

# Theosophy Sampler

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## **The Motto of the Theosophical Society**

Adopted by H.P.B.

Satyân nâsti paro dharmah

There is no religion higher than Truth

## **The Objectives of the Theosophical Society**

The first objective of The Theosophical Society is to demonstrate that the oneness of all life is a fact in nature and to form a nucleus of a universal brotherhood. This, according to Blavatsky, is because:

(a) All men have spiritually and physically the same origin, which is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy. (b) As mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one – infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature – nothing, therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. This is as certain and as obvious as that a stone thrown into a pond will, sooner or later, set in motion every single drop of water therein. – *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 41

To help promote better understanding among all people and recognition of the essential unity of life, another objective encourages the study of ancient and modern religions, sciences, and philosophies:

it is only by studying the various great religions and philosophies of humanity, by comparing them dispassionately and with an unbiased mind, that men can hope to arrive at the truth. It is especially by finding out and noting their various points of agreement that we may achieve this result. For no sooner do we arrive – either by study, or by being taught by someone who knows – at their inner meaning, than we find, almost in every case, that it expresses some great truth in Nature. – *Ibid.*, p. 59

Further objectives encourage investigating and sharing these natural truths – the spiritual, psychological, and material laws and powers found in the cosmos and in the human being. Each person, being a portion of the whole, contains, latent or expressed, all the qualities and attributes of the cosmos. Thus, to know oneself fully is to understand the universe and everything in it. The Society, however, cautions against deliberately seeking psychic powers, by-products of evolution which will in time arise naturally. Cultivating such powers distracts from the deeper goals of human growth and can lead to imbalances in development and consciousness.

The objectives of The Theosophical Society as stated in its constitution are:

- to diffuse among men a knowledge of the laws inherent in the universe;
- to promulgate the knowledge of the essential unity of all that is, and to demonstrate that this unity is fundamental in nature;
- to form an active brotherhood among men;
- to study ancient and modern religion, science, and philosophy;
- to investigate the powers innate in man.

## The Seal of the Theosophical Society



The seal of The Theosophical Society was adapted from H. P. Blavatsky's personal seal, used by her before the Society was founded in 1875. The symbols it contains are so ancient that nobody knows when they were first used to express universal ideas. They far antedate any political or other modern applications, and have nothing to do with any social or political movements. They are in fact part of the universal mystery-language that can convey wordlessly to the mind sacred truths of nature.



The Serpent swallowing its tail: A very ancient symbol depicting eternity and the continuity of cyclic time. Like the biblical serpent of Paradise lost understood mystically, it represents wisdom and, because of its ability to shed its skin, regeneration and rebirth. As a circular symbol it signifies to the Hindus the outbreathing and inbreathing of Brahmâ ("expander"), the cosmic creator: when Brahmâ breathes out, worlds come into being; when he breathes in, all is reabsorbed into the divine essence. The descending arc of the serpent's body signifies worlds descending into matter; the ascending arc, their evolution toward spirit. This spiral circulation is eternal, implying evolution through time. The circle itself represents perfection and the restoration of universal harmony; also the Boundless from which all manifestation springs and to which all will return. The symbol is found also in ancient Egypt, Greece, and West Africa, and among Buddhists and Jains, Gnostics and alchemists.



The Swastika: A Sanskrit word meaning "well-being," "auspicious" – the perennial symbol of good fortune found in the cradle of ancient cultures of India, China, Japan, and the Americas, as well as Greece and Rome (including the early Christians). In Scandinavia it was Thor's hammer and in India Vishnu's discus and the Jaina cross. In Buddhism, it expresses the "wheel of the Law." Symbol of evolution and perpetual motion, the swastika denotes the ever-churning "mill of the gods," in whose center is the soul, while the bent arms suggest the ceaseless turning of the wheels of life throughout universal existence. When we look at photos of faraway spiral galaxies, we are wonderstruck to see that they clearly resemble swastikas in their vortical motion.



The Interlaced Triangles: Known in the Occident as King Solomon's seal or star, it was called in India the seal of Vishnu. The interlaced triangles signify the bipolarity in nature – spirit and matter, or male and female. The apex of the white triangle represents the divine monad;

the apex of the dark triangle, the manifested worlds. The upward triangle suggests spirit, consciousness, and concealed wisdom, which are mirrored in the downward-pointing triangle representing matter, receptive space, manifestation, or wisdom revealed. The sides of the dark triangle may stand for form, color, and substance; the three gunas or fundamental qualities; and the creative, preserving, and destructive/regenerative forces of the Hindu triad, Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Śiva.

Together the triangles represent the manifested universe evolved from the central point within the serpent-circle of time and space. They also form the hexagon of six principles, cosmic and human, emanating from and synthesized by the central point, the seventh and highest self of any evolving being. Thus they express the sevenfold structure of the universe. The central cross is the inner person, touching all things from the six sides through the six triangles. The six points of the star reach outward toward the serpent of eternity, growing and evolving through time.



The Ansat Cross, Ankh, or Tau: A sacred symbol particularly associated with ancient Egypt, it signifies life, regeneration, and the descent of spirit from inner realms into the worlds of substance. It can denote a universe in embryo, the circle representing the cosmic or spiritual germ or egg hovering over the cross of matter which has issued from it; or limitless, uncreated space. Astronomically it is the sign of Venus, Earth's sister-planet and guardian of humanity. Applied to the human race, it may represent the evolution of mankind into the bipolarity of male and female, as well as the initiate who holds the key to the mysteries when united with his own spiritual intelligence.

These spiritual symbols forming the seal of The Theosophical Society together comprise an entire philosophy of the inner workings of man and universal nature. Taken as a whole, the seal represents the spiritually reborn person, symbolized by the tau/cross in the center, evolving through the six human and cosmic principles and encircled by the serpent of evolution of spirit in and through matter. On the larger scale, it expresses a universe expanding into manifestation from cosmic spirit.

The seal used ... is a replica of the original TS seal, printed in the Society's first Preamble and Bylaws, October 30, 1875.

## Quotes from Theosophical Leaders on Theosophy

That we, the devoted followers of that spirit incarnate of absolute self sacrifice, of philanthropy, divine kindness, as of all the highest virtues attainable on this earth of sorrow, . . . should ever allow the Theosophical Society to represent the embodiment of selfishness, the refuge of the few with no thought in them for the many, is a strange idea, my brothers. – Chohan, *Letter to K.H.*, 1881.

Theosophy is no new candidate for the world's attention, but only the restatement of Principles which have been recognised from the very infancy of mankind. – K.H., *The Mahatma Letters*, pp. 34-35.

The sun of Theosophy must shine for all, not for a part. – M., *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 271.

Theosophy is the shoreless ocean of universal truth, love, and wisdom, reflecting its radiance on earth, while the Theosophical Society is only a visible bubble on that reflection. Theosophy is divine nature, visible and invisible, and its Society human nature trying to ascend to its divine parent. Theosophy, finally is the fixed eternal sun, and its Society the evanescent comet trying to settle in an orbit to become a planet, ever revolving within the attraction of the sun of truth. It was formed to assist in showing to men that such a thing as Theosophy exists, and to help them to ascend towards it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities. – H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 57.

Theosophy is that ocean of knowledge which spreads from shore to shore of the evolution of sentient beings; unfathomable in its deepest part, it gives the greatest minds their fullest scope, yet, shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child. – William Quan Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 1.

Think of theosophy not so much as a body of philosophic or other teaching, but as the highest law of conduct, which is the enacted expression of divine love or compassion. – Katherine Tingley, *Theosophy: Path of the Mystic*, p. 3.

We have no dogmas or creeds in the Theosophical Society nor in its work; and thus it is that we have Hindu theosophists, Buddhist theosophists, Christian theosophists, Mohammedan theosophists, and Jewish theosophists, as well as other theosophists who belong to no religion – except to theosophy as the religion of religions. Hence it is our bounden duty to cultivate in our hearts the spirit of true brotherly love towards all, however much they may differ from us in philosophical and religious or scientific opinions; but while we are thus absolutely free as members in our choice of religion and philosophy, we all hold to the primeval prerequisite of a theosophist, which is a belief in universal brotherhood and an adherence to the sublime ethics which theosophy teaches. – Gottfried de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*, p. 211.

{As a man} learns to understand and to be able to assist others, so in turn does this strengthen his knowledge of his own inner being and make him more truly a worker for the sacred cause of universal brotherhood. – Arthur L. Conger, *Sunrise*, March 1952.

...view theosophy, literally, as “knowledge of things divine.” If we can consider it in this sense, we will realize that the *essence* of pure religion and philosophy – and of science too when considered as pure “knowledge” which is what the word means – is *theosophia* with a small *t*, that quality of “wisdom” which the greatest Seers of mankind have attained through direct perception of “things as they are.” – James A. Long, *Expanding Horizons*, p. 211.

In its broadest sense, theosophy connotes the stream of inspiration and wisdom that has been, is, and ever will be transmitted by generations of sages – in proportion to the receptivity of an aspirant or people. – Grace F. Knoche, *Sunrise*, April/May 1989.

### **View of the Chohan on the T.S.**

From Margaret Conger, *Combined Chronology*, Theosophical University Press, 1973, p. 39-47

Several good reasons given to K.H. by the Chohan why the T.S. should be a Brotherhood of Humanity.  
for the Simla Eclectic T.S.

The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one, must, – supported by such evidence as we are preparing to give become ultimately triumphant as every other truth. Yet it is absolutely necessary to inculcate it gradually enforcing its theories, unimpeachable facts for those who know, with direct inferences deducted from and corroborated by the evidence furnished by modern exact science. That is why Col H.S.O. who works but to revive Buddhism may be regarded as one who labours in the true path of Theosophy, far more than any other man who chooses as his goal the gratification of his own ardent aspirations for occult knowledge. Buddhism stripped of its superstitions is eternal truth, and he who strives for the latter is striving for Theos-*sophia*, Divine Wisdom, which is a synonym of truth.

For our doctrines to practically react on the so called moral code or the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc., we have to preach and popularise a knowledge of theosophy. It is not the individual and determined purpose of attaining oneself Nirvana (the culmination of all knowledge and absolute wisdom) which is, after all only an exalted and glorious *selfishness*, but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can to benefit by it, which constitutes the true Theosophist.

The intellectual portions of mankind seem to be fast dividing into two classes, the one unconsciously preparing for itself long periods of temporary annihilation or states of non-consciousness owing to the deliberate surrender of their intellect, its imprisonment in the narrow grooves of bigotry and superstition, a process which cannot fail to lead to the utter deformation of the intellectual principle; the other unrestrainedly indulging its animal propensities with the deliberate intention of *submitting* to annihilation pure and simple in cases of failure, to millenniums of degradation after physical dissolution. Those “intellectual classes,” reacting upon the ignorant masses which they attract and which look up to them as noble and fit examples to follow, degrade and morally ruin those they ought to protect and guide. Between degrading superstition and still more degrading brutal materialism the white dove of truth has hardly room where to rest her weary unwelcome foot. . . .

It's time that Theosophy should enter the arena. The sons of Theosophists are more likely to become in their turn Theosophists than anything else. No messenger of truth, no prophet has ever achieved during his life time a complete triumph, not even Buddha; the Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner stone, the foundation of the future religion of humanity. To achieve the proposed object a greater, wiser, and especially a more benevolent intermingling of the high and the low, of the alpha and the omega of society, was determined upon. The white race must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations, to call the poor despised “nigger” brothers. This prospect may not smile to all. He is *no* Theosophist who objects to this principle. . . . [Writing over a century before, the derogatory term above was unfortunately widely used for all peoples of dark descent, including the Author.]

In view of the ever increasing triumph and at the same time misuse of free-thought and *liberty* (the Universal reign of Satan, Eliphas Levi would have called it), how is the combative *natural* instinct of man to be restrained from inflicting hitherto unheard of cruelties and enormities, tyranny, injustice, etc., if not through the soothing influence of a brotherhood and of the practical application of Buddha's esoteric doctrines. For as everyone knows, total emancipation from authority of the one all pervading power or law called God by the Theists – Buddha, Divine Wisdom and Enlightenment or Theosophy by the philosophers of all ages – means also the emancipation from that of human law. Once unfettered [and] delivered from their dead weight of dogmatic interpretations, personal names, anthropomorphic conceptions and salaried priests, the fundamental doctrines of all religions will be proved identical in their esoteric meaning. Osiris, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, will be shown as different means for one and [the] same royal highway to final bliss, *Nirvana*. Mystical christianity, that is to say that christianity which teaches *self* redemption through one's own *seventh* principle – the liberated Para-atma (*Augoeides*) called by the one Christ, by others Buddha, and equivalent to regeneration or rebirth in spirit – will be found just the same truth as the Nirvana of mystical Buddhism. All of us have to get rid of our own Ego, the illusory apparent *self*, to recognise our true self in a transcendental divine life. But if we would not be selfish we must strive to make other people see that truth, to

recognise the reality of that transcendental self, the Buddh, the Christ or God of every preacher. This is why even exoteric Buddhism is the surest path to lead men toward the one esoteric truth. As we find the world now, whether Christian, Mussalman or Pagan, justice is disregarded and honour and mercy both flung to the winds.

In a word, how, once that the main objects of the T.S. are misinterpreted by those who are most willing to serve us *personally*, are we to deal with the rest of mankind, with that curse known as the “struggle for life,” which is the real and most prolific parent of most woes and sorrows and of all the crimes? Why has that struggle become the almost universal scheme of the universe? We answer, because no religion with the exception of Buddhism has hitherto taught a practical contempt for this earthly life, while each of them, always with that one solitary exception, has through its hells and damnations inculcated the greatest dread of death. Therefore do we find that struggle for life raging most fiercely in Christian countries, most prevalent in Europe and America. It weakens in the Pagan lands and is nearly unknown among Buddhist populations. (In China during famine and where the masses are most ignorant of their own or any religion, it was remarked that those mothers who devoured their children belonged to localities where there were the most of Christian missionaries to be found. Where there were none and the Bonzes alone had the field the population died with the utmost indifference.) Teach the people to see that life on this earth even the happiest is but a burden and an illusion, that it is but our own *Karma*, the cause producing the effect, that is our own judge, our Saviour in future lives, and the great struggle for life will soon lose its intensity. There are no penitentiaries in Buddhist lands and crime is nearly unknown among the Buddhist Tibetans. (The above is not addressed to you, and has nought to do with the work of the Simla Eclectic Society. It is meant only as an answer to the erroneous impression in Mr. Hume’s mind of the “Ceylon work” as *no theosophy*.)

The world in general and Christendom especially, left for two thousand years to the regime of a personal God as well as its political and social systems based on that idea, has now proved a failure. If the Theosophists say, we have nothing to do with all this, the lower classes and the inferior races (those of India for instance in the conception of the British) cannot concern us and must manage as they can, what becomes of our fine professions of benevolence, philanthropy, reform, etc. Are these professions a mockery? And if a mockery, can ours be the true path. Shall we devote our selves to teaching a few Europeans fed on the fat of the land, many of them loaded with the gifts of blind fortune, the *rationale* of bell ringing, cup growing, of the spiritual telephone and astral body formation, and leave the teeming millions of the ignorant, of the poor and despised, the lowly and the oppressed, to take care of themselves and of their hereafter the best they know how. Never. Rather perish the Theosophical Society with both its hapless founders than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic and a hall of occultism. That *we*, the devoted followers of that spirit incarnate of absolute self sacrifice, of philanthropy, divine kindness, as of all the highest virtues attainable on this earth of sorrow, the man of men, Gautama Buddha, should ever allow the Theosophical Society to represent the *embodiment of selfishness*, the refuge of the few with no thought in them for the many, is a strange idea, my brothers.

