechanisms which may once have developed naturally to work toward a goal take priority over the goal itself—which is an understandable karmic pattern in an age still afflicted with the tendency to *materialize* the import of all teachings and doctrines, even the highest. The gaining of a convert is an institutional victory, never a victory for truth, and since the Theosophist is in a sense pledged to eschew the institutional view, he is also counselled to unconcern about converts. If he has the pleasure of observing the passage of mind of one of his acquaintances from reliance upon dogma to the realm of free and independent inquiry, he may recognize that it is not the "doubts" severing the old allegiance, but the self-reliance attained, which furnishes cause for rejoicing.

The study of Theosophy, in H. P. Blavatsky's terms, involves neither doubt nor acceptance, both doubt and acceptance being accompaniments of an institutional sortie upon Truth. One is not obliged to be concerned with the "doubts" of others, nor even with one's own doubts. One is not obliged to be concerned with how much or how little another "accepts," nor even with how much is personally accepted. For, while studying Theosophy, the only faculty which can invoke progress in understanding is the faculty of contemplation, and contemplation is too engrossing a process to leave time or energy for measuring the gradations of anyone's personal beliefs or skepticisms. Krishna could legitimately tell his disciple to abjure doubt since he had also suggested that its opposite, acceptance, be likewise transcended.

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In the great matters it is now common knowledge that we have no knowledge, unless it be sufficient to advise us of the utter folly of all dogmatism. We would, indeed, think rather poorly of the world if we could understand it, if it were so trifling an affair as to be easily compassed by our petty understandings. Of that we are in no danger. Life and the world "beggar all description," let alone comprehension.

—MACNEILE DIXON

## CYCLES OF EVOLUTION

We are only in the Fourth Round, and it is in the Fifth that the full development of *Manas*, as a direct ray from the Universal MAHAT—a ray unimpeded by matter—will be finally reached. Nevertheless, as every sub-race and nation have their cycles and stages of developmental evolution repeated on a smaller scale, it must be the more so in the case of a Root Race. Our race then has, as a Root-race, crossed the equatorial line and is cycling onward on the Spiritual side; but some of our sub-races still find themselves on the shadowy descending arc of their respective national cycles; while others again—the oldest—having crossed their crucial point, which alone decides whether a race, a nation, or a tribe will live or perish, are at the apex of spiritual development as sub-races.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 301

THE longing to see behind the veil of history is a natural one, and if the foregoing account of the evolutionary status of mankind be accepted, a wondering about which of the sub-races are now “at the apex of spiritual development” is hardly to be avoided. Where, *where*, on the face of the earth, today, is to be found an ethnic group that can with any reason be called “spiritual”? In these terms, the passage from *The Secret Doctrine* is plainly an enigma, and had best remain so.

But neither “sub-race” nor “spiritual” may mean, here, what we might commonly suppose. A sub-race, instead of being a coherent, racial aggregate, may be instead a class of egos widely distributed over some quarter of the earth, or over all of it. Such egos may be externally alien to one another, united only by the subtler bonds of inner, psychic unfoldment. The linkages of Karma, during *Kali Yuga*, might easily enough be hidden from view, along with what the ancient books call the general “confusion of caste,” so that recognition of the common evolutionary heritage belongs only to the subtle sight of the subtlesighted.

“Spiritual,” in turn, during this pilgrimage through the matter and states of consciousness of the Fourth Round, may be an attribute strangely unassociated with the final luster of the Three Perfections. The coming into spirituality is a travail rather than a beatification. “Taking the kingdom of heaven by violence” may be but a figure of speech within the discourse of the world, but it has a literal meaning,

also—literal to the struggles of egoity to know itself. There is little evidence, for example, that egos of overwhelming virtue are attracted to the Theosophical Movement. The souls who move within the aura of the Movement are more often warriors of unfinished striving and imperfect pasts. And this, perhaps, is in a sense what the Movement is for, even as they are for it, according to the measure of their light and their fidelity. The attractive forces of the Theosophical Movement are addressed by its founders to the needs of the world, not to the half-made definitions which the world may apply to its as yet unrealized ideals. And so with "spirituality."

Thus, the little that we know, or think we know, about cycles of evolution may not divine correctly the upsurging currents of the world's psychic life. Yet there are clues. In *Lucifer* for October, 1888, a correspondent asked the editor, H. P. Blavatsky: ". . . could it be stated how the recent teachings of Occult Sciences really originated, . . .?" This question, H.P.B. replied, was easily answered. Her statement is categorical:

A crisis has arrived in which it was absolutely necessary to bring within reach of our generation the Esoteric Doctrine of the eternal cycles. Religion, both in the West and East, had long been smothering beneath the dust heaps of Sectarianism and enfranchised Science. For lack of any scientific religious concept, Science was giving Religion the *coup-de-grace* with the iron bar of Materialism. To crown the disorder, the phantom-world of Hades, or Kama-loka, had burst in a muddy torrent into ten thousand séance-rooms, and created most misleading notions of man's *post-mortem* state. . . .

Here, then, in a few words, are given the reasons for the launching of the Theosophical Movement in the world. So far as that world—the world of the nineteenth century—was concerned, no such "crisis" was admitted. And today, our historiographers are still far from setting the problem of Western civilization in these terms. These are the *inner* issues of human development, forming the tableau of the psychomoral environment of race evolution. It is from the play of such factors in the race mind that those who see behind the veil of "current events" take off pointer readings, to set the sights of the enterprise which they have at heart.

The cycle, however, moves, and with its progress the relationship of these factors changes; not much, perhaps, but nevertheless it changes.

During the nineteenth century, the prime objective was to break the impasse between dogmatic religion and materialistic science—and to arrest the descent of the Spiritualists into blind intoxication by their “phenomena.” The setting of the problem for the future was in somewhat different terms. In her Messages to the American theosophists (in 1890 and 1891), H.P.B. wrote:

Let us look forward, not backward. . . . And first a word of warning. As preparation for the new cycle proceeds, as the fore-runners of the new race make their appearance on the American continent, the latent psychic and occult powers in man are beginning to germinate and grow. . . . Psychism, with all its allurements and all its dangers, is necessarily developing among you, and you must beware lest the Psychic outruns the Manasic and Spiritual development. . . .

Now what does it mean to be “psychic,” to have “psychic tendencies”? Of necessity, it means a wide variety of things. For a writer it may mean a pen glib in imitation; for another, it may mean the capacity to feel in himself the turbulent transitions suffered by his fellows, and to articulate them. For all, it means a susceptibility to suggestion, although, with some, “susceptibility” may involve a deepened tenderness, a heart more vulnerable to the demands of compassion. The psychic nature, of itself, under abnormal stimulation, may turn shapelessly plastic or rigidly brittle. The one tendency leads to mediumship, the other to insanity.

What, speaking technically, is “a medium”? We have an answer in H.P.B.’s article, “Psychic and Noëtic Action”:

A medium is simply one in whose personal Ego, or terrestrial mind (*psyche*), the percentage of “astral” light so preponderates as to impregnate with it their whole physical constitution. Every organ and cell thereby is attuned, so to speak, and subjected to an enormous and abnormal tension. The mind is ever on the plane of, and quite immersed in, that deceptive light whose *soul* is divine, but whose body—the light waves on the lower planes, infernal; for they are but the black and disfigured reflections of the earth’s memories. The untrained eye of the poor sensitive cannot pierce the dark mist, the dense fog of terrestrial emanations, to see beyond in the radiant field of the eternal truths.

There is more on this subject, but already, perhaps, we have ample food for reflection. Mediumship, then, or the lower pole of psychic development, involves the saturation of its victims with the luminous

fluid of psychic light. This light, the tool of the will, is the arch-deceiver of the will-less medium. And it may augment the power of self-deception in all those who are still too much moved by their feelings to action without deliberation, to judgments without impartiality. Here, for the events of the "normal" world, we have explanation of what people call "mob psychology," of the hypnosis of oratory, of the passion for conformity which is the leading characteristic of the mass societies of the present day.

The laws of psychic development, afford, however, a brighter aspect. In the course of a discussion of mediumship in *Isis Unveiled*, H.P.B. explains why the medium sometimes seems so much more "intelligent" when in trance than in waking life. The reason is that "the intellectual perception of the astral entity is proportionately as much higher than the corporeal intelligence of the medium in its normal state, as the spirit entity is finer than itself." (II, 396.) Psychic development, then, unavoidable in this cycle, means a filtering through of the availability of a higher sort of intelligence on this plane. Hence, we may suppose, the almost preternatural insight of some of the novelists of our time into the intricacies of human nature, their ability to convey nuances of feeling and sensibility. How pedestrian the books of a century ago, compared to the vivid brush with psychic reality encountered in the well-made modern novel! The very currency of the sense of reality is changing, even as we live from day to day. A new spirit is emerging in the works of some of the social scientists—men, for example, like John Collier, and Baker Brownell. Tendentious materialism is at a serious discount, these days. Even dogmatic religion is on the wane.

The exceptions to this new, almost psychically inspired, sense of reality are usually found, we may note, in strongly institutionalized circles. In the stubbornly conservative attitudes of highly institutionalized groups we may recognize symptoms of psychic rigidity. These artifacts of yesterday's zeal and faith hold their lesson for students of cyclic history. They are always present on the scene, marking the hold of past upon present, and present upon future. They serve as brakes to progress, but also as barriers against a premature uprooting of men from their wonted security. These factors operate protectively even as the dead seed-pod harbors the germ until the hour of sudden growth arrives. They are servants of the law, however blindly, functioning in harmony with the great rule set forth in *The Secret Doctrine*:

... outside such initiation . . . for every thinker there will be a "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," mapped out by his intellectual capacity, as clearly and unmistakeably as there is for the progress of any nation or race in its cycle by the law of Karma. Outside of initiation, the ideals of contemporary religious thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic, as well as realistic thinkers, and even free-thinkers, are but the outcome and the natural product of their respective temperaments and periods. The ideals of both are only the necessary results of their temperaments, and the outcome of that phase of intellectual progress to which a nation, in its collectivity, has attained. (1, 326.)

The inauguration of a cycle of intensive development, then, it is plain enough, constitutes a kind of collective "initiation"—an initiation, in the case of advancing psychism, which we have at the hands of Nature herself, through natural infusion of the light of psychic perception and intelligence. How it will go with the race, only occultists can say. The choices of men are withheld from view, and karmic inheritances from the past, both good and bad, have a way of presenting themselves at unlikely moments. We can all see, however, how the *conditions* of choice will alter—how this century, as it progresses, will usher in new categories of decision.