Among the few glimpses obtained by Europeans of Tibet and its mystical hierarchy of “perfect lamas,” there is one which was correctly understood and described. “The incarnations of the Boddhisatwa Padma Pani or Avalo-Kiteswara and of Tsong Kapa, that of Amitabha, relinquish at their death the attainment of Buddhahood – *i.e.* the summum bonum of bliss, and of individual *personal* felicity – that they might be born again and again for the benefit of mankind.” [Rhys Davids] In other words, that they might be again and again subjected to misery, imprisonment in flesh and all the sorrows of life, provided that by such a self sacrifice repeated throughout long and dreary centuries they might become the means of securing salvation and bliss in the hereafter for a handful of men chosen among but one of the many races of mankind. And it is we, the humble disciples of these perfect lamas, who are expected to allow the T.S. to drop its noblest title, that of the Brotherhood of Humanity to become a simple school of psychology? No, no, good brothers, you have been labouring under the mistake too long already. Let us understand each other. He who does not feel competent enough to grasp the noble idea sufficiently to work for it, need not undertake a task too heavy for him. But there is hardly a theosophist in the whole society unable to effectually help it by correcting the erroneous impressions of the outsiders, if not by actually propagating himself the idea. Oh, for the noble and unselfish man to help us *effectually* in India in that divine task. All our knowledge past and present would not be sufficient to repay him. . . . Having explained our views and aspirations I have but a few words more to add.

To be *true*, religion and philosophy must offer the solution of every problem. That the world is in such a bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies, those of the *civilised* races less than any other, have ever possessed the *truth*. The right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems

of the great dual principles – right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism – are as impossible to them now as they were 1881 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were but, –

To these there *must* be somewhere a consistent solution, and if our doctrines will show their competence to offer it, then the world will be the first one to confess *that must* be the true philosophy, the true religion, the true light, which gives *truth* and nothing but the *truth*.

*An abridged version of the view of the Chohan on the T.S. from his own words as given last night. My own letter, the answer to your last will shortly follow.*

## The Original Programme of the Theosophical Society

H. P. Blavatsky, *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 7:145-171

[Words within square brackets, as well as the italicizing of certain words and sentences, in passages quoted from the Chatterji-Gebhard Statement, are H.P.B.'s own, as careful comparison with the text of the Statement will show. Throughout H.P.B.'s Pronouncement, both in the main text of it, and in some of the footnotes, the occurrence of several dots indicates no elision of words, and is apparently meant to point to the beginning of a new thought which is particularly emphasized. – *Compiler* (Boris de Zirkoff)]

{Words within these brackets are H.P.B.'s footnotes in the original.}

In order to leave no room for equivocation, the members of the T.S. have to be reminded of the origin of the Society in 1875. Sent to the U.S. of America in 1873 for the purpose of organizing a group of workers on a psychic plane, two years later the writer received orders from her Master and Teacher to form the nucleus of a regular Society whose objects were broadly stated as follows:

1. Universal Brotherhood;
2. No distinction to be made by the member between races, creeds, or social positions, but every member had to be judged and dealt by on his personal merits;
3. To study the philosophies of the East – those of India chiefly, presenting them gradually to the public in various works that would interpret exoteric religions in the light of esoteric teachings;
4. To oppose materialism and theological dogmatism in every possible way, by demonstrating the existence of occult forces unknown to science, in nature, and the presence of psychic and spiritual powers in man; trying, at the same time to enlarge the views of the Spiritualists by showing them that there are other, many other agencies at work in the production of phenomena besides the “Spirits” of the dead. Superstition had to be exposed and avoided; and occult forces, *beneficent and maleficent* – ever surrounding us and manifesting their presence in various ways – demonstrated to the best of our ability.

Such was the programme in its broad features. The two chief Founders were not told what they had to do, how they had to bring about and quicken the growth of the Society and results desired; nor had they any definite ideas given them concerning its outward organization all this being left entirely with themselves. Thus, as the undersigned had no capacity for such work as the mechanical formation and administration of a Society, the management of the latter was left in the hands of Col. H. S. Olcott, then and there elected by the primitive founders and members – *President for life*. But if the two Founders were not told *what they had to do*, they were distinctly instructed about *what they should never do*, what they had to avoid, and what the Society should never become. Church organizations, Christian and Spiritual sects were shown as the future contrasts to our Society.\* {\*A liberal Christian member of the T.S. having objected to the study of Oriental religions and doubted whether there was room left for any new Society – a letter answering his objections and preference to Christianity was received and the contents copied for him; after which he denied no longer the advisability of such a Society as the proposed Theosophical Association. A few extracts from this early letter will show plainly the nature of the Society as then contemplated, and that we have tried only to follow, and carry out in the best way we could the intentions of the *true* originators of the Society in those days. The pious gentleman having claimed that he was a *theosophist* and had a right of judgment over other people was told . . . “You have no right to such a title. You are only a *philo*-theosophist; as one who has reached to the full comprehension of *the name and nature* of a theosophist will sit in judgment on no man or action. . . . You claim that your religion is the highest and final step toward divine Wisdom on this earth, and that it has introduced into the arteries of the old decaying world new blood and life and verities that had remained unknown to the heathen? If it were so indeed, then your religion would have introduced the highest truths into all the social, civil and international relations of Christendom. Instead of that as anyone can perceive, your social as your private life is not based upon a common moral solidarity but only on constant mutual counteraction and purely mechanical equilibrium of individual powers and interests . . . . If you would be a theosophist you must not do as those around you do who call on a God of Truth and Love and serve the dark Powers of Might, Greed and Luck. We look in the midst of your Christian civilization and see the same sad signs of old: the realities of your daily lives are diametrically opposed to your religious ideal, but you feel it not; the thought that the very laws that govern your being whether in the domain of politics or social economy clash painfully with the origins of your religion – do not seem to trouble you in the

least. But if the nations of the West are so fully convinced that the ideal can never become practical and the practical will never reach the ideal – then, you have to make your choice: either it is your religion that is impracticable, and in that case it is no better than a vain-glorious delusion, or it might find a practical application, but it is you yourselves, who do not care to apply its ethics to your daily walk in life . . . Hence, before you invite other nations ‘to the King’s festival table’ from which your guests arise more starved than before, you should, ere you try to bring them to your own way of thinking, look into the repasts they offer to you . . . Under the dominion and sway of exoteric creeds, the grotesque and tortured shadows of theosophical realities, there must ever be the same oppression of the weak and the poor and the same typhonic struggle of the wealthy and the mighty among themselves . . . It is *esoteric philosophy alone*, the spiritual and psychic blending of man with Nature that, by revealing fundamental truths, can bring that much desired mediate state between the two extremes of human Egotism and divine Altruism and finally lead to the alleviation of human suffering . . .” (See last page for contin.)

[So in manuscript. The continuation of this letter from one of the Teachers – we do not know which one – is on page 169 of the present volume, beginning with the words: “Theosophy must not represent . . . ,” etc.

Certain portions of this letter were used by H.P.B. in her magazine *Lucifer*, Vol. I, January, 1888, pp. 344-46, under the title of “Some Words on Daily Life,” and credited therein to “A Master of Wisdom.” *Lucifer’s* version begins with the sentence: “It is divine philosophy alone . . . . ,” and continues with: “Theosophy should not represent . . . . .” There are changes and considerable amplifications of the main ideas, which are not in the Adyar manuscript.

Nothing further seems to be known about this letter from one of the Teachers, and the whereabouts of the original are unknown. – *Compiler.*}}

To make it clearer: –

(1) The Founders had to exercise all their influence *to oppose selfishness of any kind*, by insisting upon sincere, fraternal feelings among the Members – at least outwardly; working for it to bring about a spirit of unity and harmony, the great diversity of creeds notwithstanding; expecting and demanding from the Fellows, a great mutual toleration and charity for each other’s shortcomings; mutual help in the research of truths in every domain – moral or physical – and even, in daily life.

(2) They had to oppose in the strongest manner possible anything approaching *dogmatic faith and fanaticism* – belief in the *infallibility* of the Masters, or even in the very existence of our invisible Teachers, having to be checked from the first. On the other hand, as a great respect for the private views and creeds of every member was demanded, any Fellow criticising the faith or belief of another Fellow, hurting his feelings, or showing a reprehensible self-assertion, unasked (mutual friendly advices were a duty unless declined) – such a member incurred expulsion. The greatest spirit of free research untrammelled by anyone or anything, had to be encouraged.

Thus, for the first year the Members of the T. Body who representing every class in Society as every creed and belief – Christian clergymen, Spiritualists, Freethinkers, Mystics, Masons and Materialists – lived and met under these rules in peace and friendship. There were two or three expulsions for *slander* and *backbiting*. The rules, however imperfect in their tentative character, were strictly enforced and respected by the members. The original \$5, initiation fee, was soon abolished as *inconsistent with the spirit of the Association*: members had enthusiastically promised to support the Parent Society and defray the expenses of *machines for experiments, books*, the fees of the *Recording Secretary*\* {\*Mr. J. S. Cobb. [*Vide Bio-Bibliogr. Index under COBB.*]}, etc., etc. This was *Reform No. I*. Three months after, Mr. H. J. Newton., the Treasurer, a rich gentleman of New York,\* {\*[*Vide Bio-Bibliogr. Index under NEWTON* for further data.]} showed that no one had paid anything or helped him to defray the current expenses for the Hall of meetings, stationery, printing, etc., and that he had to carry the burden of those expenses *alone*. He went on for a short time longer, then – *he resigned as Treasurer*. It was the President-Founder, Col. H. S. Olcott, who had to pay henceforth for all. He did so for over 18 months. The “fee” was re-established, before the Founders left for India with the two English delegates – now their mortal enemies; but the money collected was for the Arya Samaj of Aryavarta with which Society the Theosophical became affiliated. It was the Prest.-Founder, who paid the enormous travelling expenses from America to India, and those of installation in Bombay, and who supported the two delegates out of his own pocket for nearly 18 months. When he had no more money left, nor the Corresponding Secretary either – a resolution was passed that the “initiation fee” sums should go towards supporting the Head Quarters.

Owing to the rapid increase in the Society in India, the present *Rules* and *Statutes* grew out. They are not the outcome of the deliberate thought and whim of the Prest.-Founder, but the result of the yearly meetings of the General Council at the Anniversaries. If the members of that G. C. have framed them so as to give a wider authority to the President-Founder, it was the result of their absolute confidence in him, in his devotion and love for the Society, and not at all-as implied in "A Few Words" – a proof of *his love for power and authority*. Of this, however, later on.

It was never denied that the Organization of the Theosophical Society was *very* imperfect. *Errare humanum est*. But, if it can be shown that the President has done what he could under the circumstances and in the best way he knew how – no one, least of all a theosophist, can charge him with the sins of the whole community as now done. From the founders down to the humblest member, the Society is composed of imperfect mortal men – not gods. This was always claimed by its leaders. "He who feels *without sin*, let him cast the first stone." It is the duty of every Member of the Council to offer advice and to bring for the consideration of the whole body any incorrect proceedings. One of the *plaintiffs* is a Councillor. Having never used his privileges as one, in the matter of the complaints now proffered – and thus, having no excuse to give that his just representations were not listened to, he by bringing out publicly what he had to state first privately – sins against Rule XII. The whole paper now reads like a defamatory aspersion, being full of untheosophical and unbrotherly insinuations – which the writers thereof could never have had in view.

This Rule XIIth was one of the first and the wisest. It is by neglecting to have it enforced when most needed, that the President-Founder has brought upon himself the present penalty.\* {\*For years the wise rule by which any member accused of backbiting or slander was expelled from the Society after sufficient evidence – has become obsolete. There have been two or three solitary cases of expulsion for the same in cases of members of *no* importance. Europeans of position and name were allowed to cover the Society literally with mud and slander their Brothers with perfect impunity. This is the President's *Karma* – and it is just.} It is his too great indulgence and unwise carelessness that have led to all such charges of abuse, of power, love of authority, show, of vanity, etc., etc. Let us see how far it may have been deserved.

As shown for 12 years the Founder has toiled *almost alone* in the interests of the Society and the general good – hence, not his own, and, the only complaint he was heard to utter was, that *he was left no time for self-development and study*. The results of this too just complaint are, that those for whom he toiled, are the first to fling at him the reproach of being ignorant of certain Hindu terms, of using one term for another, for instance of having applied the word "Jivanmukta" to a Hindu chela, on one occasion! The crime is a terrible one, indeed . . . We know of "*chelas*," who being Hindus, are sure never to confuse such well known terms in *their* religion; but who, on the other hand, pursue Jivanmuktship and the highest theosophical Ethics through the royal road of selfish ambition, lies, slander, ingratitude and backbiting. Every road leads to Rome; this is evident; and there is such a thing in Nature as "*Mahatma*"-*Dugpas* . . . It would be desirable for the cause of theosophy and truth, however, were all the critics of our President in general, less learned, yet found reaching more to the level of his all-forgiving good nature, his thorough sincerity and unselfishness; as the rest of the members less inclined to lend a willing ear to those, who, like the said "Vicars of Bray" have developed a hatred for the Founders – for reasons unknown.

The above advice is offered to the two Theosophists who have just framed their "Few Words on the Theosophical Organization." That they are not alone in their complaints (which, translated from their diplomatic into plain language look a good deal in the present case like a mere "*querelle d'allemand*") and that the said complaints are in a great measure just, – is frankly admitted. Hence, the writer must be permitted to speak in this, her answer, of theosophy and theosophists in general, instead of limiting the *Reply* strictly to the complaints uttered. There is not the slightest desire to be personal; yet, there has accumulated of late such a mass of incandescent material in the Society, by that eternal friction of precisely such "selfish personalities," that it is certainly wise to try to smother the sparks in time, by painting out to their true nature.

Demands, and a feeling of necessity for reforms have not originated with the two complainants. They date from several years, and there has never been a question of *avoiding* reforms, but rather a failure of finding such means as would satisfy *all* the theosophists. To the present day, we have yet to find that "wise man" from the East or from the West, who could not only *diagnosicate* the disease in the Theosophical Society, but offer advice and a remedy likewise to cure it. It is easy to write: "It would be out of place to suggest any *specific measures* [for such reforms, which do seem more difficult to *suggest* than to be vaguely hinted at]. For no one who has any faith in Brotherhood and in the power of Truth will fail to perceive what is necessary," – concludes the critic. One may, perhaps, have

such faith and yet fail to perceive what is *most* necessary. Two heads are better than one; and if any practical reforms have suggested themselves to our severe judges their refusal to give us the benefit of their discovery would be most unbrotherly. So far, however, we have received only most impracticable suggestions for reforms whenever these came to be specified. The Founders, and the whole Central Society at the Headquarters, for instance, are invited to demonstrate their theosophical natures by living like “fowls in the air and lilies of the field,” which neither sow nor reap, toil not, nor spin and “take no thought for the morrow.” This being found hardly practicable, even in India, where a man may go about in the garment of an Angel, but has, nevertheless, to pay rent and taxes, another proposition, then a third one and a fourth – each less practicable than the preceding – were offered . . . the unavoidable rejection of which led finally to the criticism now under review.