Let a generation pass, and the old canons of "truth" by objective experiment may have given way to more inward relativities. Metaphysics may regain its ancient standing, supported by the shadow of hidden structures in the superphysical world. The day of the proud agnostic, a warrior for truth as it could be seen in his epoch, will be forgotten with the birth of other intensities of conviction, new formulas of certainty which, in turn, are circumscribed by other, more psychological, horizons.

We shall find ourselves closer, perhaps, to the gleam we seek, yet, proportionate to our common progress, more than ever bound by the past. The day dawns, with or without our assent, and deserts grow torrid with the rising heat even as, in watered lands, seeds are brought to flower. Those who, from whatever intuitions, and under whatever name, have planted seeds will reap the harvest. They are the race of men who, whatever their color or stature, set out in this life with a determination to *know*—and in whom, from knowing, are born understanding, patience, and love.

## HELPING "SUFFERING" HUMANITY

HOW shall the Theosophical student find his duty to "suffering Humanity"? Having been ourselves helped by Theosophy, which satisfied our very souls, it is natural to feel an eager desire to help others find Theosophy, also; yet subsequently the temptation arises "to do, to do," with too little thought.

Presenting our families and friends with assertive, unassimilated quotations or ideas from Theosophic teachings may "help" little, or not at all. Simply to tell others that Theosophy will "solve all problems" is an argument, not a demonstration. Further, there is a definite distinction between recognition or acceptance of an idea and the actual knowledge of its verity. Our usual approach, with the desire to get everything accomplished in a hurry, leads us to profuse generalizations and steam-roller methods, but falls far short in results of what we naïvely hope for. Have we realized that Theosophy is not something we can "give," or which another can receive? It is rather the material out of which we can build our own perceptions of spiritual beinghood, and each one must be his own architect and artisan. Each one must construct for himself the temple of wisdom in which he is to dwell; the conditions under which such construction best proceeds must be an inner discovery.

So strong, however, has been our conditioning in the idea of the inherent ignorance and weakness of man, which makes him incapable of seeking and finding his own truth, that we are apt to succumb to the ever-present temptation to become personal guides and oracles. One of the most practical means of "helping" our fellowmen, therefore, is often by holding our counsel. The constant proffering of advice may dry up the wellsprings of self-initiative and the results of the "missionary" type of persuasiveness are plain for all to see, sometimes even confusing whatever understanding may have previously existed.

Something in the human being, however, makes him instinctively reject the *external* invasion of ideas—and this is fortunate. May it not be an intuitive, though little understood, perception that real knowledge must come from within? When the individual does capitulate to the external pressure of ideas, without philosophical evaluation, he

in one sense obliterates himself, for he cuts off the originating force of his existence as a thinking, choosing being—the spiritual consciousness which supplies the impetus for growth.

Mr. Crosbie said, "Theosophy is for those who want it and none others." It takes us a long time to grasp the significance and real meaning of this truism, for we experience periodic surges of determination to see that others lead a "theosophic" life. Possibly, only when the individual perceives the theosophical philosophy to be for purposes of *self-study* and *self-evaluation*, may he be initiated into the mysteries of "helping humanity."

Helpers of humanity are not born—they become. We are not called upon to map out the course of evolution for others, any more than to become solely interested in our own. The needs of each one are different, and seldom, probably, what we think them. Assimilation and understanding of our own daily experiences are the constant prerequisites to growth in the understanding of how we can best assist others. Neither "learning by observation" from on high, nor gazing at the weaknesses of others in a sort of fascinated disdain, will suffice.

The Three Objects of H. P. Blavatsky's Theosophical Movement do not speak of a need for "missionaries." The theosophical books say not one word about showing others *how* to evolve and get rid of their delusions, while very specific suggestions are made as to how *we* may, through self-discovery, get rid of our own. The real key to helping humanity, then, must lie in the phrase, "A profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood." Our realization, too often, is not profound at all, but shallow and faulty. Brotherhood means the affirmation of the Spiritual Unity of all beings, and our own obligation to the ideal primarily calls for simple presentations of principles which will encourage others to comprehend the philosophical and practical meaning of that primary Unity.

Becoming a real "helper of humanity" demands, moreover, the discovery that the causes of ignorance do not stem from any circumstance or condition whatsoever—material or psychological. Both ignorance and wisdom are the progeny of *ideas held*. Problems are not solved by specific courses of action, but by attitudes of mind, and we need that large-heartedness which is able to see more in a man than appears externally. This determination alone leads to "assuming the position of the Perceiver."

If the Theosophist can do no more than hold a line of expanding ideation in his own mind, if he can do no more than trust in his own divine nature, if he can do no more than struggle to eradicate his own faults and failings, he is doing much to help his brother man. For in so doing *he* keeps Theosophy alive in the world and gives impetus to the work of the Theosophical Movement. It is no small thing to preserve within oneself a lifeline of philosophical ideation, a lifeline without which the stream of conditioned existence cannot be crossed.

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#### THEOSOPHICAL OBJECTIVES

Our duty is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. To oppose and counteract—after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature—bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all, whether as religious sectarianism or as belief in miracles or anything supernatural. What we have to do is to seek to obtain *knowledge* of all the laws of nature, and to diffuse it. To encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people, the so-called Occult Sciences, *based on the true knowledge of nature*, instead of, as at present, on *superstitious beliefs based on blind faith and authority*. Popular folklore and traditions, however fanciful at times, when sifted may lead to the discovery of long-lost, important secrets of nature. The Society, therefore, aims at pursuing this line of inquiry, in the hope of widening the field of scientific and philosophical observation.

We should aim at creating *free* men and women, free intellectually, free morally, unprejudiced in all respects, and above all things, *unselfish*. All good and evil things in humanity have their roots in human character and this character is, and has been, *conditioned* by the endless chain of cause and effect. But this conditioning applies to the future as well as to the present and the past. Selfishness, indifference, and brutality can never be the normal state of the race—to believe so would be to despair of humanity—and that no Theosophist can do. Progress can be attained, and only attained, by the development of the nobler qualities.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

# THE COMING OF DEATH

## WHEN DEATH COMES

**T**HE little old lady on the second floor refused her nurses and only wanted me to sit with her that afternoon, to talk with her and hold her hand. In her clear soft voice she started:

"Tell me, do you know what death is like? I was a Catholic, once, and now I'm old and tired, I can't think what they say is real. I wish I had something else to think death is. Don't you know?"

So I said, speaking slowly, not to weary her, "Well, I've thought much about it for a long time, and what I now think is that death is sleep. I've never been afraid of going to sleep any night of my life, because I'm going to get rested. And I always am rested in the morning, and grateful for it. Besides, I always know what I have to do when morning comes, though I was too tired the night before to think anything about it. Sometimes, too, in the morning, I have the memory of being where there is light and peace and happiness: it makes my heart sing all the day. If hard things come, they do not reach below the calm place I remember, and when lovely things come my way, I somehow think they belonged to me before—while I slept."

"Oh, tell me more!" the gentle voice said eagerly, as she squeezed my fingers. "This is what I've waited to hear all my life."

"You see," I went on, "I'm all alone when I sleep, but I do not feel alone. I'm free. I'm free of cares, I'm free of pains, I'm free of people who would constrain me to do this I wish not to do, and hinder me from moving on to the spaces where my feet lead me. I am not hurried, I am not delayed; somehow I am filled with the peace of clear beauty and fitness and belonging. For it seems as if I may be in company I do not see, because they are myself."

"This is the way I think it is when death comes; only, when that happens, I shall not come back to my body in the morning, nor think what I would have to do. So, this would be for many, very many mornings. Then, I shall come back—as seeds of autumn sprout in the ground in the spring time—into a fresh baby body of earth, opening my eyes perhaps on a beloved face I knew once long ago."

Just a whisper. . . . "Yes . . . now . . . I know." . . .

The old eyes opened with a light in them, making her smile radiant. Then they closed, her fingers relaxing in mine.

So death came. But the little old lady was young again before my eyes, and peace was on her countenance.

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#### WHEN DEATH COMES

A LITTLE figure, rushing at me as I knelt beside the border plants I was thinning, nearly bowled me over, but the child threw her tense arms about me, her cheek to mine, whispering,

"Auntie Lal, it's Jimmie's baby sister—she is dead! Jimmie wanted me to see her, and I did—all in a dark room, with candles, and very sweet flowers—white as she was—so still and white. I could not bear to see her so. And I wanted to find you. Tell me, *why* did she die? And where is she?"

"Help me, dear, to separate these plants as you did yesterday, and we'll talk while we work." So, as we worked with the roots in the brown soil, I began, "You know, sometimes even one of these sturdy plants fails to send its roots into the good earth. Maybe a cut-worm finds it, and then, it withers away. Like that, disease found the little body of Jimmie's sister, and her body withered away. You know that the baby who smiled and crowed at you was not there in that quiet form. But, where indeed is she, the being who spoke to you in her baby language?"

"From oldest times, men have wondered about just that, and still they do. Perhaps we may know, inside, about these things! We have all been born, and died, many times, great sages and many poets say.

"I am wondering—when this babe was born, did you wonder where she came from, as now you wonder where is she gone?"

"No; I didn't, Auntie Lal. She was so wonderful—to know how to cry and how to eat, I only thought, she is so tiny to be *here*."

"But, maybe, if you had thought of the wonder of how she knew enough to get here, you would say to yourself—well, what would you say?"

"Why, I think I'd say—if she knew how to get here from that Otherwhere, she must know how to get back there, to her own place."

"And wouldn't you think, because it is that being's own place, we can't know very well what and where her place is? Couldn't we think,

too, that each and every one must have its own place, when death comes?"

"Auntie Lal, it is beautiful to think so."

"Well, do you know where you go every night when you sleep? Do you know where you come from every morning when you wake? Think of that, little girl. Very wise men think of that."

Now, the child's eyes were clear and untroubled, and our plants were safely cared for, ready to grow more freely in soil and air and light.

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### WHEN DEATH DID NOT COME

I WAS very ill. The fever had gone beyond the danger point, and I knew—without knowing, because no one in the sick room was talking and I had no sense of movement there—that they felt it would not be long before I left them. Half awake, then, I went to sleep, and soon, stumbling through the darkness of a long corridor, I saw a great ray of light shining through a door ajar. I quickened my step, for no longer was I sick and weary, and I knew that blessed things were waiting beyond that door.