After carefully reading “A Few Words, etc.,” no very acute intellect is needed to perceive that, although no “specific measures” are offered in them, the drift of the whole argument tends but to one conclusion, a kind of syllogism more Hindu than metaphysical. Epitomised, the remarks therein plainly say: “Destroy the bad *results* pointed out by destroying the *causes* that generate them.” Such is the apocalyptic meaning of the paper, although both causes and results are made painfully and flagrantly objective and that they may be rendered in this wise: Being shown that the Society is the result and fruition of a bad President; and the latter being the outcome of such an “untheosophically” organized Society – and, its *worse than useless* General Council – “make away with all these *Causes* and the results will disappear”; i.e., the Society will have ceased to exist. Is this the heart-desire, of the two *true and sincere Theosophists*?

The complaints – “submitted to *those interested* in the progress of *true Theosophy*” – which seems to mean “theosophy *divorced from the Society*” – may now be noticed in order and answered. They specify the following objections: –

(I) To the language of the *Rules* with regard to the powers invested in the President-Founder by the General Council. This objection seems very right. The sentence . . . The duties of the Council “shall consist in *advising* the P.F. *in regard to all matters referred to them by him*” may be easily construed as implying that on all matters *not* referred to the Council by the Pres.-Founder . . . its members will hold their tongues. The Rules are changed, at any rate they are corrected and altered yearly. This sentence can be taken out. The harm, so far, is not so terrible.

(II) It is shown that many members *ex-officio* whose names are found on the list of the General Council *are not known* to the Convention; that they are, very likely, not even interested in the Society “under their special care”; a body they had joined at one time, then probably *forgotten* its existence in the meanwhile, to withdraw themselves from the Association. The argument implied is very valid. Why not point it out *officially* to the Members residing at, or visiting the Head-Quarters, the impropriety of such a parading of names? Yet, in what respect can this administrative blunder, or carelessness, interfere with, or *impede* “the progress of *true theosophy*”?\* {\*Furthermore the writer of the complaints in “A Few Words, etc.” is himself a member of the General Council for over two years (see Rules 1885); why has he not spoken earlier?}

(III) The members are appointed by the President-Founder . . . it is complained; the General Council only *advises* on what is submitted to it” . . . and “in the meantime that P.F. is empowered *to issue special orders* and provisional rules,” on behalf of that (“dummy”) Council. (Rule IV, p. 20.) Moreover, it is urged that out of a number of 150 members of the G. Council, a quorum of 5 and even 3 members present, may, should it be found necessary *by the President*, decide upon any question of vital importance, etc., etc., etc.

Such an “untheosophical” *display* of authority, is objected to by Messrs. M. M. Chatterji and A. Gebhard, on the grounds that it leads the Society to *Caesarism*, to “tyranny” and papal infallibility, etc., etc. However right the two complainants may be *in principle* it is impossible to fail seeing, the absurd exaggerations of the epithets used; for, having just been accused on one page of “tyrannical authority,” of “centralization of power” and a “papal institution” (p. 9) – on page 11, the President-Founder is shown “issuing *special orders*” from that “centre of *Caesarism*” – *which no one is bound to obey unless he so wishes!* “It is well known” remarks the principal writer – “that not only individuals but even Branches have refused to pay this [annual] subscription . . . of . . . two shillings” (p. 11); without any bad effect for themselves, resulting out of it, as appears. Thus it would seem it is not to a *non-existent* authority that objections should be made, but simply to a vain and useless *display* of power that no one cares for. The policy of issuing “special orders” with such sorry results is indeed objectionable; only, *not on the ground of a tendency to Caesarism*, but simply because it becomes *highly ridiculous*. The undersigned for one, has many a

time objected to it, moved however, more by a spirit of *worldly* pride and an *untheosophical* feeling of self-respect than anything like Yogi humility. It is admitted with regret that the world of scoffers and *non*-theosophists might, if they heard of it, find in it a capital matter for fun. But the real wonder is, how can certain *European* theosophists, who have bravely defied the world to make them wince under any amount of ridicule, once they acted in accordance with the dictates of their conscience and duty – make a crime of what is at the worst a *harmless*, even if ridiculous, bit of vanity; a desire of giving importance – not to the Founder, but to his Society *for which he is ready to die any day*. One kind of ridicule is worth another. The Western theosophist, who for certain magnetic reasons wears his hair long and shows otherwise eccentricity in his dress, will be spared no more than his President, with his “special orders.” Only the latter, remaining as kindly disposed and brotherly to the “individual theosophist and even a Branch” – that snub *him* and his “order,” by refusing to pay what others do – shows himself *ten-fold more theosophical and true to the principle of Brotherhood*, than the former, who traduces and denounces him in such uncharitable terms, instead of kindly warning him of the bad effect produced. Unfortunately, it is not those who speak the loudest of virtue and theosophy, who are the best exemplars of both. Few of them, if any, have tried to cast out the beam from their own eye, before they raised their voices against the mote in the eye of a brother. Furthermore, it seems to have become quite the theosophical rage in these days, to denounce vehemently, yet never to offer to help pulling out *any* such *motes*.

The Society is bitterly criticized for asking every well-to-do theosophist (the poor are exempt from it, from the first) to pay annually two shillings to help defraying the expenses at Head-Quarters. It is denounced as “untheosophical,” “unbrotherly,” and the “admission fee” of £1, is declared no better than a “sale of Brotherhood.” In this our “Brotherhood” may be shown again on a far higher level than any other association past or present. The Theosophical Society has never shown the ambitious pretension to outshine in *theosophy* and *brotherliness*, the primitive Brotherhood of Jesus and his Apostles,\* {\*Yet, the Theosophical Brotherhood does seem doomed to outrival the group of Apostles in the number of its *denying* Peters, its unbelieving Thomases, and even Iscariots occasionally, ready to sell their Brotherhood for less than thirty *sheckles* of silver!} and that “Organization,” besides asking and being occasionally refused, helped itself *without asking*, and as a matter of fact in a *real* community of Brothers. Nevertheless, such action, that would seem highly untheosophical and prejudicial in our day of culture when nations alone are privileged to pocket each other’s property and expect to be honoured for it – does not seem to have been an obstacle in the way of deification and sanctification of the said early “Brotherly” group. Our Society had never certainly any idea of rising superior to the *brotherliness* and *ethics* preached by Christ, but only to those of the *sham* Christianity of the Churches – as originally ordered to, by our MASTERS. And if we do not worse than the Gospel Brotherhood did, and far better than any Church, which would expel any member refusing too long to pay his Church rates, it is really hard to see why our “Organization” should be ostracized by its own members. At any rate, the pens of the latter ought to show themselves less *acerb*, in these days of trouble when every one seems bent on finding fault with the Society, and few to help it, and that the President-Founder is alone to work and toil with a few devoted theosophists at Adyar to assist him.

(IV) “There is no such institution in existence as the Parent Society” – we are told (pp. 2 and 3). “It has disappeared from the Rules and . . . has no *legal* existence” . . . The Society being unchartered, *it has not* – legally; but no more has any theosophist a legal existence, for the matter of that. Is there one single member throughout the whole globe who would be recognised *by law* or before a Magistrate – *as a theosophist*? Why then do the gentlemen “complainants” call themselves “theosophists” if the latter qualification has no better legal standing than the said “Parent Society” or the Head-Quarters itself? But the Parent-body *does* exist, and will, so long as the last man or woman of the primitive group of Theosophists-*Founders* is alive. This – as a body; as for its moral characteristics, the Parent-Society means that small nucleus of theosophists who hold sacredly through storm and blows to the *original programme* of the T.S. as established under the direction and orders of those, whom they recognize-and will, to their last breath – as the real originators of the Movement, their *living*, Holy MASTERS AND TEACHERS.\* {\*The members of the T.S. know, and those who do not should be told, that the term “Mahatma,” now so subtly analysed and controverted, for some mysterious reasons had never been applied to our Masters before our arrival in India. For years they were known as the “Adept-Brothers,” the “Masters,” etc. It is the Hindus themselves who began applying the term to the two Teachers. This is no place for an etymological disquisition and the fitness or unfitness of the qualification, in the case in hand. As a *state*, *Mahatmaship* is one thing, as a double noun, *Maha-atma* (Great Soul), quite another one. Hindus ought to know the value of metaphysical Sanskrit names used; and it is they the first, who have used it to designate the MASTERS.}

(V) The complaints then, that the T.S. “has laws without sanction, a legislative body without legality, a Parent Society without existence,” and, worse than all – “a President-Founder *above all rules*” – are thus shown only *partially* correct. But even were they all absolutely true, it would be easy to abolish such rules with one stroke of the pen, or to modify them. But now comes the curious part of that severe *philippic* against the T.S. by our eloquent Demosthenes. After six pages (out of the twelve) had been filled with the said charges, the writer admits on the 7th, – that they have been so modified! – “The above” we learn (rather late) “was written under the *misapprehension* that the Rules bearing date 1885 were the latest. It has since been found that there is a later version of the Rules dated 1886, which *have modified the older rules on a great many points.*” So much the better. – Why recall in such case mistakes in the past if these exist no longer? But the accusers do not see it in this light. They are determined to act as a theosophical Nemesis; and in no way daunted by the discovery, they add that nevertheless “it is *necessary* to examine the earlier rules to ascertain *the underlying principle* which runs through the present ones as well.” This reminds of the fable of “the Wolf and the Lamb.” But – you see – “the chief point is that the Convention *has no power to make any rules*, as such a power is *opposed to the spirit of Theosophy.* . . . ,” etc., etc.

Now this is the most extraordinary argument that could be made. At this rate no Brotherhood, no Association, no Society is possible. More than this: no theosophist, however holy his present life may be, would have the right to call himself one; for were it always found *necessary* to examine *his earlier life*, “to ascertain the *underlying principle*” which rules through the nature of the present man – ten to one, he would be found unfit to be called a theosophist! The experiment would hardly be found pleasant to the majority of those whom association with the T.S. has reformed; and of such there are a good many.

After such virulent and severe denunciations one might expect some good, friendly and theosophically *practical* advice. Not at all, and none is offered, since we have been already told (p. 9) that it would be “out of place to suggest any specific measures. For no one who has any faith in Brotherhood and in the power of Truth *will fail* to perceive what is necessary.” The President-Founder, has *no faith* in either “Brotherhood,” or “the power of Truth” – apparently. This is made evident by his having *failed* to perceive (a) that the Head-Quarters – opened to *all* Theosophists of any race or social position, board and lodging free of charge the whole year round – was an *unbrotherly* Organization; (b) that the “central office at Adyar for keeping records and concentrating information” with its European and Hindu inmates working *gratuitously* and some helping it with their own money whenever they have it – ought to be carried on, according to the method and principle of George Muller of Bristol, namely, the numerous household and staff of officers at Adyar headed by the Prest.-Founder ought to kneel every morning in prayer for their bread and milk appealing for their meals to “miracle”; and that finally, and (c) all the good the Society is doing, is no good whatever but “a spiritual wrong,” because it presumes to call a “*limited line of good work* [theosophy] Divine Wisdom.”

The undersigned is an ever patient theosophist, who has hitherto laboured under the impression that no amount of subtle scholasticism and tortured casuistry but could find like the Rosetta stone its Champollion – some day. The most acute among theosophists are now invited to make out in “A Few Words” – what the writers or writer is driving at – unless in plain and unvarnished language, it be – “Down with the Theosophical Society, Prest.-Founder and its Head-Quarters!” This is the only possible explanation of the twelve pages of denunciations to which a reply is now attempted. What can indeed be made out of the following jumble of contradictory statements: –

(a) The Prest.-Founder having been shown throughout as a “tyrant,” a “*would be Caesar*,” “aiming at *papal power*” and a “Venetian Council of Three,” and other words to that effect implied in almost every sentence of the paper under review, it is confessed in the same breath “that the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society has *completely ignored* the *Rules* [of the Pope Caesar] published by the Headquarters at Adyar”! (p. 4). And yet, the “L.L. of the T.S.” still lives and breathes and one has heard of no *anathema* pronounced against it, so far . . . (b) Rule XIV stating that the Society has “to deal *only* with scientific and philosophical subjects,” hence, “it is quite *evident* [?] that the power and position claimed in the *Rules* for the Prest.-Founder, the General Council and the Convention are opposed to the spirit of the declared objects. . . .”

It might have been as well perhaps to quote the entire paragraph in which these words appear,\* {“XIV. The Society having to deal only with scientific and philosophical subjects, and having Branches in different parts of the world under various forms of Government, does not permit its members, as such, to interfere with politics, and repudiates any attempt on the part of anyone to commit it in favor or against any political party or measure. Violation of this rule will meet with. expulsion.”

This rather alters the complexion put on the charge, which seems conveniently to forget that “scientific and philosophical subjects” are not the *only* declared objects of the Society. Let us not leave room for a doubt that there is more animus underlying the charges than would be strictly *theosophical*. } once that hairs are split about the possibly faulty reaction of the *Rules*? Is it not self-evident, that the words brought forward “only with scientific and philosophical subjects” are inserted as a necessary caution to *true* theosophists, who by dealing with politics *within* any Branch Society might bring disgrace and ruin on the whole body, – in India to begin with? Has the Society or has it not over 140 Societies scattered through four parts of the World to take care of? As in the case of “Mahatmas” and the “Mahatmaship” – active work of the Theosophical Society is confused – willingly or otherwise it is not for the writer to decide – with Theosophy. No need of entering here upon the difference between the jar that contains a liquid and the nature of, or that liquid itself. “Theosophy teaches *self-culture* and not control,” we are told. Theosophy teaches *mutual-culture* before *self-culture* to *begin* with. Union is strength. It is by gathering many theosophists of the same way of thinking into one or more groups, and making them closely united by the same magnetic bond of fraternal unity and sympathy that the objects of *mutual* development and progress in Theosophical thought may be best achieved. “Self-culture” is for isolated *Hatha Yogis*, independent of any Society and having to avoid association with human beings; and this is a triply *distilled* SELFISHNESS. For real moral advancement-there “where two or three are gathered” in the name of the SPIRIT OF TRUTH – there that Spirit of Theosophy *will be in the midst of them*. To say that theosophy has no need of a Society – a vehicle and centre thereof, – is like affirming that the Wisdom of the Ages collected in thousands of volumes at the British Museum has no need of either the edifice that contains it, nor the works in which it is found. Why not advise the British Govt. on its lack of discrimination and its *worldliness* in not destroying Museum and all its vehicles of Wisdom? Why spend such sums of money and pay so many officers to watch over its treasures, the more so, since many of its guardians may be quite out of keeping with, and opposed to the Spirit of that Wisdom? The Directors of such Museums may or may not be very perfect men, and some of their assistants may have never opened a philosophical work: yet, it is they who take care of the library and preserving it for future generations are indirectly entitled to their thanks. How much more gratitude is due to those who like our self-sacrificing theosophists at Adyar, devote their lives to, and give their services gratuitously to the good of Humanity!