I reached the door ajar. I was just lifting my foot to the threshold, when a strong hand pushed, almost violently, against my chest, and a voice spoke: "Go back. You have work to do. Your children need you—and only you can fill that need."

Straightway, I turned, never asking who thus spoke to me. Back I went unfaltering down the dark corridor, now growing lighter, and then I woke. Another voice than the one heard in my dream was saying, "She will live."

So, death did *not* come! And after a long convalescence, I went back to the familiar routine of daily tasks—the same, yet not the same. For me, henceforth, death could hold no terrors, for I knew that sometimes even its hand can be stayed by the simple will to live, when what I call the real self sees our own life is not ours alone.

If I live to be very old, there may still be some need for me to live, and when no longer does such a need exist, it will be as if a ripe leaf drops to the ground, so far as my out-worn body is concerned. But, then, I shall not be stayed by any voice, as I pass over the threshold into that light which I have never forgotten.

And then? . . . . I have never been one to hold, since I once came back into the same body in this life, that we can not come back to life here in other bodies. I think we come to think and work and love, again and again, growing toward some great end—that end not just our own. And I have come to find that myriads besides myself have thought these very things down through all the centuries. There is nobility and truth in this for me.

Strangely, I know I shall be alone when gone from here, and yet—not lonely. I think there is a world of other beings, who are myself. Perhaps, they spoke that time when I was lost, and turned me back. They were not other than myself, else I would have questioned. I had no question, then or now, for in myself is that which knows, that answers, that finds the sure way back again to earth. I think I shall find again those others who are myself—after a while—after a long while.

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#### THE FEARLESS ETERNAL

This is to be understood by the heart: there is no separateness at all. He goes from death to death who beholds separateness. For only where there is separation may one see another, may one taste another, may one speak to another, may one hear another, may one think of another, may one touch another, may one know another.

But the one Seer is undivided, like pure water. This, O king, is the world of the Eternal. This is the highest path. This is the highest treasure. This is the highest world. This is the highest bliss. All beings live on the fragments of this bliss. When all desires that dwell in his heart are let go, the mortal becomes immortal, and reaches the Eternal. When all the knots of his heart are untied here, the mortal becomes immortal. So far is the teaching. . . .

This immeasurable and unchanging Being is to be beheld as the One. The stainless Soul is higher than the heavens, mighty and sure. It is incomprehensible, for it cannot be comprehended; it is imperishable, for it passes not away; nought adheres to it, for it is free; the Soul is not bound, fears not, suffers not. This mighty Soul unborn grows not old, nor dies, for the Soul is immortal and fearless. The Soul is the fearless Eternal. He grows one with the Eternal, the fearless Eternal, who knows this.

—*The Upanishads*

## DEVACHAN

A CORRESPONDENT writes that there seems to be some confusion or contradiction in theosophical literature and among theosophical writers in respect to the length of time a person stays in Devachan, and cites that statement by Mr. Sinnett that the number of years is 1500, while I am quoted as giving a shorter time. Two things should be always remembered. First, that Mr. Sinnett in writing on Devachan in *Esoteric Buddhism* was repeating his own understanding of what Mme. Blavatsky's teachers had communicated through her to him—a copy of each letter being kept and now accessible, and he might very easily make an error in a subject with which he was not at all familiar; second, that only the Adepts who gave out the information could possibly know the exact number of years for which any course of life would compel one to remain in the Devachanic state; and as those Adepts have spoken in other places on this subject, the views of Mr. Sinnett must be read in connection with those superior utterances.

There is in reality no confusion save in the way different students have taken the theory, and always the mistakes that have arisen flow from hastiness as well as in inaccuracy in dealing with the matter as a theory which involves a knowledge of the laws of mental action.

In *Key to Theosophy*, p. 143, 158, H.P.B. says, "The stay in Devachan depends on the degree of spirituality and the merit or demerit of the last incarnation. The *average* time is from 1000 to 1500 years." . . . "Whether that interval lasts one year or a million."

Here the average time means "the time for the average person who has any devachanic tendencies," for many "average persons" have no such tendencies; and the remark on p. 158 gives a possible difference of 500 years. This is exactly in accord with the theory, because in a matter which depends on the subtle action of mind solely it would be very difficult—and for most of us impossible—to lay down exact figures.

But the Adept K.H., who wrote most of the letters on which Mr. Sinnett's treatment of Devachan was based, wrote other letters, two of which were published in *The Path*, in Vol. 5 in 1890, without signa-

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ture. The authorship of those *Notes on Devachan* is now divulged. They were attributed to "X". He says:

"The 'dream of Devachan' lasts *until Karma* is satisfied in that direction. In Devachan there is a gradual exhaustion of force.

"The stay in Devachan is *proportionate to the unexhausted psychic* impulses originating in earth life. Those whose attractions were preponderatingly material *will be sooner brought back* into rebirth by the force of Tanha."

Very clearly in this, as was always taught, it is stated that the going into Devachan depends upon psychic (which here means spiritual and of the nature of the soul) thoughts of earth life. So he who has not originated many such impulses will have but little basis or force in him to throw his higher principles into the Devachanic state. And the second paragraph of his letter shows that the materialistic thinker, having laid down no spiritual or psychic basis of thought, is "sooner brought back to rebirth by the force of Tanha," which means the pulling or magnetic force of the thirst for life inherent in all beings and fixed in the depths of their essential nature. In such a case the average rule has no application, since the whole effect either way is due to a balancing of forces and is the outcome of action and reaction. And this sort of materialistic thinker might emerge to rebirth out of the Devachanic state in about a month, because we have to allow for the expending of certain psychic impulses generated in childhood before materialism obtained full sway. But as every one varies in his force and in respect to the impulses he may generate, some of this class might stay in the Devachanic state one, five, ten, twenty years, and so on, in accordance with the power of the forces generated in earth life.

For these reasons, and having had H.P.B.'s views ever since 1875 on the subject, I wrote in *Path*, V. 5, 1890, p. 190, "In the first place I have never believed that the period given by Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* of 1500 years for the stay in that state was a fixed fact in nature. It might be fifteen minutes as well as 1500 years. But it is quite likely that for the majority of those who so constantly wish for a release and for an enjoyment of heaven, the period would be more than 1500 years." This contradicts nothing unless Mr. Sinnett shall be shown as saying positively that every man and woman is bound by an arbitrary inflexible rule to stay 1500 years—no more nor less—in the Devachanic state; and this it is quite unlikely he could say, since it

would involve a contradiction of the whole philosophy of man's nature in which he has faith. And what was said in Vol. 5 of *Path* accords as well as with the very ancient teachings thereupon in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and elsewhere.

In everyday life many illustrations can be found of the operation upon living men of the same force which puts disembodied men into Devachan. The artist, poet, musician, and day-dreamer constantly show it. When rapt in melody, composition, color arrangement, and even foolish fancy, they are in a sort of living Devachanic state wherein they often lose consciousness of time and sense impressions. Their stay in that condition depends, as we well know, on the impulses toward it which they have amassed. If they were not subject to the body and its forces they might remain years in their "dream." The same laws, applied to the man divested of a body, will give us exactly the results for Devachan. But no one save a trained mathematical Adept could sum up the forces and give us the total number of years or minutes which might measure Devachan. On the Adepts, therefore, we have to depend for a specific time-statement, and they have declared 1000 to 1500 years to be a good general average.

This will therefore result in giving us what may be known as the general *Cycle of Reincarnation* for the average mass of units in any civilization. By means of this a very good approximation may be made toward forecasting the probable development of national thought, if we work back century by century, or by decades of this century, for fifteen hundred years in history.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

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Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. . . . The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. . . . Only that day dawns to which we are awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star.

—HENRY D. THOREAU

## MESMERISM AND THE HIGHER SELF

RECENTLY a book on the subject of the "Rationale of Mesmerism," having been published in London, written by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, I read in it some astounding statements about the relation of the higher self to Mesmerism. He says that it is the higher self that acts in the case of those mesmerized subjects who show clairvoyance, clairaudience, and the like, of a high order. That is to say, the views expressed amount to the doctrine that pure spirit, which the Higher Self is, can be acted on and affected by the gross physical power of mesmerism. This idea seems to be quite contrary to all that we have read in Theosophical literature on the philosophy of man and his complex nature. For if there is anything clearly stated in that, it is that the higher self cannot be affected in this manner. It is a part of the supreme spirit, and as such cannot be made to go and come at the beck of a mesmerizer.

It is a well known fact that the more gross and physical the operator, the stronger is his influence, and the easier he finds it to plunge his subject into the trance state. Seldom do we find the very delicate, the nervous, or the highly spiritualized able to overcome the senses of another by these means. For when we have thus spiritualized our bodies, the means by which we can affect others and make them do what we wish are such as pertain to a finer plane of matter than the one with which mesmerism deals, and the particular instruments used are of an order that must not be described in these pages, since they are secret in their nature and must not be given out too soon. They can be discovered by those who look the proper way, and have been given out by way of hint many a time in the past decade, but discretion is to be observed. And even these means, fine and subtle as they are, do not act on the higher self, but upon exactly the same parts of our inner nature as those reached by ordinary mesmerism. Not only does the whole of our philosophy sustain the contention that the higher self is not acted on, but we have also the eminent writer H. P. Blavatsky saying that the human spirit—and that is the higher self—cannot be influenced by any man.

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Mesmeric force is purely material, although of a finer sort of materiality than gas. It is secreted by the physical body in conjunction with the astral man within, and has not a particle of spirituality about it further than that spirit is immanent in the whole universe. And when it is brought to bear on the willing or unwilling subject, the portion of the nature of the latter which is waked up, or rather separated from the rest, is the astral man.

Probably the reason why Mr. Sinnett and others make the mistake of confounding this with the higher self is that the utterances of the one entranced seem so far to transcend the limits of ordinary waking consciousness. But this only makes the possible horizon of consciousness wider; it does not prove we are hearing direct from the spirit. The vast powers of memory are well known, and when we add to the worldly estimate of its powers the knowledge of the ancient esoteric schools, we can see that the uncovering of the subconscious memories will give us much that a spiritualist might attribute to a denizen of the summerland. Thus in the famous case of the ignorant servant of the pastor who was in the habit of walking up and down in her hearing and repeating aloud verses from the Latin and the Greek, we know that when she fell sick with fever her constant repetition of those Latin and Greek verses was an act of the under memory which had caught and retained all, though she was, in her usual health too ignorant to say one word in either of those languages. These illustrations can be multiplied a thousand fold from the records of clairvoyants of all sorts and conditions. When the barrier to the action of the subconscious memory is removed, whether by sickness, by training, by processes, or by natural change of the body, all the theretofore unperceived impressions come to the surface.