Diplomas, and Charters are objected to, and chiefly the “admission fee.” The latter is a “taxation,” and therefore “*inconsistent* with the principle of Brotherhood” . . . A “forced gift is *unbrotherly*,” etc., etc. It would be curious to see where the T.S. would be led to, were the Pt.-F. to religiously follow the proffered advices. “Initiation” on admission, has been made away with already in Europe, and has *led to that* which will very soon become known: no use mentioning it at present. Now the “Charters” and diplomas would follow. Hence no document to show for any group, and no diploma to prove that one is affiliated to the Society. Hence also perfect liberty to any one to either call himself a theosophist, or deny he is one. The “admission fee”? Indeed, it has to be regarded as a terrible and *unbrotherly* “extortion,” and a “forced gift,” in the face of those thousands of Masonic Lodges, of Clubs, Associations, Societies, Leagues, and even the “Salvation Army.” The former, extort yearly *fortunes* from their Members; the latter – throttle in the name of Jesus the masses and appealing to *voluntary* contributions make the converts pay, and pay in their turn every one of their “officers,” none of whom will serve the “Army” for nothing. Yet it would be well, perchance, were our members to follow the example of the Masons in their solidarity of thought and action and at least *outward* Union, notwithstanding that receiving a thousand times more from their members they give them in return still less than we do, whether spiritually or morally. This solitary single guinea expected from every new member is spent in less than one week, as was calculated, on postage and correspondence with theosophists. Or are we to understand that all correspondence with members – now left to “*self-culture*” – is also to cease and has to follow diplomas, Charters and the rest? Then truly, the Head-Quarters and Office have better be closed. A simple *Query* – however: Have the £1. – the yearly contribution to the L.L. of the T.S., and the further sum of 2/6d. to the Oriental Group been abolished as “acts of unbrotherly extortion,” and how long, if so, have they begun to be regarded as “a *sale of Brotherhood*”?

To continue: the charges wind up with the following remarks, so profound, that it requires a deeper head than ours to fathom all that underlies the words contained in them. “Is the Theosophical Society a Brotherhood, or not?” queries the plaintiff – “if the former, is it possible to *have any centre of arbitrary power*?\* {\*It is the *first time* since the T.S. exists that such an accusation of arbitrary power, is brought forward. Not many will be found of this way of thinking.} To hold that there is a necessity for such a centre is only a round-about way of saying that no Brotherhood is possible,\* {\*No need taking a *roundabout* way, to say that no Brotherhood would ever be possible if many theosophists shared the very original views of the writer.} but in point of fact *that necessity itself is by no*

*means* proved [!]. There have been no doubt Brotherhoods under single Masters [there “have been” and *still are*. H.P.B.], but in such cases the Masters were never elected *for geographical* or other considerations [?]. The natural leader of men was always recognized by his embodying the spirit of Humanity. To institute comparisons would be little short of blasphemy. The greatest among men is always the readiest to serve and yet is unconscious of the Service.

“Let us pause before finally tying the millstone of worldliness round the neck of Theosophy. Let us not forget that Theosophy does not grow in our midst *by force and control*, but by the *sunshine of brotherliness* and the *dew of self-oblivion*. If we do not believe in Brotherhood and Truth, let us put ashes on our head and *weep in sackcloth* and not rejoice in the purple of authority and in the festive garments of pride and worldliness. Better it is by far that the name of Theosophy should never be heard than that it should be used as the motto of a *papal institution*.”

Who, upon reading this, and being ignorant that the above piece of rhetorical flowers of speech is directed against the luckless Prest.-Founder-would not have in his “mind’s eye” – an Alexander Borgia, a Caligula, or to say the least – General Booth in his latest metamorphosis! When, how, or by doing what, has our good natured, unselfish, ever kind President merited such a Ciceronian tirade? The state of things denounced exists now for almost twelve years, and our accuser knew of it and even took an active part in its organization, Conventions, Councils, Rules, etc., etc., at Bombay, and at Adyar. This virulent *sortie* is no doubt due to “SELF-CULTURE”? The critic has outgrown the movement and turned his face from the original programme; hence his severity. But where is the *true theosophical charity*, the tolerance and the “*sunshine of brotherliness*” just spoken of, and so insisted upon? Verily – it is easy to preach the “dew of self-oblivion” when one has nothing to think about except to evolve such finely rounded phrases; were every theosophist at Adyar to have his daily wants and even comforts, his board, lodging and all, attended to by a wealthier theosophist; and were the same “sunshine of brotherliness” to be poured upon him, as it is upon the critic who found for himself an endless brotherly care, a fraternal and self-sacrificing devotion in two other noble minded members, then – would there be little need for the President-Founder to call upon and humble himself before our theosophists. For, if he has to *beg* for 2 annual shillings – it is, in order that those – Europeans and Hindus – who work night and day at Adyar, giving their services free and receiving little thanks or honour for it, should have at least *one meal a day*. The fresh “dew of self-oblivion” must not be permitted to chill one’s heart, and turn into the lethal *mold of forgetfulness* to such an extent as that. The severe critic seems to have lost sight of the fact that for months, during the last crisis, the whole staff of our devoted Adyar officers, from the President down to the youngest brother in the office, have lived on 5d. a day each, having reduced their meals to the *minimum*. And it is *this mite*, the proceeds of the “2 shill. contribution,” conscientiously paid by some, that is now called *extortion*, a desire to live “in the purple of authority and in the festive garments of pride and worldliness”!

Our “Brother” is right. Let us “weep in sackcloth and ashes on our head” if the T.S. has many more such *unbrotherly* criticisms to bear. Truly it would be far better” that the name of Theosophy should never be heard than that it should be used as the motto “– not of *papal authority* which exists nowhere at Adyar outside the critic’s imagination – but as a motto of a “self-developed fanaticism.” All the great services otherwise rendered to the Society, all the noble work done by the complainant will pale and vanish before such an appearance of coldheartedness. Surely he cannot desire the *annihilation* of the Society? And if he did it would be useless: the T.S. *cannot be destroyed as a body*. It is not in the power of either Founders or their critics; and neither friend nor enemy can ruin that which is *doomed to exist*, all the blunders of its leaders notwithstanding. That which was generated through and founded by the “High Masters” and under their authority if not their instruction – MUST AND WILL LIVE. Each of us and all will receive his or her *Karma* in it, but the *vehicle* of Theosophy will stand indestructible and undestroyed by the hand of whether man or fiend. No; “truth does not depend on show of hands”; but in the case of the much-abused President-Founder it must depend on the show of *facts*. Thorny and full of pitfalls was the steep path he had to climb up alone and unaided for the first years. Terrible was the opposition outside the Society he had to build – sickening and disheartening the treachery he often encountered within the Head-Quarters. Enemies gnashing their teeth in his face around, those whom he regarded as his staunchest friends and co-workers betraying him and the Cause on the slightest provocation. Still, where hundreds in his place would have collapsed and given up the whole undertaking in despair, he, unmoved and unmovable, went on climbing up and tolling as before, unrelenting and undismayed, supported by that one thought and conviction that he was doing his duty. What other inducement has the Founder ever had, but his theosophical pledge and the sense of his duty toward THOSE he had promised to serve to the end of his life? There was but one beacon for him – the hand that had first pointed to him his way up: the hand of the MASTER he loves and reveres so well, and serves so devotedly though occasionally perhaps, unwisely. President elected for life, he has nevertheless offered more than once to resign in favour of any

one found worthier than him, but was never permitted to do so by the majority-not of “show of hands” but *show of hearts*, literally, – as few are more beloved than he is even by most of those, who may criticise occasionally his actions. And this is only natural: for cleverer in administrative capacities, more learned in philosophy, subtler in casuistry, in metaphysics or daily life policy, there may be many around him; but the whole globe may be searched through and through and no one found stauncher to his friends, truer to his word, or more devoted to real, practical theosophy – than the President-Founder; and these are the chief requisites in a leader of such a movement – one that aims to become a Brotherhood of men. The Society needs no Loyolas; it has to shun anything approaching casuistry; nor ought we to tolerate too subtle casuists. There, where every individual has to work out his own Karma, the judgment of a casuist who takes upon himself the duty of pronouncing upon the state of a brother’s soul, or guide his conscience is of no use, and may become positively injurious. The Founder claims no more rights than everyone else in the Society: the *right of private judgment*, which, whenever it is found to disagree with Branches or individuals are quietly set aside and *ignored – as shown by the complainants themselves*. This then, is the sole crime of the would-be culprit, and no worse than this can be laid at his door. And yet what is the reward of that kind man? He, who has never refused a service, outside what he considers his official duties – to any living being; he who has redeemed dozens of men, young and old from dissipated, often immoral lives and saved others from terrible scrapes by giving them a safe refuge in the Society; he, who has placed others again, on the pinnacle of Saintship *through their status in that Society*, when otherwise they would have indeed found themselves now in the meshes of “worldliness” and perhaps worse; – he, that true friend of every theosophist, and verily “the readiest to serve and as unconscious of the service” – he is now taken to task for what? – for insignificant blunders, for useless “special orders,” a *childish*, rather than untheosophical love of display, out of pure devotion to his Society. Is then *human nature* to be viewed so uncharitably by us, as to call *untheosophical*, worldly and sinful the natural impulse of a mother to dress up her child and parade it to the best advantages? The comparison may be laughed at, but if it is, it will be only by him who would, like the fanatical Christian of old, or the naked, dishevelled Yogi of India – have no more charity for the smallest human weakness. Yet, the simile is quite correct, since the Society is the child, the beloved creation of the Founder; he may be well forgiven for this too exaggerated love for that for which he has suffered and toiled more than all other theosophists put together. He is called “worldly,” “ambitious of power” and *untheosophical* for it. Very well; let then any impartial judge compare the life of the Founder with those of most of his critics, and see which was *the most theosophical* ever since the Society sprang into existence. If no better results have been achieved, it is not the President who ought to be taken to task for it, but the Members themselves, as he has been ever trying to promote its growth, and the majority of “Fellows” have either done nothing, or created obstacles in the way of its progress through sins of omission as of commission. Better unwise *activity*, than an overdose of too wise *inactivity*, apathy or indifference which are always the death of an undertaking.

Nevertheless, it is the members who now seek to sit in Solomon’s seat; and they tell us that the Society is useless, its President positively mischievous, and that the Head-Quarters ought to be done away with, as “the organization called Theosophical *presents many features seriously obstructive to the progress of Theosophy*.” Trees, however, have to be judged by their fruits. It was just shown that no “special orders” issuing from the “Centre of Power” called Adyar, could affect in any way whatever either Branch or individual; and therefore any theosophist bent on “self-culture,” “self-involution” or any kind of *selfness*, is at liberty to do so; and if, instead of using his rights he will apply his brain-power to criticize other people’s actions then it is he who becomes the *obstructionist* and not at all the “Organization called Theosophical.” For, if theosophy is anywhere practised on this globe, it is at Adyar, at the Head-Quarters. Let “those interested in the progress of true theosophy” appealed to by the writers look around them and judge. See the Branch Societies and compare them with the group that works in that “Centre of Power.” Admire the “progress of theosophy” at Paris, London and even America. Behold, in the great “Brotherhood,” a true *Pandemonium* of which the Spirit of Strife and Hatred himself might be proud! Everywhere – quarrelling, fighting for supremacy; backbiting, slandering, scandal-mongering for the last two years; a veritable battlefield, on which several members have so disgraced themselves and their Society by trying to disgrace others, that they have actually become more like hyenas than human beings by digging into the graves of the Past, in the hopes of bringing forward old forgotten slanders and scandals!

At Adyar alone, at the Head-Quarters of the Theosophical Society, the Theosophists are that which they ought to be everywhere else: *true theosophists* and not merely *philosophers* and Sophists. In that centre alone are now grouped together the few solitary, practically working Members, who labor and toil, quietly and uninterruptedly, while those Brothers for whose sake they are working, sit in the *dolce far niente* of the West and criticise them. Is this “true theosophical and brotherly work,” to advise to put down and disestablish the only “centre” where real brotherly, humanitarian work is being accomplished?

“Theosophy first and organization after.” Golden words, these. But where would Theosophy be heard of now, had not its Society been organized before its Spirit and a desire for it had permeated the whole world? And would Vedanta and other Hindu philosophies have been ever taught and studied in England outside the walls of Oxford and Cambridge, had it not been for that organization that fished them like forgotten pearls out of the Ocean of Oblivion and Ignorance and brought them forward before the profane world? Nay, kind Brothers and critics, would the Hindu exponents of that sublime philosophy themselves have ever been known outside the walls of Calcutta, had not the Founders, obedient to the ORDERS received, forced the remarkable learning and philosophy of those exponents upon the recognition of the two most civilized and cultured centres of Europe – London and Paris? Verily it is easier *to destroy* than to build. The words “untheosophical” and “unbrotherly” are ever ringing in our ears; yet, truly theosophical acts and words are not to be found in too unreasonable a superabundance among those who use the reproof the oftener. However insignificant, and however *limited the line* of good deeds, the latter will have always more weight than empty and vainglorious talk, and will be *theosophy* whereas theories without any practical realisation are at best philosophy. Theosophy is an all-embracing Science; many are the ways leading to it, as numerous in fact as its definitions, which began by the sublime, during the day of Ammonius Saccas, and ended by the ridiculous in Webster’s *Dictionary*. There is no reason why our critics should claim the right for themselves alone to *know* what is theosophy and to define it. There were theosophists and Theosophical Schools for the last 2,000 years, from Plato down to the mediaeval Alchemists, who knew the value of the term, it may be supposed. Therefore, when we are told that “the question for consideration is not whether the Theosophical Society *is doing good*, but whether it is doing *that kind of good which is entitled to the name of Theosophy*” – we turn round and ask: And who is to be the judge in this mooted question? We have heard of one of the greatest Theosophists who ever lived, who assured his audience that whosoever *gave a cup of cold water to a little one* in his (Theosophy’s) name, would have a greater reward than all the learned Scribes and Pharisees. “Woe to the world because of offences!”