Clairvoyance and similar phenomena are explicable by the knowledge of the inner man, and, that being so, it is straining a point and degrading a great idea to say the higher self is involved. For the inner astral man has the real organs which partially function through the one we know. The real eye and ear are there. So what happens in mesmeric trance is that the outer eye and ear are paralyzed for the time, and the brain is made to report what is seen and heard by the inner senses.

These, it is well known, are not limited by time or space, and so give to the operator very wonderful things when viewed from the ordinary

level of observation.

And at the same time it is well known to those who have experimented strictly on the lines laid down by the masters of occultism that the sight and hearing and ideation of the mesmerized subject are all deflected and altered by the opinions and thoughts of the operator. And this is especially the case with very sensitive subjects who have gone into the so-called lucid state. They are in a realm of which they know but little, and will give back to him who has put them into that state answers on such subjects as the inner constitution of man and nature which will be enlarged copies of what the operator himself has been thinking on the same subject, if he has thought definitely on them. From the tenor of parts of the book I mentioned, it seems clear that the ideas as to the higher self there expressed emanated from sensitives who have in fact merely enlarged and confirmed the views expressed by the author of that work some years ago in "Transactions of the London Lodge" on the subject of the higher self, as may be seen from reading the latter. A simple subject of the mesmeric influence, no matter how far in advance of other sensitives, is not by any means a *trained seer*, but in the opinion of the esoteric schools is untrained, for training in this means a complete knowledge on the part of the seer of all the forces at work and of all the planes to which his or her consciousness gains entry. Hence one who merely goes into that condition by the force of the mesmeric fluid is a wanderer wholly unfit to guide any one. It is different in the case of the previously trained seer who uses the mesmeric fluid of another simply as an aid toward passing into that state. And the assertion can be made with confidence that there are no seers so trained in the Western world yet. Hence no operator can have the advantage of the services of such, but all investigators are compelled to trust to the reports from the state of trance made by men or women—chiefly women—who never went through the long preliminary training and discipline, not only physically but also mentally, that are absolute prerequisites to seeing correctly with the inner eyes. Of course, I except from this the power to see facts and things that take place near and far. But that is only the use of inner sight and hearing; it is not the use of the inner understanding. But on this subject I should like to say a little more at some future time.

WILLIAM BREHON

## THOUGHTS ON HOMEOPATHY

It has been heard of old time in the world that poison is the remedy for poison.

—*Sanscrit Poem*, 56 B. C.

. . . treatment of suicidal mania—"Give the patient a draught made from the root of mandrake, in a smaller dose than will induce mania."

—HIPPOCRATES

NATURE has an antidote for every poison and a reward for every suffering. However, in the search for the antidote and the reward we are led to consider Life's universal processes. "Hermetic gold," wrote the old alchemists, "is the outflow of the sun-beam, or of light suffused invisibly and magically into the body of the world. Light is sublimated gold, rescued magically by invisible stellar attractions, out of material depths. Gold is thus the deposit of light, which of itself generates. . . . Gold draws inferior natures in the metals, and intensifying and multiplying, converts into itself." (Robertus di Fluctibus.) Gold is thus crystallized sunlight, and all matter is gold in various stages of differentiation or impurity. The word Al-chemy means Sun-chemistry. All Life proceeds from the sun and will eventually return to that source. H. P. Blavatsky said that there were elements yet undiscovered by science as well as substances called elements which are not genuine elements. The knowledge of how ordinary substances may be traced back to their source is Alchemy, but, as we shall see, it is also the science of medicine.

As Nature has an antidote for every poison, so has she a remedy for every illness. Just as there are individuals who, in the infinite ramifications of the personal, lower nature, are far from the state of union and non-separateness which the adept represents, so there are natural medicinal substances, far removed from the seven primeval elements which sprang from crystallized sunlight.

Homeopathy deals with the lower quaternary of man's sevenfold nature. As through devotion and the study of true philosophy the eccentricities of lower mind are to a degree lessened, so the ailments of the body must be affected. How does Homeopathy cure? This is declared to be a mystery by those who write books on the subject. Perhaps

we could say that disease is a state of disharmony between the "fiery lives" (which compose the atoms) of the body, that is, the destroyers and the preservers are unequally balanced. Thus the *polarity* of these electro-magnetic lives would be affected. If a substance (which in a healthy person would produce the ailment) is given to the sufferer in a lesser degree than the actual affliction, harmony will be regained between the destroyers and preservers because the remedy and the malady will be expelled from the body by the now uninhibited vital force. "The *similimum* (curative remedy) releases reactive power strong enough to reestablish harmony, which in turn is capable of sweeping away almost any morbid condition." (Boger.) This process was seen and used by Mesmer in the earlier part of his career:

His fundamental doctrine was that of the Alchemists. He believed that metals, as also woods and plants have all an affinity with, and bear a close relation to, the human organism. Everything in the Universe has developed from one homogeneous primordial substance differentiated into incalculable species of matter, and everything is destined to return thereinto. The secret of healing, he maintained, lies in the knowledge of correspondences and affinities between kindred atoms. Find that metal, wood, stone, or plant that has the most correspondential affinity with the body of the sufferer; and, whether through internal or external use, that particular agent imparting to the patient additional strength to fight disease—(developed generally through the introduction of some foreign element into the constitution)—and to expel it, will lead invariably to his cure. Many and marvellous were such cures effected by Anton Mesmer. ("Black Magic in Science," by H. P. Blavatsky.)

Over one hundred years ago, Dr. Francis Victor Broussais said, "If magnetism were true, medicine would be an absurdity." Magnetism is "true." Homeopathy, since it cures, must change or alter the polarity of the cells of the body, thus re-establishing vital equilibrium. The mesmeric fluid is described as "flowing from the operator and creeping steadily over the whole body of the subject, *changing the polarity of the cells in every part*" ("Mesmerism," by W. Q. Judge). This makes Homeopathy a *physical plane mesmerism*, a method of cure practiced by Mesmer.

What is it in mineral or plant that, when used as medicine, effects a cure in the sick man? It is not the quantity of physical substance, for in Homeopathy the system of potentization seems to increase the heal-

ing power with the minuteness of the dose, rather than decrease it, though, of course, the potency used depends upon the constitution of the patient. In fact, the less of physical substance there is, the more dynamic the medicine seems to become. So minute an amount of the drug may be used to cure, that it almost seems as if it is the *idea* of the drug, rather than the drug itself, that works the magic of healing.

All elements are held in suspension everywhere, yet in Homeopathy we must begin with the physically precipitated substance needed for cure, and then, through potentization, render it adaptable to the organism we wish to treat. William Q. Judge writes:

Because of the oneness of source of all beings and forms of matter, there are transmutations going on all the time; the mineral elements might be called "crystallized intelligence" and in that state be dormant, but in commingling with other elements many possible degrees and kinds of activity are released and find play. The dormant or inactive state might be classed as a kind of "devachan" for that kind of consciousness, and the commingling as a period of "manifestation." In all these comminglings the action of one or more kinds of consciousness upon others imparts to them other trends toward a fuller expression of intelligence through form. Through the commingling of two forms of intelligence a third form from both may be produced; for instance, two parts of Hydrogen to one part of Oxygen—both gases—will, by being fused by the electric spark, produce a third element—Water, entirely unlike the original constituents. This transmutation is continually going on in the evolution of form or embodiments of beings of every grade, and is the result of the Evolutionary impulse given to substance by intelligent beings of every degree. The Universe is embodied Consciousness.

Thus it is the *inner* nature of the plant or mineral that affects the *inner* nature of man; and this inner, intelligent action of carbon as a healing agent is released through potentization. In the crude form of carbon this intelligence is latent, imprisoned, even as the dormant spirit lies hid in the stone until the blow of a workman's pickaxe forces it into objectivity as visible sparks.

How can one know the inner nature of a plant or mineral, know the consciousness or intelligence which is embodied in those forms? There are several kinds of knowledge, the knowledge of the ordinary unlearned man, the knowledge of the mineralogist, of the chemist, and a knowledge of the *essential* nature which is the basis of the physical

form. This latter knowledge, which includes all the others, is gained through the use of a sense which under evolutionary law is beginning to awaken in humanity, the sixth sense—*permeability*. Again, from one of Wm. Q. Judge's discussions:

"Permeability" is the seeing back beyond the appearance of the thing to the nature that caused that appearance. Take a stone, for example: the first thing that strikes you in a stone is its density. For most people one stone is just like another stone. But the mineralogist knows the differences by separation of the particles. Chemistry goes still farther; it gets the different qualities in the stone and shows its constituent parts—the various kinds of elements that make it up. But all these are physical. "Permeability" not only gives all that mineralogy and chemistry give, but discloses the essential nature which is the basis of each physical expression. It determines the nature of the various conscious beings that compose the stone, and there are many such classes.

Or consider a tree, for instance: first the tree is seen with its trunk, branches, leaves and what not; then the tree within the bark, the veins of the tree; then the various arteries through which the sap, the blood of the tree, flows; then the pulsation of the heart of the tree in the root, which causes the circulation of the blood (sap) to flow, and then the nature of the lives that cause the expression of the tree—thus bringing gradually the sense of the *feeling* of the nature of the being, which we call "tree." That is "permeability" carried to its highest point. In its lower degrees it might stop short at any point—one might see only a portion of these qualities.

There is harmony in nature below man. His body is built up from the lower kingdoms, yet he has deranged the normal function of those centers of life in him. Is it too much to say that the homeopathic remedy (fresh from the heart of nature) *re-educates* the lives in the sufferer's diseased organ? "There is real affiliation as well as an occult connection existing between the seven principles in man and the seven classes of minerals under the earth. There are truths connected with the properties of the latter which man may find out by learning the constitution of his own seven-fold nature." ("Teachings of the Master," by Wm. Q. Judge, THEOSOPHY I, 234.)

How can the Law of Nature be defined? In the lower kingdoms it may seem to be the survival of the fittest, physically, but for man there is another kind of survival. Compassion *understands*, and, seek-

ing nothing, but desiring to help, does so. *The Voice of the Silence* says:

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.