Belief in the Masters was never made an article of faith in the T.S. But for its Founders, the commands received from Them when it was established have ever been sacred. And this is what one of them wrote in a letter preserved to this day:

“Theosophy must not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical Ethics epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy must be made practical, and has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless discussion . . . It has to find objective expression in an all-embracing code of life thoroughly impregnated with its spirit – the spirit of mutual tolerance, charity and love. Its followers have to set the example of a firmly outlined and as firmly applied morality before they get the right to point out, even in a spirit of kindness, the absence of a like ethic Unity and singleness of purpose in other associations and individuals. As said before – no Theosophist should blame a brother whether within or outside of the association, throw slur upon his actions or denounce him\* {\*It is in consequence of this letter that Art. XII was adopted in *Rules* and a fear of lacking the charity prescribed, that led so often to neglect its enforcement.} lest he should himself lose the right of being considered a theosophist. Ever turn away your gaze from the imperfections of your neighbour and centre rather your attention upon your own shortcomings in order to correct them and become wiser . . . Show not the disparity between claim and action in another man but – whether he be brother or neighbour – rather help him in his arduous walk in life . . . The problem of true theosophy and its great mission is the working out of clear, unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties which would satisfy most and best the altruistic and right feeling in us; and the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life where they may be applied with most equitableness . . . Such is the common work in view for all who are willing to act on these principles. It is a laborious task and will require strenuous and persevering exertion, but it must lead you insensibly to progress and leave no room for any selfish aspirations outside the limits traced . . . Do not indulge in unbrotherly comparisons between the task accomplished by yourself and the work left undone by your neighbour or brother, in the field of Theosophy, *as none is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity will permit him* . . . Do not be too severe on the merits or demerits of one who seeks admission among your ranks, as the truth about the actual state of the inner man can only be known to, and dealt with justly by KARMA alone. Even the simple presence amidst you of a well-intentioned and sympathising individual may help you magnetically . . . You are the Free-workers on the Domain of Truth, and as such, must leave no obstructions on the paths leading to it.” . . . [The letter closes with the following lines which have now become quite plain, as they give the key to the whole situation] . . . “*The degrees of success or failure are the landmark we shall have to follow, as they will constitute the barriers placed with your own hands between yourselves and those whom you have asked to be your teachers. The nearer your approach to the goal contemplated the shorter the distance between the student and the Master . . .*”

A complete answer is thus found in the above lines to the paper framed by the two Theosophists. Those who are now inclined to repudiate the Hand that traced it and feel ready to turn their backs upon the whole Past and the original programme of the T.S. are at liberty to do so. The Theosophical body is neither a Church nor a Sect and every individual opinion is entitled to a hearing. A Theosophist may progress and develop, and his views may outgrow those of the Founders, grow larger and broader in every direction, without for all that abandoning the fundamental soil upon which they were born and nurtured. It is only he who changes diametrically his opinions from one day to another and shifts his devotional views from white to black – who can be hardly trusted in his remarks and actions. But surely, this can never be the case of the two Theosophists who have now been answered . . .

Meanwhile, peace and fraternal good-will to all.

H. P. BLAVATSKY,  
Corres. Secty T.S.

*Ostende*, Oct. 3rd., 1886.

## What is Theosophy?

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879 & *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 2:87-97

This question has been so often asked, and misconception so widely prevails, that the editors of a journal devoted to an exposition of the world's Theosophy would be remiss were its first number issued without coming to a full understanding with their readers. But our heading involves two further queries: What is the Theosophical Society; and what are the Theosophists? To each an answer will be given.

According to lexicographers, the term *theosophia* is composed of two Greek words – *theos*, “god,” and *sophos*, “wise.” So far, correct. But the explanations that follow are far from giving a clear idea of Theosophy. Webster defines it most originally as “a supposed intercourse with God and superior spirits, and consequent attainment of superhuman knowledge, by *physical processes*, as by the theurgic operations of some ancient Platonists, or by the *chemical processes* of the German fire-philosophers.”

This, to say the least, is a poor and flippant explanation. To attribute such ideas to men like Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Proclus – shows either intentional misrepresentation, or Mr. Webster's ignorance of the philosophy and motives of the greatest geniuses of the later Alexandrian School. To impute to those whom their contemporaries as well as posterity styled “*theodidaktoi*,” god-taught – a purpose to develop their psychological, spiritual perceptions by “*physical processes*,” is to describe them as materialists. As to the concluding fling at the fire-philosophers, it rebounds from them to fall home among our most eminent modern men of science; those, in whose mouths the Rev. James Martineau places the following boast: “matter is all we want; give us atoms alone, and we will explain the universe.”

Vaughan offers a far better, more philosophical definition. “A Theosophist,” he says – “is one who gives you a theory of God or the works of God, which has not revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis.” In this view every great thinker and philosopher, especially every founder of a new religion, school of philosophy, or sect, is necessarily a Theosophist. Hence, Theosophy and Theosophists have existed ever since the first glimmering of nascent thought made man seek instinctively for the means of expressing his own independent opinions.

There were Theosophists before the Christian era, notwithstanding that the Christian writers ascribe the development of the Eclectic theosophical system to the early part of the third century of their Era. Diogenes Laertius traces Theosophy to an epoch antedating the dynasty of the Ptolemies; and names as its founder an Egyptian Hierophant called Pot-Amun, the name being Coptic and signifying a priest consecrated to Amun, the god of Wisdom. But history shows it revived by Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the Neo-Platonic School. He and his disciples called themselves “*Philalethians*” – lovers of the truth; while others termed them the “*Analogists*,” on account of their method of interpreting all sacred legends, symbolical myths and mysteries, by a rule of analogy or correspondence, so that events which had occurred in the external world were regarded as expressing operations and experiences of the human soul. It was the aim and purpose of Ammonius to reconcile all sects, peoples and nations under one common faith – a belief in one Supreme Eternal, Unknown, and Unnamed Power, governing the Universe by immutable and eternal laws. His object was to prove a primitive system of Theosophy, which at the beginning was essentially alike in all countries; to induce all men to lay aside their strifes and quarrels, and unite in purpose and thought as the children of one common mother; to purify the ancient religions, by degrees corrupted and obscured, from all dross of human element, by uniting and expounding them upon pure philosophical principles. Hence, the Buddhistic, Vedantic and Magian, or Zoroastrian, systems were taught in the Eclectic Theosophical School along with all the philosophies of Greece. Hence also, the preeminently Buddhistic and Indian feature among the ancient Theosophists and Alexandria, of due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human race; and a compassionate feeling for even the dumb animals. While seeking to establish a system of moral discipline which enforced upon people the duty to live according to the laws of their respective countries; to exalt their minds by the research and contemplation of the one Absolute Truth; his chief object in order, as he believed, to achieve all others, was to extract from the various religious teachings, as from a many-chorded instrument, one full and harmonious melody, which would find response in every truth-loving heart.

Theosophy is, then, the archaic *Wisdom-Religion*, the esoteric doctrine once known in every ancient country having claims to civilization. This “*Wisdom*” all the old writings show us as an emanation of the divine Principle; and the clear comprehension of it is typified in such names as the Indian Buddha, the Babylonian Nebo, the Thoth of Memphis, the Hermes of Greece; in the appellations, also, of some goddesses – Metis, Neitha, Athena, the Gnostic

*Sophia*, and finally the *Vedas*, from the word “to know.” Under this designation, all the ancient philosophers of the East and West, the Hierophants of old Egypt, the Rishis of Aryavart, the Theodidaktoi of Greece, included all knowledge of things occult and essentially divine. The *Mercavah* of the Hebrew Rabbis, the secular and popular series, were thus designated as only the vehicle, the outward shell which contained the higher esoteric knowledge. The Magi of Zoroaster received instruction and were initiated in the caves and secret lodges of Bactria; the Egyptian and Grecian hierophants had their *apporrhêta*, or secret discourses, during which the *Mystês* became an *Epoptês* – a Seer.

The central idea of the Eclectic Theosophy was that of a simple Supreme Essence, Unknown and *Unknowable* – for – “How could one know the knower?” as enquires *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. Their system was characterized by three distinct features: the theory of the above-named Essence; the doctrine of the human soul – an emanation from the latter, hence of the same nature; and its theurgy. It is this last science which has led the Neo-Platonists to be so misrepresented in our era of materialistic science. Theurgy being essentially the art of applying the divine powers of man to the subordination of the blind forces of nature, its votaries were first termed magicians – a corruption of the word “Magh,” signifying a wise, or learned man, and – derided. Skeptics of a century ago would have been as wide of the mark if they had laughed at the idea of a phonograph or telegraph. The ridiculed and the “infidels” of one generation generally become the wise men and saints of the next.

As regards the Divine essence and the nature of the soul and spirit, modern Theosophy believes now as ancient Theosophy did. The popular *Diu* of the Aryan nations was identical with the *Iao* of the Chaldeans, and even with the Jupiter of the less learned and philosophical among the Romans; and it was just as identical with the *Jahve* of the Samaritans, the *Tiu* or “Tiusco” of the Northmen, the *Duw* of the Britains, and the Zeus of the Thracians. As to the Absolute Essence, the One and all – whether we accept the Greek Pythagorean, the Chaldean Kabalistic, or the Aryan philosophy in regard to it, it will lead to one and the same result. The Primeval Monad of the Pythagorean system, which retires into darkness and is itself Darkness (for human intellect) was made the basis of all things; and we can find the idea in all its integrity in the philosophical systems of Leibnitz and Spinoza. Therefore, whether a Theosophist agrees with the Kabala which, speaking of En-Soph propounds the query: “Who, then, can comprehend It since It is formless, and Non-existent?” – or, remembering that magnificent hymn from the *Rig-Veda* (Hymn 129th, Book 10th) – enquires:

“Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?  
Whether his will created or was mute.  
He knows it – or perchance even *He knows not*;”

Or again, accepts the Vedantic conception of Brahma, who in the *Upanishads* is represented as “without life, without mind, pure,” *unconscious*, for – Brahma is “Absolute Consciousness”; or, even finally, siding with the Svâbhâvikas of Nepal, maintains that nothing exists but “Svabhavat” (substance or nature) which exists by *itself* without any creator; any one of the above conceptions can lead but to pure and absolute Theosophy – that Theosophy which prompted such men as Hegel, Fichte and Spinoza to take up the labors of the old Grecian philosophers and speculate upon the One Substance – the Deity, the *Divine All* proceeding from the Divine Wisdom – incomprehensible, unknown and *unnamed* – by any ancient or modern religious philosophy, with the exception of Christianity and Mohammedanism. Every Theosophist, then, holding to a theory of the Deity “which has not revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis,” may accept any of the above definitions or belong to any of these religions, and yet remain strictly within the boundaries of Theosophy. For the latter is belief in the Deity as the ALL, the source of all existence, the infinite that cannot be either comprehended or known, the universe alone revealing *It*, or, as some prefer it, *Him*, thus giving a sex to that, to anthropomorphize which is *blasphemy*. True, Theosophy shrinks from brutal materialization; it prefers believing that, from eternity retired within itself, the Spirit of the Deity neither wills nor creates; but that, from the infinite effulgency everywhere going forth from the Great Centre, that which produces all visible and invisible things, is but a Ray containing in itself the generative and conceptive power, which, in its turn, produces that which the Greeks called *Macrocosm*, the Kabalists *Tikkun* or Adam Kadmon – the archetypal man, and the Aryans *Purusha*, the manifested Brahm, or the Divine Male. Theosophy believes also in the *Anastasis* or continued existence, and in transmigration (evolution) or a series of changes in the soul\* {\*In a series of articles entitled “The World’s Great Theosophists,” we intend showing that from Pythagoras who got his wisdom in India, down to our best known modern philosophers and theosophists – David Hume, and Shelley, the English poet – the Spritists of France included – many believed and yet believe in

metempsychosis or reincarnation of the soul; however unelaborated the system of the Spiritists may fairly be regarded.

Such a series of articles was never written by H.P.B., although some of the material in *The Theosophical Glossary*, published posthumously in 1892, has similarity to the general aim H.P.B. may have had in view. – *Compiler.*}] which can be defended and explained on strict philosophical principles; and only by making a distinction between *Paramâtma* (transcendental, supreme soul) and *Jivâtma* (animal, or conscious soul) of the Vedantins.

To fully define Theosophy, we must consider it under all its aspects. The interior world has not been hidden from all by impenetrable darkness. By that higher intuition acquired by *Theosophia* – or God-knowledge, which carried the mind from the world of form into that of formless spirit, man has been sometimes enabled in every age and every country to perceive things in the interior or invisible world. Hence, the “Samadhi,” or *Dyan Yog Samadhi*, of the Hindu ascetics; the “Daïmonion-photi,” or spiritual illumination of the Neo-Platonists; the “sidereal confabulation of soul,” of the Rosicrucians or Fire-philosophers; and, even the ecstatic trance of mystics and of the modern mesmerists and spiritualists, are identical in nature, though various as to manifestation. The search after man’s diviner “self,” so often and so erroneously interpreted as individual communion with a personal God, was the object of every mystic, and belief in its possibility seems to have been coëval with the genesis of humanity, each people giving it another name. Thus Plato and Plotinus call “Noëtic work” that which the Yogin and the Shrotriya term *Vidya*. “By reflection, self-knowledge and intellectual discipline, the soul can be raised to the vision of eternal truth, goodness, and beauty – that is, to the *Vision of God* – this is the *epopteia*,” said the Greeks. “To unite one’s soul to the Universal Soul,” says Porphyry, “requires but a perfectly pure mind. Through self-contemplation, perfect chastity, and purity of body, we may approach nearer to It, and receive, in that state, true knowledge and wonderful insight.” And Swami Dayânand Saraswati, who has read neither Porphyry nor other Greek authors, but who is a thorough Vedic scholar, says in his *Veda Bhâshya* (upâsnâ prakaru ank. 9) – “To obtain *Diksha* (highest initiation) and *Yog*, one has to practise according to the rules . . . The soul in human body can perform the greatest wonders by knowing the Universal Spirit (or God) and acquainting itself with the properties and qualities (occult) of all the things in the universe. A human being (a *Dikshita* or initiate) can thus *acquire a power of seeing and hearing at great distances*.” Finally, Alfred R. Wallace, F.R.S., a spiritualist and yet a confessedly great naturalist, says, with brave candour: “It is ‘spirit’ that alone feels, and perceives, and thinks – that acquires knowledge, and reasons and aspires . . . there not unfrequently occur individuals so constituted that the spirit can perceive independently of the corporeal organs of sense, or can perhaps, wholly or partially, quit the body for a time and return to it again . . . the spirit . . . communicates with spirit easier than with matter.” We can now see how, after thousands of years have intervened between the age of Gymnosophists\* {\*The reality of the Yoga-power was affirmed by many Greek and Roman writers, who called the Yogins Indian Gymnosophists; by Strabo, Lucan, Plutarch, Cicero (*Tuscul. Disp.*), Pliny (Nat. Hist. VII, ii, 22), etc.} and our own highly civilized era, notwithstanding, or, perhaps, just because of such an enlightenment which pours its radiant light upon the psychological as well as upon the physical realms of nature, over twenty millions of people today believe, under a different form, in those same spiritual powers that were believed in by the Yogins and the Pythagoreans, nearly 3,000 years ago. Thus, while the Aryan mystic claimed for himself the power of solving all the problems of life and death, when he had once obtained the power of acting independently of his body, through the *Atman* – “self;” or “soul”; and the old Greeks went in search of *Atmu* – the Hidden one, or the God-Soul of man, with the symbolical mirror of the Thesmophorian mysteries; – so the spiritualists of today believe in the faculty of the spirits, or the souls of the disembodied persons, to communicate visibly and tangibly with those they loved on earth. And all these, Aryan Yogis, Greek philosophers, and modern spiritualists, affirm that possibility on the ground that the embodied soul and its never embodied spirit – the real *self*, are not separated from either the Universal Soul or other spirits by space, but merely by the differentiation of their qualities; as in the boundless expanse of the universe there can be no limitation. And that when this difference is once removed – according to the Greeks and Aryans by abstract contemplation, producing the temporary liberation of the imprisoned Soul; and according to spiritualists, through mediumship – such an union between embodied and disembodied spirit becomes possible. Thus was it that Patañjali’s Yogis and, following in their steps, Plotinus, Porphyry and other Neo-Platonists, maintained that in their hours of ecstasy, they had been united to, or rather become as one with God, several times during the course of their lives. This idea, erroneous as it may seem in its application to the Universal Spirit, was, and is, claimed by too many great philosophers to be put aside as entirely chimerical. In the case of the Theodidaktoi, the only controvertible point, the dark spot on this philosophy of extreme mysticism, was its claim to include that which is simply ecstatic illumination, under the head of sensuous perception. In the case of the Yogins, who maintained their ability to see Íswara “face to face,” this claim was successfully overthrown by the stern logic of Kapila. As to the similar assumption made for their Greek followers,

for a long array of Christian ecstasies, and, finally, for the last two claimants to “God-seeing” within these last hundred years – Jacob Böhme and Swedenborg – this pretension would and *should* have been philosophically and logically questioned, if a few of our great men of science who are spiritualists had had more interest in the philosophy than in the mere phenomenalism of spiritualism.