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### MICROSCOPIC UNIVERSES

The ray of sunlight entering our apartment, reveals in its passage myriads of tiny beings living their little life and ceasing to be, independent and heedless of whether they are perceived or not by our grosser materiality. Our bodies, as well as those of animals, plants, and stones, are themselves altogether built up of such beings; which, except larger species, no microscope can detect. So far, as regards the purely animal and material portion of man, Science is on its way to discoveries that will go far towards corroborating this theory.

With every day, the identity between the animal and physical man, between the plant and man, and even between the reptile and its nest, the rock, and man—is more and more clearly shown. The physical and chemical constituents of all being found to be identical, chemical science may well say that there is no difference between the matter which composes the ox and that which forms man. But the Occult doctrine is far more explicit. It says:—Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant, and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle—whether you call it organic or inorganic—*is a life*. Every atom and molecule in the Universe is both *life-giving* and *death-giving* to that form, inasmuch as it builds by aggregation universes and the ephemeral vehicles ready to receive the transmigrating soul, and as eternally destroys and changes the *forms* and expels those souls from their temporary abodes.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## · YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

**W**HAT is the source of that inspirational drive towards self-realization and knowledge which some men are able to manifest to a degree far beyond the capacity of the average?

As holds true in regard to many important questions dealing with the nature of man, we feel that there is no *one* answer to this question. For, although the "source" in question seems to be only a higher aspect of the basic impulse or tendency of "becoming" that manifests itself throughout the realms of nature universally, the *inspiration* and *capacity* to manifest this natural urge with conscious force and direction are due to strictly human qualities.

Two interpretations of the key-word, "source," are applicable: "the beginning, or first cause," and "the origin or beginningless tendency from which other causes—relative beginnings—have sprung." For though the basic impulse and tendency of nature (nature meaning the countless monads or intelligences behind form) which periodically seeks fuller consciousness through forms, has never had a *first* beginning, and therefore is *beginningless*, there is a kind of beginning to "that inspirational drive" which becomes possible with the "lighting of *manas*." So, then, the fundamental source of this self-determined effort to learn wisdom springs from the laws governing a three-fold evolutionary process.

But another dimension of the question is then before us. What enables some men to manifest this quality to a degree far beyond the capacity of the average? Or, initially, What enables men to manifest it to any degree? We shall attempt to explain this under two headings. At the outset, however, one clarification should be made: Man, having gained self-consciousness, is motivated and directed by his *Will* and power of choice, as contrasted with impulse and instinct in the lower order of nature. The two factors are: (*a*) a standard of values which enables man to realize the strategic importance of full self-consciousness and knowledge of Self—in short one's relationship to the whole as a potentially perfectible being; and (*b*) one's ability to employ self-mastery by the development of the Will. The man who can adjust his values to that which the soul requires, as contrasted to what he

simply wants or shuns, is in the position to partake of inspiration. That which is either wanted or shunned refers not only to sensation, glory, power, and false security, but to all prejudiced minds involved with the many sorts of "vested interests." True inspiration flourishes only when, "be what he may [regardless of creed or sect] a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought—Godward." The man who partakes of inspiration, who snatches a glimpse of a more perfect relationship with the universe, and momentarily realizes his perfectibility, gladly accepts hardships and personal discomfitures and steels himself to conquer.

Inspiration, in a subtle sense, also *reveals the nature of that which is sought*. A standard of soul-values will become the means by which the vision is gradually realized. Fortunate indeed would be the aspirer who could be *constantly* propelled by Herculean strength, but such is never the case. Self-realization is dependent upon a slow growth of steadfastness. Thus a triad—working-values, inspiration, and will—represents the possible transformation of potential growth into actual growth, an ascending cycle. This recurring inspiration, known to a few, explains the difference in the capacity of the average man and the man of inspiration to manifest soul-effort; the inspired man fully utilizes all the creative forces and powers of nature.

*Some psychologists feel that a certain amount of rationalization may be necessary in assigning motivations for our actions. But would a new set of values perhaps supplant the need for rationalization?*

The tendency to rationalize is popular enough in our civilization, and the question is interesting to investigate for this reason alone. We should consider, too, whether there is a positive or useful side of rationalization.

Rationalization can be defined either as "attributing to one's actions creditable motives," or, "to make conformable one's actions satisfactory to reason." In the first case, we are crediting ourselves with good motives, whether or not this is justified. But in the second case we may be making a conscious effort to find a reason for our actions so that we will better understand ourselves—is not this a positive and useful form of "rationalization"?

The first definition partially explains the position taken by some psychologists who hold that in ordinary, everyday affairs there is neither

the leisure nor the necessity for analyzing all of one's motives. For unimportant matters it presumably does no harm to assign a socially approved but perhaps unwarranted motive, especially if this may make an individual happier and more "self-respecting," or better company for those among whom he lives. Many people, it is also argued, are afflicted with "guilt complexes" and feelings of inadequacy, and this sort of rationalization tends to keep down feelings which otherwise might possibly be exaggerated into neuroses. So the thought must be that we may well do away with morbid introspection over every small action. But how can we determine what are big and small actions?

It is probably generally agreed that the relationship of our past experiences (combined with heredity) forms a pattern which contributes a great deal to the quality of our actions in any given situation. It is, then, the culmination of many actions, both big and small, which determines our thread of action, and which affects the basic conditions of our lives. We may say, in a general sense, that these actions which affect the basic conditions of our lives are the important ones. Therefore, the tendency to rationalize in a self-justifying manner would not necessarily stop with the "small, unimportant" actions, because these are the very actions which are brought together to influence important decisions.

To refer to the last portion of the question: A new set of values could either be a personal moral standard based on opinion or a deeply considered philosophy of life. Standards can become dogmatic or simply serve as an approach or method of evaluation. We may set up a punitive standard—all persons who steal will receive as punishment two years in a penitentiary—but one man may steal food because he is hungry, another to gain power, while yet another may steal because he is insane. Each situation is a "value situation," but all do not have the *same* value. Obviously, there are degrees of value in respect to any situation.

If we interpret a standard, however, as a method of evaluation, or as a philosophy of life, problems can be approached individually with only fundamental principles involved. In accordance with this, a Theosophical standard would involve the three Fundamental Propositions. That is, these propositions would be the test in connection with any problem. Self-justifying rationalization usually takes place when we are primarily concerned about society's immediate judgment, rather than ulti-

mate value. Yet, if such doctrines as Karma and Reincarnation are used as standards, there would be no need for a purely social fear concerning any basic condition of our lives.

*What are the advantages and disadvantages of answering all questions "yes, and no"? Even though this may be philosophically correct, it frequently only annoys people.*

The attitude of "yes, and no" does indeed seem to be a philosophical one, whether or not it should be a policy to answer all questions thus.

Would it not be important, first, to try to determine the object of the questioner in asking? A "yes, and no" answer might be a means of avoiding an explanation too involved and too difficult for the questioner to assimilate at that particular time. Or, it may be felt that the obstacles arising from the annoyance of the questioner at having his question parried with a "yes, and no" is of less importance than the danger of satisfying him completely with a pat answer. Perhaps this is partly why Socrates considered the gadfly so essential. By not closing the questioner's mind to further thought of his own, sometimes new mental horizons are opened up and he is led on to more profound answers than the most correct and complete explanation would afford. This method is similar to the one followed by Buddha when asked by the wandering monk Vacchagotta about the existence of the Ego. When pressed to answer, "the Exalted One maintained silence."

There might be occasions when inquiry into the implications of belief or non-belief are not so important as the acceptance of the idea itself for further consideration. For instance, one may accept the idea of reincarnation as a working basis for living, but still may not wish to assent to "believing in" it.

Actually, if the tendency to provide "yes and no" answers arises from a desire to avoid forming limiting conceptions, and serves instead to deepen one's own perceptions and those of others, this would seem to be an important and vital method of learning. The words in which "answers" are clothed must in any case vary with the circumstances and the individuals involved.

## NOTES ON THE KEY

THEOSOPHISTS often remark that it should be possible to discuss any subject, no matter how controversial, from a Theosophical perspective—even politics. Yet realization of the ideal, in this particular, especially, is remarkably difficult, politics in general appearing to be so deeply enshrouded in factional miasmas that philosophy is an alien language. H.P.B.'s opening sentences in "The Relations of the T. S. to Political Reforms" imply, however, that the Theosophist is obliged to seek understanding of all political positions, be they "Capitalistic," "Socialistic," "Communitistic," "Anarchical," "Democratic," "Monarchical," or even "Totalitarian." For she writes that the aim of the Society is to be "international in the highest sense, in that its members comprise men and women of all races, creeds and forms of thought."

The determination to *avoid* any partisan grouping of Theosophical students under one of these slogans or banners is the same determination, in Theosophical terms, which inspires sympathetic understanding of each—the mantram, "The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect yet belongs to each and all," being double-edged. Some time, it may happen that politics and religion will be regarded as twin incarnations, since in either of these fields we find both the power of worthy ideals and that distorted idealism which supports coercive force, as well as both worthy and unworthy methods utilized for achieving proclaimed ends. Just as there has been an enormous amount of hypocrisy in respect to political pronouncements, so have there been innumerable like instances revealed by attempts to promote sectarian religious interests; and, conversely, if one has studied religious differences with both sympathy and profit, why may he not essay the same in respect to "politics"?

The key to an approach for such study might be taken from H.P.B.'s statement that "political action must necessarily vary with the circumstances of the time and with the idiosyncrasies of individuals." While it may often be difficult for the devoted social reformer or political visionary to see in such a Theosophical attitude anything more than indifference to the social and economic needs of exploited peoples, the Theosophist is fully entitled to press the argument that until an atti-

tude of mind is developed which is willing to *synthesize the best of all approaches to political problems*, no cooperative solutions will be possible. Further, fundamental humanitarian sympathy must precede a willingness to appreciate whatever valid points of emphasis are selected by divergent political movements and, in turn, it is only from such synthesis that agreement upon a few basic principles can be reached.