The Alexandrian Theosophists were divided into neophytes, initiates, and masters, or hierophants; and their rules were copied from the ancient Mysteries of Orpheus, who, according to Herodotus, brought them from India. Ammonius obligated his disciples by oath not to divulge his *higher* doctrines, except to those who were proved thoroughly worthy and initiated, and who had learned to regard the gods, the angels, and the demons of other peoples, according to the esoteric *hyponoia*, or under-meaning. “The gods exist, but they are not what the *hoi polloi*, the uneducated multitude, suppose them to be,” says Epicurus. “He is not an atheist who denies the existence of the gods whom the multitude worship, but he is such who fastens on these gods the opinions of the multitude.” In his turn, Aristotle declares that of the “Divine Essence pervading the whole world of nature, what are styled the gods are simply the first principles.”\* {\*[*Vide* Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, X, 123, where the Greek word *acebês* means impious, irreverent, ungodly, rather than “atheist”; and Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Bk. XII, viii, p. 1074b. – *Compiler*.]}

Plotinus, the pupil of the “God-taught” Ammonius, tells us that the secret *gnosis* or the knowledge of Theosophy, has three degrees – opinion, science, and *illumination*. “The means or instrument of the first is sense, or perception; of the second, dialectics; of the third, intuition. To the last, reason is subordinate; it is *absolute knowledge*, founded on the identification of the mind with the object known.” Theosophy is the exact science of psychology, so to say; it stands in relation to natural, uncultivated mediumship, as the knowledge of a Tyndall stands to that of a school-boy in physics. It develops in man a direct beholding; that which Schelling denominates “a realization of the identity of subject and object in the individual”; so that under the influence and knowledge of *hyponoia* man thinks divine thoughts, views all things as they really are, and, finally, “becomes recipient of the Soul of the World,” to use one of the finest expressions of Emerson. “I, the imperfect, adore my own perfect” – he says in his superb Essay on *The Over-Soul*. Besides this psychological, or soul-state, Theosophy cultivated every branch of sciences and arts. It was thoroughly familiar with what is now commonly known as mesmerism. Practical theurgy or “ceremonial magic,” so often resorted to in their exorcisms by the Roman Catholic clergy – was discarded by the theosophists. It is but Iamblichus alone who, transcending the other Eclectics, added to Theosophy the doctrine of Theurgy. When ignorant of the true meaning of the esoteric divine symbols of nature, man is apt to miscalculate the powers of his soul, and, instead of communing spiritually and mentally with the higher, celestial beings, the good spirits (the gods of the theurgists of the Platonic school), he will unconsciously call forth the evil, dark powers which lurk around humanity – the undying, grim creations of human crimes and vices – and thus fall from *theurgia* (white magic) into *göetia* (or black magic, sorcery). Yet, neither white, nor black magic are what popular superstition understands by the terms. The possibility of “raising spirits” according to the key of Solomon, is the height of superstition and ignorance. Purity of deed and thought can alone raise us to an intercourse “with the gods” and attain for us the goal we desire. Alchemy, believed by so many to have been a spiritual philosophy as well as physical science, belonged to the teachings of the theosophical school.

It is a noticeable fact that neither Zoroaster, Buddha, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Confucius, Socrates, nor Ammonius Saccas, committed anything to writing. The reason for it is obvious. Theosophy is a double-edged weapon and unfit for the ignorant or the selfish. Like every ancient philosophy it has its votaries among the moderns; but, until late in our own days, its disciples were few in numbers, and of the most various sects and opinions. “Entirely speculative, and founding no school, they have still exercised a silent influence upon philosophy; and no doubt, when the time arrives, many ideas thus silently propounded may yet give new directions to human thought” – remarks Mr. Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie IX<sup>o</sup> . . . himself a mystic and a Theosophist, in his large and valuable work, *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia* (articles Theosophical Society of New York and Theosophy, p. 731).\* {\**The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia of History, Rites, Symbolism, and Biography*. Edited by Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie IX<sup>o</sup> (Cryptonymous), Hon. Member of the Canongate Kilwinning Lodge, No. 2 Scotland. New York, J. W. Bouton, 706 Broadway, 1877.} Since the days of the fire-philosophers, they had never formed themselves into societies, for, tracked like wild beasts by the Christian clergy, to be known as a Theosophist often amounted, hardly a century ago, to a death-warrant. The statistics show that, during a period of 150 years, no less than 90,000 men and women were burned in Europe for alleged witchcraft. In Great Britain only, from A.D. 1640 to 1660, but twenty years, 3,000 persons were put to death for compact with the “Devil.” It was but late in the present century – in 1875 – that some progressed mystics and spiritualists, unsatisfied with the theories and explanations of Spiritualism, started by its votaries, and finding that they were far from covering the whole ground of the wide range of phenomena, formed at New York,

America, an association which is now widely known as the Theosophical Society. And now, having explained what is Theosophy, we will, in a separate article, explain what is the nature of our Society, which is also called the "Universal Brotherhood of Humanity."

## What Are the Theosophists?

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879 & *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, II:98-106

Are they what they claim to be – students of natural law, of ancient and modern philosophy, and even of exact science? Are they Deists, Atheists, Socialists, Materialists, or Idealists; or are they but a schism of modern Spiritualism – mere visionaries? Are they entitled to any consideration, as capable of discussing philosophy and promoting real science; or should they be treated with the compassionate toleration which one gives to “harmless enthusiasts”? The Theosophical Society has been variously charged with a belief in “miracles,” and “miracle-working”; with a secret political object – like the Carbonari; with being spies of an autocratic Czar; with preaching socialistic and nihilistic doctrines; and, *mirabile dictu*, with having a covert understanding with the French Jesuits, to disrupt modern Spiritualism for a pecuniary consideration! With equal violence they have been denounced as dreamers, by the American Positivists; as fetish-worshippers, by some of the New York press; as revivalists of “mouldy superstitions,” by the Spiritualists; as infidel emissaries of Satan, by the Christian Church; as the very types of “*gobe-mouche*,” by Professor W. B. Carpenter, F.R.S.; and finally, and most absurdly, some Hindu opponents, with a view to lessening their influence, have flatly charged them with the employment of demons to perform certain phenomena. Out of all this pother of opinions, one fact stands conspicuous the Society, its members, and their views, are deemed of enough importance to be discussed and denounced: *Men slander only those whom they hate – or fear.*

But, if the Society has had its enemies and traducers, it has also had its friends and advocates. For every word of censure, there has been a word of praise. Beginning with a party of about a dozen earnest men and women, a month later its numbers had so increased as to necessitate the hiring of a public hall for its meetings; within two years, it had working branches in European countries. Still later, it found itself in alliance with the Indian Arya Samaj, headed by the learned Pandit Dayanund Saraswati Swâmi, and the Ceylonese Buddhists, under the erudite H. Sumangala, High Priest of Adam’s Peak and President of the Widyodaya College, Colombo.

He who would seriously attempt to fathom the psychological sciences, must come to the sacred land of ancient Aryavarta. None is older than she in esoteric wisdom and civilization, however fallen may be her poor shadow – modern India. Holding this country, as we do, for the fruitful hot-bed whence proceeded all subsequent philosophical systems, to this source of all psychology and philosophy a portion of our Society has come to learn its ancient wisdom and ask for the impartation of its weird secrets. Philology has made too much progress to require at this late day a demonstration of this fact of the primogenitive nationality of Âryâvarta. The unproved and prejudiced hypothesis of modern Chronology is not worthy of a moment’s thought, and it will vanish in time like so many other unproved hypotheses. The line of philosophical heredity, from Kapila through Epicurus to James Mill; from Patañjali through Plotinus to Jacob Böhme, can be traced like the course of river through a landscape. One of the objects of the Society’s organization was to examine the too transcendent views of the Spiritualists in regard to the powers of disembodied spirits; and, having told them what, in our opinion at least, a portion of their phenomena are not, it will become incumbent upon us now to show what they are. So apparent is it that it is in the East, and especially in India, that the key to the alleged “supernatural” phenomena of the Spiritualists must be sought, that it has recently been conceded in the Allahabad *Pioneer* (August 11th, 1879), an Anglo-Indian daily journal which has not the reputation of saying what it does not mean. Blaming the men of science who “intent upon physical discovery, for some generations have been too prone to neglect super-physical investigation,” it mentions “the new wave of doubt” (Spiritualism) which has “latterly disturbed this conviction.” To a large number of persons, including many of high culture and intelligence, it adds, “the supernatural has again asserted itself as a fit subject of inquiry and research. And there are plausible hypotheses in favour of the idea that among the ‘sages’ of the East . . . there may be found in a higher degree than among the more modernized inhabitants of the West traces of those personal peculiarities, whatever they may be, which are required as a condition precedent to the occurrence of supernatural phenomena.” And then, unaware that the cause he pleads is one of the chief aims and objects of our Society, the editorial writer remarks that it is “the only direction in which, it seems to us, the efforts of the Theosophists in India might possibly be useful. The leading members of the Theosophical Society in India are known to be very advanced students of occult phenomena, already, and we cannot but hope that their professions of interest in Oriental philosophy . . . may cover a reserved intention of carrying out explorations of the kind we indicate.”

While, as observed, one of our objects, it yet is but one of many; the most important of which is to revive the work of Armonius Saccas, and make various nations remember that they are the children “of one mother.” As to the transcendental side of the ancient theosophy, it is also high time that the Theosophical Society should explain. With

how much, then, of this nature-searching, God-seeking science of the ancient Aryan and Greek mystics, and of the powers of modern spiritual mediumship, does the Society agree? Our answer is: – with it all. But if asked what it believes in, the reply will be: – “*as a body* – Nothing.” The Society, as a body, has no creed, as creeds are but the shells around spiritual knowledge; and Theosophy in its fruition is spiritual knowledge itself – the very essence of philosophical and theistic enquiry. Visible representative of Universal Theosophy, it can be no more sectarian than a Geographical Society, which represents universal geographical exploration without caring whether the explorers be of one creed or another. The religion of the Society is an algebraical equation, in which so long as the sign = of equality is not omitted, each member is allowed to substitute quantities of his own, which better accord with climatic and other exigencies of his native land, with the idiosyncrasies of his people, or even with his own. Having no accepted creed, our Society is very ready to give and take, to learn and teach, by practical experimentation, as opposed to mere passive and credulous acceptance of enforced dogma. It is willing to accept every result claimed by any of the foregoing schools or systems, that can be logically and experimentally demonstrated. Conversely, it can take nothing on mere faith, no matter by whom the demand may be made.

But, when we come to consider ourselves individually, it is quite another thing. The Society’s members represent the most varied nationalities and races, and were born and educated in the most dissimilar creeds and social conditions. Some of them believe in one thing, others in another. Some incline toward the ancient *magic*, or secret wisdom that was taught in the sanctuaries, which was the very opposite of supernaturalism or diabolism; others in modern spiritualism or intercourse with the spirits of the dead; still others in mesmerism or animal magnetism, or only an occult dynamic force in nature. A certain number have scarcely yet acquired any definite belief, but are in a state of attentive expectancy; and there are even those who call themselves materialists, in a certain sense. Of atheists and bigoted sectarians of any religion, there are none in the Society; for the very fact of a man’s joining it proves that he is in search of the final truth as to the ultimate essence of things. If there be such a thing as a speculative atheist, which philosophers may deny, he would have to reject both cause and effect, whether in this world of matter, or in that of spirit. There may be members who, like the poet Shelley, have let their imagination soar from cause to prior cause *ad infinitum*, as each in its turn became logically transformed into a result necessitating a prior cause, until they have thinned the Eternal into a mere mist. But even they are not atheists in the speculative sense, whether they identify the material forces of the universe with the functions with which the theists endow their God, or otherwise; for once that they cannot free themselves from the conception of the abstract ideal of power, cause, necessity, and effect, they can be considered as atheists only in respect to a personal God, and not to the Universal Soul of the Pantheist. On the other hand, the bigoted sectarian, fenced in, as he is, with a creed upon every paling of which is written the warning “No Thoroughfare,” can neither come out of his enclosure to join the Theosophical Society, nor, if he could, has it room for one whose very religion forbids examination. The very root idea of the Society is free and fearless investigation.

As a body, the Theosophical Society holds that all original thinkers and investigators of the hidden side of nature whether materialists – those who find matter “the promise and potency of all terrestrial life,” or spiritualists – that is, those who discover in spirit the source of all energy and of matter as well, were and are, properly, Theosophists. For to be one, one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or a deity. One need but worship the spirit of living nature, and try to identify oneself with it. To revere that *Presence*, the invisible Cause, which is yet ever manifesting itself in its incessant results; the intangible, omnipotent, and omnipresent Proteus: indivisible in its Essence, and eluding form, yet appearing under all and every form; who is here and there, and everywhere and nowhere; is ALL, and NOTHING; ubiquitous yet one; the Essence filling, binding, bounding, containing everything; contained in all. It will, we think, be seen now, that whether classed as Theists, Pantheists or Atheists, such men are near kinsmen to the rest. Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought – Godward – he is a Theosophist; an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth with “an inspiration of his own” to solve the universal problems.

With every man that is earnestly searching in his own way after a knowledge of the Divine Principle, of man’s relations to it, and nature’s manifestations of it, Theosophy is allied. It is likewise the ally of honest science, as distinguished from much that passes for *exact*, physical science, so long as the latter does not poach on the domains of psychology and metaphysics.