In this respect, the Eastern world has been far ahead of the West—*a fact persuasively attested by Edmond Taylor, author of Richer by Asia*. Taylor discovered that Indians of the most widely divergent political opinions could meet socially, discuss courteously and with profit all sorts of matters, even though their political affiliations led them on other occasions to the most vehement partisanship. The Americans, Taylor reflected, tended strongly to make *personal* vendettas of political differences. Why? The Indian statesmen of Taylor's acquaintance were no less serious about their beliefs—perhaps more so, since impersonal detachment freed them from loss of energy through childish name-calling and accusation and helped keep their thinking straight. At the cultural root of this endowment Taylor found the old Vedic scriptures and *The Bhagavad-Gita*. In 1947, a time of great stress and trial for India, Taylor wrote:

Today millions of Hindus are turning to the *Bhagavad Gita* to seek inspiration for a life of effort, struggle, and even conflict. Like the scripture's legendary hero, Arjuna, they are asking the gods how they can reconcile the modern idealism of combat in the worldly arena with the ascetic values of the Vedic sages, and the gods are replying to them—as, according to the text, they appear to have replied to Arjuna—that the reconciliation lies not in the rejection of worldly participation but in the renunciation of selfish gains, not in the avoidance of struggle, not in the refusal of combat, but in refusing to hate the adversary one opposes. For many Indians political action and social reform have become a personal discipline of the spirit, a kind of social yoga, as well as a patriotic duty.

Taylor continues with a remarkable statement of the dynamics which obviously must implement full realization of the First Object of the Theosophical Movement:

As I found for myself in Asia, the study of the causes of man's disunity becomes an adventure of the mind and a discipline of self-knowledge when it is used to discover the roots of disunity in ourselves, to lay bare the resistances, the hesitations, and the contradic-

tions hidden beneath our own verbalizations of the ideal of human unity.

Such discoveries are sometimes painful but they have a peculiar liberating effect and tend to make the discoverer feel at peace with the earth upon which he walks and with the other living creatures who walk with him, to feel that this planet upon which he dwells is his home, the home of man, and that he himself is at last a member of the tribe of man. This feeling is, of course, a purely personal acquisition, yet it is a useful feeling to have because if we have it strongly enough we may find the strength to solve the problems of realizing one world, while if we try to solve them without it, the result is very likely to be no world at all.

Few Westerners are able to see that this attitude of mind, far from being impractical, is the *only* practical way for advancing the hope of political accord. This is *philosophical* politics rather than *religious* politics; the philosopher seeks the impartial truth, while the typical authoritarian religionist, bound forever to his conviction of personal superiority, fanatically attacks or defends without devotion to the principles of reason. The same holds true with many Western programs of social reform, alike suffering from the cultural Karma of a "personal God" type of authority. H.P.B. writes:

In most of the panaceas there is no really guiding principle, and there is certainly no one principle which connects them all. Valuable time and energy are thus wasted; for men, instead of cooperating, strive one against the other, often, it is to be feared, for the sake of fame and reward rather than for the great cause which they profess to have at heart, and which should be supreme in their lives.

The lesson of the new India is a profound one in many respects, for both the career and assassination of Mohandas Gandhi illustrated graphically the two polar opposites of orientation present in political movements. It was the philosophic heritage of a great past which enabled so many millions of Hindus to become *understanding* followers of Gandhi, true appreciators of the fact that political action and social reform must become "a personal discipline of the spirit"—a kind of social yoga. Gandhi's assassination, on the other hand, was the result of religious fanaticism. Here, as if pictured on a screen for all the world to see, was the history of all "politics" since the beginning of time. In every country, *both* philosophical men of vision and religious fanatics have contributed to the course of history, nor can we say that

any one of the usual political designations has a monopoly on either quality.

Even with those who believed or still believe in some form of Fascism, there may be some slight ground for finding a bond of sympathy. The chaotic and undisciplined behavior of most societies may easily lead to the belief that man can never find his strength unless he is forced to follow the most stringent of disciplines, the most intense channelling of energies towards the development of perfect order. Plato has often been called a fascist because he frequently emphasized in his *Republic* the necessity for a political view which transcended ordinary personal concerns, and in which duty and obedience to law would prosper.

We must remember, however, that Plato's Athens was an Athens striving for some form of unitary government, some point of stability, while our own age is one of approaching totalitarianisms. This latter fact makes it especially easy, now, to understand the cry of the anarchist, who believes that only freedom from *all* forms of external compulsion can bring to fruition the development of man's highest and noblest qualities. The anarchists are concerned, though often with an uncompromising fanaticism of their own, with preventing what H.P.B. calls the "slightest invasion of another's right," and are convinced, with her, that "the whole present system of politics is built on the oblivion of such rights, and the most fierce assertion of national selfishness."

These are the polar extremes, Anarchism and Totalitarianism, yet elements of both are included in the writings of the great Plato, whom H.P.B. called an Initiate. The opening section of *Isis Unveiled* devotes some ten pages to Plato, pointing out, in particular, that:

It is the Platonic philosophy, the most elaborate compend of the abstruse systems of old India, that can alone afford us this middle ground. Although twenty-two and a quarter centuries have elapsed since the death of Plato, the great minds of the world are still occupied with his writings. He was, in the fullest sense of the word, the world's interpreter.

In the Platonic dialogues, reaching their most dramatic climax in the recounting of the trial and death of Socrates, Plato enunciates the great paradox. Socrates refused, again and again, even on the threat of death, to abstain from speaking his mind freely in opposition to the

will of the lawmakers of Athens. Yet he also refused to escape from the punishment decreed, when his friends prepared an avenue of flight. He expressed, at one and the same time, complete independence of the State and complete acceptance of its decrees. He proclaimed, for all Western history to hear, the inviolability of the individual conscience, but at the same time proclaimed an obligation to measure one's duty to law *even though* it be externally imposed. Laws, he held, however, had only to do with actions, never with thought.

We wonder how many have reflected on why it is that Plato, dramatizing a Socrates who would not bend one fraction of an inch towards modifying his opinions to fit the dogmas of his time, could still portray the advantages of a State regulated in a totalitarian fashion? A few Platonists have speculated—correctly, we think, from the Theosophical point of view—that Plato's intent was simply to dramatize the need for discipline in human life, and that the real *summum bonum* is the ordering of vagrant desires and impulses by the stern command of the higher mind. But even if Plato's respect for authority in politics were taken literally, the student must grant that it was not the advocacy of contrary ideas that was to be outlawed, but only the failure to follow the patterns set by the "Philosopher-Kings." The most vicious aspect of totalitarianism, obviously, enters when *conformity of thought* is demanded, and when unpopular opinions are punished and persecuted. Even in the modern "democracies," we sometimes find an unintelligent persecution of minority opinions which rivals the thought-control programs of the most fanatical totalitarian states. In fact, there is a special kind of horror involved when private citizens can so easily persecute one another, for they thus corrupt their own perspectives and take on themselves a vast load of political Karma. As H.P.B. has elsewhere written, "we never forgive those whom we have wronged."

There can be no doubt of the existence of great values in the democratic experiments. H.P.B. spoke of her love for America "because of its noble freedom," and here we see another aspect of the essential truth embodied in the position taken by the Anarchist. Yet it is a karmic law that unless men become devoted to self-discipline, to a "kind of social yoga," external disciplines of a dangerous and destructive variety will be foisted upon them by the ambitious and power-mad. Freedom, according to the old saying, "must be won anew each day." Freedom is a precious condition, a delicate balance, which cannot

maintain itself unless utilized for the inauguration of action beneficial to others. Otherwise the *kama-manasic* mind is likely to become entrenched in conceptions of privilege and superiority.

All these factors may be seen working behind the century-long struggle between "Capitalism" and "Socialism." The Theosophist will find himself believing with H.P.B. in "Socialism of the highest and noblest sort," but he will conversely believe in the karmic right of individuals to exercise custodianship of wealth. We need the "social-order" vision of Edward Bellamy to the extent that we need a natural and universally acclaimed recognition of worthy leaders; but we must also resist coercive control by systems, parties or groups. No one, moreover, can *appoint* any individual to either a higher or lower position—the "appointment" must come through Karma, and its rightness be indicated by grateful acceptance. If such grateful acceptance is not present, the karmic condition is simply not right, and anyone who assumes power to control social or economic forces at such a time becomes a tyrant, whether he be capitalist or socialist.

The hidden element in Plato's politics is the implication that men may only serve as leaders of their fellows when they have been called upon to so lead, and to serve the cooperative interests of the whole society rather than to wage warfare against an opposition party. Monarchies were overthrown—however much appeal this application of the natural "aristocratic principle of nature" had for the populace—whenever men connived either for the perpetuation of dynasties or their overthrow. Similarly, democracy fails when it becomes but a symbol for partisan conflict. Governments by kings and parties alike are "untheosophical" to the extent that they have to do with manipulative power, the power that the sage shuns. It should be remembered, though, that there is a kernel of philosophic truth in every political idea, and it should be the task of the Theosophist to ferret it out, just as he seeks the "ounce of gold in a ton of rubbish" in the religions and philosophies of the world.

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The individual is the ultimate yardstick; but he cannot develop fully or freely except in an organized society. Nor is any one individual the yardstick. His freedom and opportunities must obviously be limited by the need for guaranteeing freedom from interference to his fellow-individuals.

—JULIAN HUXLEY

## ON THE LOOKOUT

### "MY SIX CONVICTS"

The current showing of the motion picture, *My Six Convicts*, will happily secure an even larger number of readers for Donald Powell Wilson's book of the same title, a last year's Book-of-the-Month selection. At times an astute philosopher as well as a man of humanitarian instincts, Dr. Wilson has certainly "served humanity" in this diary of his experiences as a laboratory psychologist at Fort Leavenworth, for the book is a living argument for further revision in penological attitudes. As part of his research program it was Dr. Wilson's task at Leavenworth to form, from prison personnel, a group capable of giving intelligence tests to the other inmates, thus implementing legislation aimed at securing more psychological assistance for convicts, at a time when the hiring of a full staff was impossible.

### A PHILOSOPHER IN A PRISON

Dr. Wilson's point of view seems basically Theosophical, and particularly in the Buddhist sense. (See *Lookout*, THEOSOPHY 40: 426, for similar attitudes expressed by Wardens Duffy of San Quentin and Scudder of Chino.) The best of the criminologists now seem to be directly concerned with the *Karma* of the criminal; they desire to know as many contributing factors as possible, and are willing to recognize the extent to which many societal practices contribute to destructive behavior.

The prisoners of Leavenworth, Wilson found, were aware of "the cupidity of the law that convicts one man and protects another, and of the immorality of society which, having attached a price to almost everything else in life, has also hung a price on crime." He continues:

It is not reasonable to expect the reformation of small-time criminals while gangsters operate with political and police protection. . . . Regarding prison reform, it is surely obvious that even if the regeneration of a criminal while he is in prison takes place, he is still released upon an unregenerated society whose evils and complaisance helped to misshape him in the first place.

Crime is with us always, on many levels, in many forms. The proportion of the problem it poses is not reflected in the number of crimes

on our books or convictions on our police blotters or prisoners in our penitentiaries. *It is reflected in the attitude of our people toward what crime is. For what a nation comes to agree upon as being the nature of crime is what determines the nature of its criminals.*

#### AID FROM THE WARDEN

A transition from the crude naïveté which characterized the outlook of most prison employees a few decades ago is indicated by a statement quoted by Dr. Wilson from the Leavenworth warden. At first skeptical of recommendations he feared would amount to no more than the "coddling" of criminals, the warden finally came to welcome and respect the opinions of psychologists and sociologists. At a crucial conference which sought means of avoiding a riot among the prisoners, he said:

"A lot of us around this table were brought up in the old school. We were told that the way to handle a criminal was to break his spirit. It was a battle cry. *Break his spirit.* I don't know what the hell's the matter with us that we don't learn. You break a man's spirit and he isn't a man any more. He's a wild animal. The spirit in man is the only thing we've got to work with."

This book will aid the reader to understand why a humanitarian-tending transition in penology has involved much more than replacing "bad" wardens with "good" ones. Dr. Wilson demonstrates, as did Wardens Duffy and Scudder, that the overt manifestation of what we call "crime" is but one facet of social neurosis. As the psychologists and sociologists help prison officials to see that there is often little or no distinction between the attitudes of those outside the walls and those inside, wardens may be able to consider a more compassionate approach to the criminal. Dr. Wilson puts it in this fashion:

#### SUPERFICIAL DISTINCTIONS

The convict thinks very little better of our conscience on the outside than we do of his. Sanitaria, hospitals, doctors' and psychologists' offices, pastors' studies and institutions for the insane are full of maladjusted individuals, but *their* outward manifestations of neurosis have social approval. We have no legislation outlawing them. The manifestations of neuroses in the man who tangles with the law instead of with religion do not have social approval, although the criminal may not wreak any greater misery on any more people through his crimes than does the tyranny of the chronic invalid in your home—

who would find her legs soon enough if a pot of gold lay at the end of a brisk walk.

One is said to be neurotic, the other is said to be criminal.

#### INTERESTING FOOTNOTE

It is not surprising to find that a man as thoughtful as Dr. Wilson should also maintain an open mind on other subjects, and for those interested in "the hitherto unexplained laws of nature" and the "psychical powers latent in man," the author's description of an incident involving a self-trained West Indian "yogi" inmate will be memorable. "Hadad," as this unusual murderer named himself, provided skeptical prison officials with amazing evidence of his para-normal capacities. Boasting that he possessed the mysterious power to suspend epileptic seizures, he guaranteed to assert a psychic influence sufficient to prevent all epileptic manifestations within a large ward for a twelve-hour period—without personally contacting the patients. Hadad came through on schedule, to the complete amazement of the prison doctors and Dr. Wilson! When confined in solitary, moreover, Hadad, feigning suicide, induced a catatonic trance of such depth that he was pronounced dead. Finally, carried to the morgue for an autopsy, Hadad raised himself from a marble slab just as the dissecting surgeon was about to commence, and respectfully demurred. Dr. Wilson's comments betray no trace of scientific arrogance:

#### "THE ANCIENT VICTORY OF MIND"

Hadad's parapsychology can hardly be posed as rare in the annals of medicine and psychosomatics. However, the following phenomena in his case were unusual:

The uninterrupted function of consciousness and memory during his catatonic and cataleptic trances.

His control of the depth and termination of his trance.

His controlled, autonomous dermagraphia in producing the signs of the Zodiac upon his body.

His post-hypnotic therapy with the deteriorated epileptics of the psychopathic ward, who in our knowledge were beyond hope.

We were struck with the incongruity of the fact that here was modern science epitomized in a research hospital with the last word in equipment, and with the best consultants in the country only five telephone minutes away. But no x-ray machine could penetrate, no microscope reveal, no surgery excise, no cosmic ray illuminate, no test tube break down the rationale of a black man in a dungeon

five hundred feet away, quietly working the ancient mysteries of the world outside the body and the senses, quietly reflecting the ancient philosophic victory of mind in the impingement of the unknown and feared upon the known.

All of which will indicate that, among currently popular books, *My Six Convicts* contains some unusually interesting material.

#### CONTINUING INVESTIGATIONS OF HYPNOSIS

Dr. Wilson, by the way, seemed to feel an instinctive distrust of hypnotic means of the sort employed by "Hadad," for he declined to let Hadad experiment with him. But, for many psychologists, interest in hypnotism is still outrunning caution. The Los Angeles *Times* for June 26 reports a three-day hypnosis symposium at U.C.L.A., during which medical and dental graduate students, as well as graduates in psychology and social welfare, were fascinated by accounts of the many methods of hypnosis now employed. The *Times* report emphasizes the fact that it is quite possible for a subject to be hypnotized without anyone noting the fact. According to the *Times*, Dr. Frank A. Pattie, University of Kentucky psychiatrist, believes that—

. . . the hypnotic state can be induced while the subject is standing with his eyes open and with no suggestions about relaxation. The recognition that hypnotism can be produced in the waking state is now widespread.

"In my own work," said the University of Kentucky scientist, "I develop quite active trances in my subjects. They almost never give the appearance of sleeping. They are alert, although lacking spontaneity and initiative."

#### "MORAL" PROTECTION NOT IRONCLAD

Another statement by Dr. Pattie (quoted in the Los Angeles *Herald Express* for June 26) undermines the prevalent notion that "nobody can be forced to do anything while under a hypnotic spell that is contrary to his moral beliefs and training."

"It is sometimes possible," explained Dr. Pattie, "to persuade a hypnotic subject to perform acts foreign to his nature by changing his perception of the situation."

An earlier *Herald Express* story (June 16) on a hypnotic stage performance in England was illustrated with a photograph showing Elizabeth Taylor watching the demonstration. According to the caption,

the American actress "can hardly control her laughter," but for Theosophists hypnotism never seems a laughing matter. One does not need to assume the role of a prophet of doom to warn against the deep-seated dangers of hypnotic practice, nor to hope that many psychologists will finally heed instinctive doubts as to the wisdom of hypnosis, as did Sigmund Freud after but a few personal experiments.

In one sense, we might say that hypnosis, as currently known, is but *half a power*—that is, the utilization of a force which cannot be properly directed to man's benefit until integrated with and directed by an understanding of the higher nature of man—at which time the "power" would undoubtedly assume an entirely different form, becoming therapeutic mesmerism.

#### THE CALLOUSNESS OF STANDARDIZATION

Another questionable violence against man's body and psychic nature, currently endorsed by nearly all physicians, is that of injection. A Los Angeles *Times* report (July 11) recites the tragedy of a seven-year-old Wilmington boy "who died under strange circumstances Wednesday afternoon after receiving a tetanus injection":

The youngster, Bruce Miller of 1516 Ronan St., suffered an "overwhelming reaction" to the antitoxin administered by a Wilmington doctor and within a minute was seized with abdominal cramps.

The boy stopped breathing and was immediately given adrenalin and other circulatory stimulants. He failed to respond, however, and was pronounced dead a short time later.

Dr. Harry Deutsch of the Coroner's office reported that "while death from this cause is infrequent, it is not entirely rare." A bland closing sentence in the *Times* article ought to stir some questioning from physicians who heretofore have been addicted to the use of "preventive injections" for all manner of diseases: "Other medical sources said the attention he [the boy] received *constituted the proper treatment under the circumstances.*" (Italics added.)

#### "THIS WORLD AND THAT"

With the appearance of such books as *Many Mansions*, the growing interest in psychiatric uses of hypnotism, and the increasing publicity afforded scientific experiments in *psi* phenomena, every treatise on psychism which is written from an essentially theosophic perspective can

be held to augment enlightenment. *This World and That*, a work of collaboration by Phoebe D. Payne, a "psychic," and her husband, Dr. L. J. Bendit, a psychiatrist, is certainly philosophical in tone. The authors declare their intentions in the Preface: "We have tried to keep an objective, scientific attitude to the subject. We have tried to avoid didacticism and to leave every question open." And *This World and That* (Faber, London, 1950) is frankly conjectural rather than doctrinaire.

The first two chapters give a basis for evaluating the worth of the psychic practices discussed in the remainder of the book. Discussing the fundamental question, "What is Man?", the authors sum up:

Man is different from the animal in that he is self-conscious. The core of his being, and that which makes him other than merely animal, is his sense of identity. We have a picture of man as a triple being. There is his animal nature: the body and its instinctive urges on one side; the ego and its mental field in the centre; and a mysterious third factor, implicit rather than explicit, drawing him forward into futurity on the other side. This latter we may, for the sake of simplicity, call spirit.

#### WHAT KIND OF IMMORTALITY?

No less fundamental to any investigation of séances and spiritualistic practices is the question, "Do we survive?", to which this answer is given: "It may be that *personal* immortality is indeed a myth. But *individual* immortality is one of the deepest truths of life. For the personality, made up of mental and physical characteristics of a person, belongs to the changing world of time, whereas the individuality consists of those enduring qualities which belong to the spirit of man and of which, as the word itself tells us, the personality or mask-self is only the outer garment."

The following may have been derived from a perusal of Theosophic literature, since phrases used often seem reminiscent of statements of the three fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*:

#### THREE FUNDAMENTALS APPROXIMATED

... the conclusion seems justifiable that man is in essence immortal and eternal. He is spirit, and this spirit, for the purposes beyond our understanding, projects some part of itself into the extended worlds of matter, space and time. It seems unlikely and unreasonable, however, to think that the span between the birth and death of one body

can represent the whole of the space-time experience of spiritual man. Experience may have begun before physical birth and may extend beyond the death of the body.

Further, Nature appears to work according to a cyclic or phasic law. Wherever one looks, vibration—that is, movement between opposite and complementary poles—is the rule. This would mean periodic change from outward-turned action to inward-turned withdrawal, just as he does during life when he sleeps and wakes from one day to the next. . . . If it is true, it does away with any idea of injustice on the part of the Creator, whatever name we give to him: Nature, Natural Law, or God. On the contrary, it brings man under the sway of natural law and of the balancing up of forces and energies, at all levels of creation. It may be that materialism is right, that the universe is a fortuitous thing, that man is simply a body, though a most elaborate one. But somehow this does not, for many people, seem to fit the facts of their own experience. . . . There is no certainty about such things except that which the individual develops from within himself.