And it is also the ally of every honest religion – to wit: a religion willing to be judged by the same tests as it applies to the others. Those books, which contain the most self-evident truth, are to it inspired (not revealed). But all books it regards, on account of the human element contained in them, as inferior to the Book of Nature; to read which and

comprehend it correctly, the innate powers of the soul must be highly developed. Ideal laws can be perceived by the intuitive faculty alone; they are beyond the domain of argument and dialectics, and no one can understand or rightly appreciate them through the explanations of another mind, though even this mind be claiming a direct revelation. And, as this Society which allows the widest sweep in the realms of the pure ideal, is no less firm in the sphere of facts, its deference to modern science and its just representatives is sincere. Despite all their lack of a higher spiritual intuition, the world's debt to the representatives of modern physical science is immense; hence, the Society endorses heartily the noble and indignant protest of that gifted and eloquent preacher, the Rev. O. B. Frothingham, against those who try to undervalue the services of our great naturalists. "Talk of Science as being irreligious, atheistic," he exclaimed in a recent lecture, delivered at New York, "Science is creating a new idea of God. It is due to Science that we have any conception at all of a *living* God. If we do not become atheists one of these days under the maddening effect of Protestantism, it will be due to Science, because it is disabusing us of hideous illusions that tease and embarrass us, and putting us in the way of knowing how to reason about the things we see . . ."

And it is also due to the unremitting labours of such Orientalists as Sir W. Jones, Max Müller, Burnouf, Colebrooke, Haug, de Saint-Hilaire, and so many others, that the Society, as a body, feels equal respect and veneration for Vedic, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, and other old religions of the world; and, a like brotherly feeling towards its Hindu, Sinhalese, Parsi, Jain, Hebrew, and Christian members as individual students of "self," of nature, and of the divine in nature.

Born in the United States of America, the Society was constituted on the model of its Motherland. The latter, omitting the name of God from its Constitution lest it should afford a pretext one day to make a state religion, gives absolute equality to all religions in its laws. All support and each is in turn protected by the State. The Society, modeled upon this Constitution, may fairly be termed a "Republic of Conscience."

We have now, we think, made dear why our members, as individuals, are free to stay outside or inside any creed they please, provided they do not pretend that none but themselves shall enjoy the privilege of conscience, and try to force their opinions upon the others. In this respect the Rules of the Society are very strict. It tries to act upon the wisdom of the old Buddhist axiom, "Honour thine own faith, and do not slander that of others"; echoed back in our present century, in the "Declaration of Principles" of the Brahmo Sama;, which so nobly states that: "no sect shall be vilified, ridiculed, or hated." In Section VI of the Revised Rules of the Theosophical Society, recently adopted in General Council, at Bombay, is this mandate: "It is not lawful for any officer of the Parent Society to express, by word or act, any hostility to, or preference for, any one section (sectarian division, or group within the Society) more than another. All must be regarded and treated as equally the objects of the Society's solicitude and exertions. All have an equal right to have the essential features of their religious belief laid before the tribunal of an impartial world." In their individual capacity, members may, when attacked, occasionally break this Rule, but, nevertheless, as officers they are restrained, and the Rule is strictly enforced during the meetings. For, above all human sects stands Theosophy in its abstract sense; Theosophy which is too wide for any of them to contain but which easily contains them.

In conclusion, we may state that, broader and far more universal in its views than any existing mere scientific Society, it has *plus* science its belief in every possibility, and determined will to penetrate into those unknown spiritual regions which exact science pretends that its votaries have no business to explore. And, it has one quality more than any religion in that it makes no difference between Gentile, Jew, or Christian. It is in this spirit that the Society has been established upon the footing of a Universal Brotherhood.

Unconcerned about politics; hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism which it abhors – as both are but disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour; the Society cares but little about the outward human management of the material world. The whole of its aspirations are directed toward the occult truths of the visible and invisible worlds. Whether the physical man be under the rule of an empire or a republic, concerns only the man of matter. His body may be enslaved; as to his Soul, he has the right to give to his rulers the proud answer of Socrates to his Judges. They have no sway over the *inner* man.

Such is, then, the Theosophical Society, and such its principles, its multifarious aims, and its objects. Need we wonder at the past misconceptions of the general public, and the easy hold the enemy has been able to find to lower it in the public estimation? The true student has ever been a recluse, a man of silence and meditation. With the busy

world his habits and tastes are so little in common that, while he is studying, his enemies and slanderers have undisturbed opportunities. But time cures all and lies are but ephemera. Truth alone is eternal.

About a few of the Fellows of the Society who have made great scientific discoveries, and some others to whom the psychologist and the biologist are indebted for the new light thrown upon the darker problems of the inner man, we will speak later on. Our object now was but to prove to the reader that Theosophy is neither “a newfangled doctrine,” a political cabal, nor one of those societies of enthusiasts which are born today but to die tomorrow. That not all of its members can think alike, is proved by the Society having organized into two great Divisions – the Eastern and the Western – and the latter being divided into numerous sections, according to races and religious views. One man’s thought, infinitely various as are its manifestations, is not all-embracing. Denied ubiquity, it must necessarily speculate but in one direction; and once transcending the boundaries of exact human knowledge, it has to err and wander, for the ramifications of the one Central and Absolute Truth are infinite. Hence, we occasionally find even the greater philosophers losing themselves in the labyrinths of speculations, thereby provoking the criticism of posterity. But as all work for one and the same object, namely, the disenthralment of human thought, the elimination of superstitions, and the discovery of truth, all are equally welcome. The attainment of these objects, all agree, can best be secured by convincing the reason and warming the enthusiasm of the generation of fresh young minds, that are just ripening into maturity, and making ready to take the place of their prejudiced and conservative fathers. And, as each – the great ones as well as small – have trodden the royal road to knowledge, we listen to all, and take both small and great into our fellowship. For no honest searcher comes back empty-handed, and even he who has enjoyed the least share of popular favour can lay at least his mite upon the one altar of Truth.

## **An Epitome of Theosophy**

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. II, January 1888 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 3:53-67

Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, has existed from immemorial time. It offers us a theory of nature and of life which is founded upon knowledge acquired by the Sages of the past, more especially those of the East; and its higher students claim that this knowledge is not imagined or inferred, but that it is a knowledge of facts seen and known by those who are willing to comply with the conditions requisite for seeing and knowing.

Theosophy, meaning knowledge of or about God (not in the sense of a personal anthropomorphic God, but in that of divine “godly” wisdom), and the term “God” being universally accepted as including the whole of both the known and the unknown, it follows that “Theosophy” must imply wisdom respecting the absolute; and, since the absolute is without beginning and eternal, this wisdom must have existed always. Hence Theosophy is sometimes called the Wisdom-Religion, because from immemorial time it has had knowledge of all the laws governing the spiritual, the moral, and the material.

The theory of nature and of life which it offers is not one that was at first speculatively laid down and then proved by adjusting facts or conclusions to fit it; but is an explanation of existence, cosmic and individual, derived from knowledge reached by those who have acquired the power to see behind the curtain that hides the operations of nature from the ordinary mind. Such Beings are called Sages, using the term in its highest sense. Of late they have been called Mahatmas and Adepts. In ancient times they were known as the Rishis and Mahâ-rishis – the last being a word that means Great Rishis.

It is not claimed that these exalted beings, or Sages, have existed only in the East. They are known to have lived in all parts of the globe, in obedience to the cyclic laws referred to below. But as far as concerns the present development of the human race on this planet, they now are to be found in the East, although the fact may be that some of them had, in remote times, retreated from even the American shores.

There being of necessity various grades among the students of this Wisdom-Religion, it stands to reason that those belonging to the lower degrees are able to give out only so much of the knowledge as is the appanage of the grade they have reached, and depend, to some extent, for further information upon students who are higher yet. It is these higher students for whom the claim is asserted that their knowledge is not mere inference, but that it concerns realities seen and known by them. While some of them are connected with the Theosophical Society, they are yet above it. The power to see and absolutely know such laws is surrounded by natural inherent regulations which must be complied with as conditions precedent; and it is, therefore, not possible to respond to the demand of the worldly man for an immediate statement of this wisdom, insomuch as he could not comprehend it until those conditions are fulfilled. As this knowledge deals with laws and states of matter, and of consciousness undreamed of by the “practical” Western world, it can only be grasped, piece by piece, as the student pushes forward the demolition of his preconceived notions, that are due either to inadequate or to erroneous theories. It is claimed by these higher students that, in the Occident especially, a false method of reasoning has for many centuries prevailed, resulting in a universal habit of mind which causes men to look upon many effects as causes, and to regard that which is real as the unreal, putting meanwhile the unreal in the place of the real. As a minor example, the phenomena of mesmerism and clairvoyance have, until lately, been denied by Western science, yet there have always been numerous persons who know for themselves, by incontrovertible introspective evidence, the truth of these phenomena, and, in some instances, understand their cause and rationale.

The following are some of the fundamental propositions of Theosophy:

The spirit in man is the only real and permanent part of his being; the rest of his nature being variously compounded. And since decay is incident to all composite things, everything in man but his spirit is impermanent.

Further, the universe being one thing and not diverse, and everything within it being connected with the whole and with every other thing therein, of which upon the upper plane (below referred to) there is a perfect knowledge, no act or thought occurs without each portion of the great whole perceiving and noting it. Hence all are inseparably bound together by the tie of Brotherhood.

This first fundamental proposition of Theosophy postulates that the universe is not an aggregation of diverse unities but that it is one whole. This whole is what is denominated “Deity” by Western Philosophers, and “Para-Brahma” by the Hindu Vedântins. It may be called the Unmanifested, containing within itself the potency of every form of manifestation, together with the laws governing those manifestations. Further, it is taught that there is no creation of worlds in the theological sense; but that their appearance is due strictly to evolution. When the time comes for the Unmanifested to manifest as an objective Universe, which it does periodically, it emanates a Power or “The First Cause” so called because it itself [Parabrahma] is the rootless root of that Cause, and called in the East the “Causeless Cause.” The first Cause we may call Brahmâ, or Ormazd, or Osiris, or by any name we please. The projection into time of the influence or so-called “breath of Brahmâ” causes all the worlds and the beings upon them to gradually appear. They remain in manifestation just as long as that influence continues to proceed forth in evolution. After long aeons the outbreathing, evolutionary influence slackens, and the universe begins to go into obscuration, or pralaya, until, the “breath” being fully indrawn, no objects remain, because nothing *is* but Brahma. Care must be taken by the student to make a distinction between Brahma (the impersonal Parabrahma) and Brahmâ the manifested Logos. A discussion of the means used by this power in acting would be out of place in this Epitome, but of those means Theosophy also treats.

This breathing-forth is known as a Manvantara, or the Manifestation of the world between two Manus (from Manu, and Antara “between”) and the completion of the inbreathing brings with it Pralaya, or destruction. It is from these truths that the erroneous doctrines of “creation” and the “last judgment” have sprung. Such Manvantaras and Pralayas have eternally occurred, and will continue to take place periodically and forever.

For the purpose of a Manvantara two so-called eternal principles are postulated, that is, Purusha and Prakriti (or spirit and matter), because both are ever present and conjoined in each manifestation. Those terms are used here because no equivalent for them exists in English. Purusha is called “spirit,” and Prakriti “matter,” but this Purusha is not the unmanifested, nor is Prakriti matter as known to science; the Āryan Sages therefore declare that there is a higher spirit still, called Purushottama. The reason for this is that at the night of Brahmâ, or the so-called indrawing of his breath, both Purusha and Prakriti are absorbed in the Unmanifested; a conception which is the same as the idea underlying the Biblical expression – “remaining in the bosom of the Father.”

This brings us to the doctrine of Universal Evolution as expounded by the Sages of the Wisdom-Religion. The Spirit, or Purusha, they say, proceeds from Brahmâ through the various forms of matter evolved at the same time, beginning in the world of the spiritual from the highest and in the material world from the lowest form. The lowest form is one unknown as yet to modern science. Thus, therefore, the mineral, vegetable and animal forms each imprison a spark of the Divine, a portion of the indivisible Purusha.

These sparks struggle to “return to the Father,” or in other words, to secure self-consciousness and at last come into the highest form, on Earth, that of man, where alone self-consciousness is possible to them. The period, calculated in human time, during which this evolution goes on embraces millions of ages. Each spark of divinity has, therefore, millions of ages in which to accomplish its mission – that of obtaining complete self-consciousness while in the form of man. But by this is not meant that the mere act of coming into human form of itself confers self-consciousness upon this divine spark. That great work may be accomplished during the Manvantara in which a Divine spark reaches the human form, or it may not; all depends upon the individual’s own will and efforts. Each particular spirit thus goes through the Manvantara, or enters into manifestation for its own enrichment and for that of the Whole. Mahatmas and Rishis are thus gradually evolved during a Manvantara, and become, after its expiration, planetary spirits, who guide the evolutions of other future planets. The planetary spirits of our globe are those who in previous Manvantaras – or days of Brahma – made the efforts, and became in the course of that long period Mahatmas.

Each Manvantara is for the same end and purpose, so that the Mahatmas who have now attained those heights, or those who may become such in the succeeding years of the present Manvantara, will probably be the planetary spirits of the next Manvantara for this or other planets. This system is thus seen to be based upon the identity of Spiritual Being, and, under the name of “Universal Brotherhood,” constitutes the basic idea of the Theosophical Society, whose object is the realization of that Brotherhood among men.

The Sages say that this Purusha is the basis of all manifested objects. Without it nothing could exist or cohere. It interpenetrates everything everywhere. It is the reality of which, or upon which, those things called real by us are

mere images. As Purusha reaches to and embraces all beings, they are all connected together; and in or on the plane where that Purusha is, there is a perfect consciousness of every act, thought, object, and circumstance, whether supposed to occur there, or on this plane, or any other. For below the spirit and above the intellect is a plane of consciousness in which experiences are noted, commonly called man's "spiritual nature"; this is frequently said to be as susceptible of culture as his body or his intellect.

This upper plane is the real register of all sensations and experiences, although there are other registering planes. It is sometimes called the "subconscious mind." Theosophy, however, holds that it is a misuse of terms to say that the spiritual nature can be cultivated. The real object to be kept in view is to so open up or make porous the lower nature that the spiritual nature may shine through it and become the guide and ruler. It is only "cultivated" in the sense of having a vehicle prepared for its use, into which it may descend. In other words, it is held that the real man, who is the higher self – being the spark of the Divine before alluded to – overshadows the visible being, which has the possibility of becoming united to that spark. Thus it is said that the higher Spirit is not in the man, but above him. It is always peaceful, unconcerned, blissful, and full of absolute knowledge. It continually partakes of the Divine state, being continually that state itself, "conjoined with the Gods, it feeds upon Ambrosia." The object of the student is to let the light of that spirit shine through the lower coverings.

This "spiritual culture" is only attainable as the grosser interests, passions, and demands of the flesh are subordinated to the interests, aspirations and needs of the higher nature; and this is a matter of both system and established law.

This spirit can only become the ruler when the firm intellectual acknowledgment or admission is first made that IT alone is. And, as stated above, it being not only the person concerned but also the whole, all selfishness must be eliminated from the lower nature before its divine state can be reached. So long as the smallest personal or selfish desire even for spiritual attainment for our own sake remains, so long is the desired end put off. Hence the above term "demands of the flesh" really covers also demands that are not of the flesh, and its proper rendering would be "desires of the personal nature, including those of the individual soul."

When systematically trained in accordance with the aforesaid system and law, men attain to clear insight into the immaterial, spiritual world, and their interior faculties apprehend truth as immediately and readily as physical faculties grasp the things of sense, or mental faculties those of reason. Or, in the words used by some of them, "They are able to look directly upon ideas"; and hence their testimony to such truth is as trustworthy as is that of scientists or philosophers to truth in their respective fields.