#### DANGERS OF DISTORTION

The authors approach Spiritualism from an analytical point of view, recognizing the foibles of the psychic world while accepting that world as the source of strange experiences involving mediumship, healing, ghosts, and psychic communications. It is pointed out that the sitter takes with him into the séance room his "unconscious," which can easily play tricks on him and which is often "tapped" by the medium. Recognition of this, the writers hope, will aid those unduly impressed by spiritualistic phenomena to retain their objectivity.

*This World and That* is in part an exposé of mediums and their methods of work, not only through a rationale which minimizes any sensationalism, but also by revealing the close proximity of abnormalities and mental illnesses—dangers inherent in that deliberate loosening of physical consciousness which the medium strives for. A clear distinction is drawn at the beginning of the book, and reiterated throughout, between positive and negative psychism:

#### PASSIVITY

Anything which tends to diminish the conscious control of the ego is negative or regressive, while anything which helps it to widen the field under its control is positive or teleological. Where psychic perceptivity is concerned, anything which tends to re-open the psychic field otherwise than under direct control, is negative, whereas con-

scious and deliberate addition to the area which is now largely limited to the physical world, is positive.

The psychologist, therefore, as he is concerned with the mental health of people, must of necessity look upon negative methods as unwise, to say the least of it. Positive methods, however, are aimed at precisely the same thing as sound psychological training, or the Raja Yoga of India and the equivalent in all other religions; that is, at increased conscious perception with increased self-direction, aiming at a spiritual goal.

Possibly the strongest criticism we would make of *This World and That* would be of the writers' implicit conviction that the genuine *individuality* can often establish communication with the living by way of psychics and mediums. For this is precisely what feeds the fires of curiosity, offers false hope to persons of emotional temperament—and, in short, keeps Spiritualism in business.

#### GOOD CRITICAL JUDGMENT

Yet an admonition given so often by H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge also occurs—the moral admonition, which should always be regarded as basic:

I have learned something of both the strength and the limitations of *psi*. It is a source of information, and hence of *knowledge*, but it does not, in itself, bring *wisdom*. To be wise requires a deeper understanding than comes through psychism alone—and, for that matter, from any other avenue through which knowledge is acquired. It needs something which comes from the heart and neither from the head, with its intellect, nor from the "solar plexus," the seat of much negative psychism and much unco-ordinated emotionalism.

There are many people frequenting public circles and smaller séances, and in course of time they can find themselves in difficulties and may get into deep waters, because they do not realize what is happening to them. This type of person is in need of psychological help because it does not occur to him to stop negative psychic practices, even if those practices are very simple and only consist of attendance at a circle. Failing that, they may go from bad to worse, gradually becoming more confused and anxious because their own thoughts and feelings have become confused with others by psychic contamination.

As a person grows in spiritual insight, as a result of intensive self-training, his perceptive field naturally widens and enlarges. He finds himself becoming psychic in the true sense, but his interest is in the spiritual value more than the psychic vision, useful though the psy-

chic aspect may be to him. . . . the inevitable result of the lack of a spiritual touchstone is unreliability, inaccuracy, confusion, and, more often than not, self-inflation. Hence, the person who is ambitious to be a good psychic needs to take stock of himself before trying to embark on any scheme of development. It is well if he looks first and foremost at his true purpose. And, if it is psychism which interests him rather than Life itself, he will do well to leave it alone, and to confine himself to learning to know himself as he is, not to try prematurely to develop capacities which are so easily deceptive.

### THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF MAN

For the psychiatrists attending the recent Eastern States' Health Conference at the New York Academy of Medicine, the words "love" and "brotherhood" suddenly took on very tangible meaning. A motion picture record of the "loneliness-deaths" of thirty-four infants in a South American Foundling home emphasized the continual dependence of human beings upon the kindness and compassion of others. These infants had adequate food, clothing, and the medical attention of competent nurses, but since each nurse in the under-staffed institution had to care for ten babies, no time was left for play or personal affection.

The New York *Times* (April 26) summarizes the tragic story as told by Dr. Rene A. Spitz, maker of the films:

### THE PSYCHIC FUNCTIONS OF MOTHERHOOD

Each infant had the equivalent of one-tenth of a mother, Dr. Spitz reported—and, he added, this was not enough.

The extreme deprivation of emotional experience for the children, which was imposed by circumstances beyond the control of Dr. Spitz, the institution's nurses or others aware of the situation had within three months completely changed the children. Within five months it was impossible to correct the changes.

Dr. Spitz reported that observations made on the infants, who were between three months and three years old, indicated that the lack of emotional experience was subjecting the babies to "stress" as great as any that might be encountered in life. This stress, he emphasized, was just as real as those imposed by malnutrition, infection or injury. It had the same fatal consequences.

These films have been called psychiatric "classics," and there is small wonder that attending social workers and physicians "wept as they watched the babies die because they had everything they wanted or

needed—except a mother.” One may also wonder, however, at the approach to the situation which allowed Dr. Spitz to find the time and money for motion picture records, while funds were not available for additional help for the children. “Scientific objectivity” sometimes seems macabre, though Dr. Spitz undoubtedly hoped to convince psychiatrists throughout the world that similar tragedies are occurring everywhere, probably unnoticed.

#### NO INCARNATION OF MANAS

However strong the implicit arguments for environmental determinism supplied by the tragic story of the foundlings, theosophists may see an even stronger substantiation of the thesis that man, unlike the animals, cannot come to full mental and psychic birth without the aid of others. The awakening of a child's capacities has often been likened to the “lighting up of Manas”—the passing of mind from higher beings to those who are not yet able to establish and mold their own conscious connections with the world. Dr. Spitz describes the appearance of one fifteen-month-old child as that of “an idiot driven insane by loneliness,” observing that “at her death, her face was the Greek mask of tragedy.”

#### NOT ONLY FOUNDLINGS “DIE”

How many, we wonder, now inhabiting the adult world have been driven at least partially insane by a loneliness of mind, or by a deprivation of contact with other human beings on the higher planes of aspiration? Just as the babies were not comforted nor even substantially aided by adequate food, clothing, and medical care, so are innumerable members of modern civilization left uncompleted, unaspiring, in our antiseptic but callous culture. The most perfect external environment in physical terms, in other words, will not begin to touch the needs of the soul.

Consistent readers of *Lookout* may wish to correlate Dr. Spitz' discoveries with conclusions reported in *THEOSOPHY* for May, 1940, drawn by workers of the Child Welfare Research Station at the University of Iowa. The psychiatrists of that institution claim to have proved that *there are no feeble-minded* new-born babies. One of the psychiatrists exclaimed, “We are still looking for our first feeble-minded child whose environment was good from infancy onward.”

Babies born to feeble-minded parents, when placed in homes among compassionate and intelligent people, invariably achieved high I.Q.'s.

There is, of course, a certain karmic affiliation between each infant and the foster-home to which he is drawn, but all such discoveries add emphasis to H. P. Blavatsky's statement in *The Key to Theosophy*, that "true evolution teaches us that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man."

### NEUROSIS

A conference of twenty-four psychologists, meeting under the auspices of the New York Academy of Sciences, recently brought a new psychiatric perspective into the limelight. *The Ladies Home Journal* for August reports:

There's a new theory of the cause of mental diseases which to this ignorant layman sounds like sense. It puts the blame for the patient's condition on himself, instead of regarding him as a victim of circumstances over which he has no control.

The neurotic's history, these psychologists say, is largely one of evasion and deception. He has learned to get around the conflicts between his desires and the social consequences of gratifying them, by duplicity and trickery. He must be made to see his neurosis as a product of real but well-protected immaturities. He must see that he has to grow up instead of having his fears and scruples scaled down. Instead of having the psychiatrist listen to his long defensive, evasive mulling over his own frustrations, the patient now must assume responsibility for his own recovery. That this requires considerable initiative on his part should be all to the good.

### FIRM LINE

John J. O' Neill's report of the same conference (in the *Herald Tribune*, for March 16) is much more specific in outlining the new point of view. According to O' Neill, leading representatives of clinical psychology "condemned the present treatment given to neurotic individuals by psychiatrists as a therapy designed to please the neurotics instead of being in harmony with the facts aimed at producing effective remedial results."

O' Neill quotes Dr. O. H. Mowrer, professor of clinical psychology at the University of Illinois, who seemed to be "writing the majority opinion" for the conference as a whole:

### CAN'T BE DONE WITH MIRRORS

"It is often said that the neurotically disturbed persons should not be held responsible for their troubles. 'It is not their fault,' we are constantly told." "It is my belief," said Professor Mowrer, "that, on the contrary, radical psychotherapy is possible only when the patient comes to accept a very large share of the responsibilities for both the causation and the correction of his neurosis.

"He must come to see his troubles as largely a product of what he himself has done and is doing rather than as a consequence of what has been done to him. He must come to see himself as needing to grow up instead of having his fears and moral scruples scaled down. As long as the immaturities exist the individual will continue to be insecure and afraid."

### TWO PSYCHOLOGIES

H. P. Blavatsky's article "Psychology" first published in *Lucifer* for October, 1896, furnishes interesting correlative reading, indicating, by way of contrast, that modern psychology is now moving on an ascending arc of perceptivity. H.P.B. remarks that Theosophists were first inclined to regard modern psychology as a natural ally, but that the subsequent unbalanced leaning towards materialistic hypotheses as to the origin and nature of man made "psychology" a misnomer:

It is as misleading a term, as taught at present, as that of the Antarctic Pole with its ever arid and barren frigid zone, called southern merely from geographical considerations. The modern psychologist, dealing as he does only with the superficial brain-consciousness, is in truth more hopelessly materialistic than all-denying materialism itself.

A consequence of this sort of "psychology" has been to believe that human beings are the products of "conditioning." Such beliefs led to an emphasis upon the irresponsibility of the individual—his character being conceded to be the result of the chance impingement of environmental or hereditary factors. Today, however, the word "soul," in the basically Theosophic sense, is coming back into use among the leading psychologists, and views such as those of Professor Mowrer recognize and re-affirm individual integrity and responsibility.

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