In the course of this spiritual training such men acquire perception of, and control over, various forces in Nature unknown to other men, and thus are able to perform works usually called "miraculous," though really but the result of larger knowledge of natural law. What these powers are may be found in Patañjali's "Yoga Philosophy." [Book III].

Their testimony as to super-sensuous truth, verified by their possession of such powers, challenges candid examination from every religious mind.

Turning now to the system expounded by these sages, we find, in the first place, an account of cosmogony, the past and future of this earth and other planets, the evolution of life through elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal and human forms, as they are called.

These "passive life elementals" are unknown to modern science, though sometimes approached by it as a subtle material agent in the production of life, whereas they are a form of life itself.

Each Kalpa, or grand period, is divided into four ages or yugas, each lasting many thousands of years, and each one being marked by a predominant characteristic. These are the Satya-Yuga (or age of truth), the Tretâ-Yuga, the Dvâpara-Yuga, and our present Kali-Yuga (or age of darkness), which began five thousand years back. The word "darkness" here refers to spiritual and not material darkness. In this age, however, all causes bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other age – a fact due to the intensified momentum of "evil," as the course of its cycle is about rounding towards that of a new cycle of truth. Thus a sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations during Kali-Yuga, than he could in a much greater number in any other age. The darkness of this

age is not absolute, but is greater than that of other ages; its main tendency being towards materiality, while having some mitigation in occasional ethical or scientific advance conducive to the well-being of the race, by the removal of immediate causes of crime or disease.

Our earth is one of a chain of seven planets, it alone being on the visible plane, while the six others are on different planes, and therefore invisible. (The other planets of our solar system belong each to a chain of seven.) And the life-wave passes from the higher to the lower in the chain until it reaches our earth, and then ascends and passes to the three others on the opposite arc, and thus seven times. The evolution of forms is coincident with this progress, the tide of life bearing with it the mineral and vegetable forms, until each globe in turn is ready to receive the human life wave. Of these globes our Earth is the fourth.

Humanity passes from globe to globe in a series of Rounds, first circling about each globe, and reincarnating upon it a fixed number of times. Concerning the human evolution on the concealed planets or globes little is permitted to be said. We have to concern ourselves with our Earth alone. The latter, when the wave of humanity has reached it for the last time (in this, our Fourth Round), began to evolve man, subdividing him into races. Each of these races when it has, through evolution, reached the period known as “the moment of choice” and decided its future destiny as an individual race, begins to disappear. The races are separated, moreover, from each other by catastrophes of nature, such as the subsidence of continents and great natural convulsions. Coincidentally with the development of races the development of specialized senses takes place; thus our fifth race has so far developed five senses.

The Sages further tell us that the affairs of this world and its people are subject to cyclic laws, and during any one cycle the rate or quality of progress appertaining to a different cycle is not possible. These cyclic laws operate in each age. As the ages grow darker the same laws prevail, only the cycles are shorter; that is, they are the same length in the absolute sense, but go over the given limit in a shorter period of time. These laws impose restrictions on the progress of the race. In a cycle, where all is ascending and descending, the Adepts must wait until the time comes before they can aid the race to ascend. They cannot, and must not, interfere with Karmic law. Thus they begin to work actively again in the spiritual sense, when the cycle is known by them to be approaching its turning point.

At the same time these cycles have no hard lines or points of departure or inception, inasmuch as one may be ending or drawing to a close for some time after another has already begun. They thus overlap and shade into one another, as day does into night; and it is only when the one has completely ended and the other has really begun by bringing out its blossoms, that we can say we are in a new cycle. It may be illustrated by comparing two adjacent cycles to two interlaced circles, where the circumference of one touches the center of the other, so that the moment where one ended and the other began would be at the point where the circumferences intersected each other. Or by imagining a man as representing, in the act of walking, the progress of the cycles; his rate of advancement can only be obtained by taking the distance covered by his paces, the points at the middle of each pace, between the feet, being the beginning of cycles and their ending.

The cyclic progress is assisted, or the deterioration further permitted, in this way; at a time when the cycle is ascending, developed and progressed Beings, known in Sanskrit by the term “Jñānis,” descend to this earth from other spheres where the cycle is going down, in order that they may also help the spiritual progress of this globe. In like manner they leave this sphere when our cycle approaches darkness. These Minis must not, however, be confounded with the Mahatmas and Adepts mentioned above. The right aim of true Theosophists should, therefore, be so to live that their influence may be conducive for the dispelling of darkness to the end that such Jñānis may turn again towards this sphere.

Theosophy also teaches the existence of a universal diffused and highly ethereal medium, which has been called the “Astral Light” and “Ākāśa.” It is the repository of all past, present, and future events, and in it are recorded the effects of spiritual causes, and of all acts and thoughts from the direction of either spirit or matter. It may be called the Book of the Recording Angel.

Ākāśa, however, is a misnomer when it is confused with Ether or the astral light of the Kabalists. Ākāśa is the noumenon of the phenomenal Ether or astral light proper, for Ākāśa is infinite, impartite, intangible, its only production being Sound.\* {\*Ākāśa in the mysticism of the Esoteric Philosophy is, properly speaking, the female “Holy Ghost”; “Sound” or speech being the Logos – the manifested Verbum of the unmanifested Mother. See

*Sāṅkhyasāra*, Preface, p. 33 et seq. [*Sāṅkhya-Sāra* by Viṣṇu Bhikṣu, ed. By Fitzedward Hall, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1862.]}

And this astral light is material and not spirit. It is, in fact, the lower principle of that cosmic body of which Ākāśa is the highest. It has the power of retaining all images. This includes a statement that each thought as well as word and act makes an image there. These images may be said to have two lives. First. Their own as an image. Second. The impress left by them in the matrix of the astral light. In the upper realm of this light there is no such thing as space or time in the human sense. All future events are the thoughts and acts of men; these are producers in advance of the picture of the event which is to occur. Ordinary men continually, recklessly, and wickedly, are making these events sure to come to pass, but the Sages, Mahatmas, and the Adepts of the good law, make only such pictures as are in accordance with Divine law, because they control the production of their thought. In the astral light are all the differentiated sounds as well. The elementals are energetic centers in it. The shades of departed human beings and animals are also there. Hence, any seer or entranced person can see in it all that anyone has done or said, as well as that which has happened to anyone with whom he is connected. Hence, also, the identity of deceased persons – who are supposed to report specially out of this plane – is not to be concluded from the giving of forgotten or unknown words, facts, or ideas. Out of this plane of matter can be taken the pictures of all who have ever lived, and then reflected on a suitable magneto-electrical surface, so as to seem like the apparition of the deceased, producing all the sensations of weight, hardness, and extension.

Through the means of the Astral Light and the help of Elementals, the various material elements may be drawn down and precipitated from the atmosphere upon either a plane surface or in the form of a solid object; this precipitation may be made permanent, or it may be of such a light cohesive power as soon to fade away. But the help of the elementals can only be obtained by a strong will added to a complete knowledge of the laws which govern the being of the elementals. It is useless to give further details on this point; first, because the untrained student cannot understand; and second, the complete explanation is not permitted, were it even possible in this space.

The world of the elementals is an important factor in our world and in the course of the student. Each thought as it is evolved by a man coalesces instantly with an elemental, and is then beyond the man's power.

It can easily be seen that this process is going on every instant. Therefore, each thought exists as an entity. Its length of life depends on two things: (a) The original force of the person's will and thought; (b) The power of the elemental which coalesced with it, the latter being determined by the class to which the elemental belongs. This is the case with good and bad thoughts alike, and as the will beneath the generality of wicked thoughts is usually powerful, we can see that the result is very important, because the elemental has no conscience and obtains its constitution and direction from the thought it may from time to time carry.

Each human being has his own elementals that partake of his nature and his thoughts. If you fix your thoughts upon a person in anger, or in critical, uncharitable judgment, you attract to yourself a number of those elementals that belong to, generate, and are generated by this particular fault or failing, and they precipitate themselves upon you. Hence, through the injustice of your merely human condemnation, which cannot know the source and causes of the action of another, you at once become a sharer of his fault or failing by your own act, and the spirit expelled returns "with seven devils worse than himself."

This is the origin of the popular saying that "curses, like chickens, come home to roost," and has its root in the laws governing magnetic affinity.

In the Kali-Yuga we are hypnotized by the effect of the immense body of images in the Astral Light, compounded of all the deeds, thoughts, and so forth of our ancestors, whose lives tended in a material direction. These images influence the inner man – who is conscious of them – by suggestion. In a brighter age the influence of such images would be towards Truth. The effect of the Astral Light, as thus molded and painted by us, will remain so long as we continue to place those images there, and it thus becomes our judge and our executioner. Every universal law thus contains within itself the means for its own accomplishment and the punishment for its violation, and requires no further authority to postulate it or to carry out its decrees.

The Astral Light by its inherent action both evolves and destroys forms. It is the universal register. Its chief office is that of a vehicle for the operation of the laws of Karma, or the progress of the principle of life, and it is thus in a deep spiritual sense a medium or “mediator” between man and his Deity – his higher spirit.

Theosophy also tells of the origin, history, development and destiny of mankind.

Upon the subject of Man it teaches:

*First.* That each spirit is a manifestation of the One Spirit, and thus a part of all. It passes through a series of experiences in incarnation, and is destined to ultimate reunion with the Divine.

*Second.* That this incarnation is not single but repeated, each individuality becoming re-embodied during numerous existences in successive races and planets of our chain, and accumulating the experiences of each incarnation towards its perfection.

*Third.* That between adjacent incarnations, after grosser elements are first purged away, comes a period of comparative rest and refreshment, called Devachan – the soul being therein prepared for its next advent into material life.

The constitution of man is subdivided in a septenary manner, the main divisions being those of body, soul and spirit. These divisions and their relative development govern his subjective condition after death. The real division cannot be understood, and must for a time remain esoteric, because it requires certain senses not usually developed for its understanding. If the present seven-fold division, as given by Theosophical writers is adhered to strictly and without any conditional statement, it will give rise to controversy or error. For instance, Spirit is not a seventh principle. It is the synthesis, or the whole, and is equally present in the other six. The present various divisions can only be used as a general working hypothesis, to be developed and corrected as students advance and themselves develop.

The state of spiritual but comparative rest known as Devachan is not an eternal one, and so is not the same as the eternal heaven of Christianity. Nor does “hell” correspond to the state known to Theosophical writers as Avichi.

All such painful states are transitory and purificatory states. When those are passed the individual goes into Devachan.

“Hell” and Avichi are thus not the same. Avichi is the same as the “second death,” as it is in fact annihilation that only comes to the “black Magician” or spiritually wicked, as will be seen further on.

The nature of each incarnation depends upon the balance as struck of the merit and demerit of the previous life or lives – upon the way in which the man has lived and thought; and this law is inflexible and wholly just.

“Karma” – a term signifying two things, the law of ethical causation (Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap [*Gal 6:7*]); and the balance or excess of merit or demerit in any individual, determines also the main experiences of joy and sorrow in each incarnation, so that what we call “luck” is in reality “desert” – desert acquired in past existence.

Karma is not all exhausted in a single life, nor is a person necessarily in this life experiencing the effect of all his previous Karma; for some may be held back by various causes. The principle cause is the failure of the Ego to acquire a body which will furnish the instrument or apparatus in and by which the meditation or thoughts of previous lives can have their effect and be ripened. Hence it is held that there is a mysterious power in the man’s thoughts during a life, sure to bring about its results in either an immediately succeeding life or in one many lives distant; that is, in whatever life the Ego obtains a body capable of being the focus, apparatus, or instrument for the ripening of past Karma. There is also a swaying or diverging power in Karma in its effects upon the soul, for a certain course of life – or thought – will influence the soul in that direction for sometimes three lives, before the beneficial or bad effect of any other sort of Karma can be felt. Nor does it follow that every minute portion of Karma must be felt in the same detail as when produced, for several sorts of Karma may come to a head together at one point in the life, and, by their combined effect, produce a result which, while, as a whole, accurately representing all

the elements in it, still is a different Karma from each single component part. This may be known as the nullification of the postulated effect of the classes of Karma involved.

The process of evolution up to reunion with the Divine is and includes successive elevation from rank to rank of power and usefulness. The most exalted beings still in the flesh are known as Sages, Rishis, Brothers, Masters. Their great function being the preservation at all times, and when cyclic laws permit, the extension of spiritual knowledge and influence.

When union with the Divine is effected, all the events and experiences of each incarnation are known.

As to the process of spiritual development, Theosophy teaches:

*First.* That the essence of the process lies in the securing of supremacy, to the highest, the spiritual, element of man's nature.

*Second.* That this is attained along four lines, among others, –

- (a) The entire eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of *broad, generous* sympathy in, and effort for the good of others.
- (b) The absolute cultivation of the inner, spiritual man by meditation, by reaching to and communion with the Divine, and by exercise of the kind described by Patañjali, *i.e.*, incessant striving to an ideal end.
- (c) The control of fleshly appetites and desires, all lower, material interests being deliberately subordinated to the behests of the spirit.
- (d) The careful performance of every duty belonging to one's station in life, without desire for reward, leaving results for Divine law.

*Third.* That while the above is incumbent on and practicable by all religiously disposed men, a yet higher plane of spiritual attainment is conditioned upon a specific course of training, physical, intellectual and spiritual, by which the internal faculties are first aroused and then developed.

*Fourth.* That an extension of this process is reached in Adeptship, Mahatmaship, or the states of Rishis, Sages and Dhyâni-Chohans, which are all exalted stages, attained by laborious self-discipline and hardship, protracted through possibly many incarnations, and with many degrees of initiation and preferment, beyond which are yet other stages ever approaching the Divine.

As to the rationale of spiritual development it asserts:

*First.* That the process takes place entirely within the individual himself, the motive, the effort, and the result proceeding from his own inner nature, along the lines of self-evolution.

*Second.* That, however personal and interior, this process is not unaided, being possible, in fact, only through close communion with the supreme source of all strength.

As to the degree of advancement in incarnations it holds:

*First.* That even a mere intellectual acquaintance with Theosophic truth has great value in fitting the individual for a step upwards in his next earth-life, as it gives an impulse in that direction.

*Second.* That still more is gained by a career of duty, piety and beneficence.

*Third.* That a still greater advance is attained by the attentive and devoted use of the means to spiritual culture heretofore stated.

*Fourth.* That every race and individual of it reaches in evolution a period known as “the moment of choice,” when they decide for themselves their future destiny by a deliberate and conscious choice between eternal life and death, and that this right of choice is the peculiar appanage of the free soul. It cannot be exercised until the man has realized the soul within him, and until that soul has attained some measure of self-consciousness in the body. The moment of choice is not a fixed period of time; it is made up of all moments. It cannot come unless all the previous lives have led up to it. For the race as a whole it has not yet come. Any individual can hasten the advent of this period for himself under the previously stated law of the ripening of Karma. Should he then fail to choose right he is not wholly condemned, for the economy of nature provides that he shall again and again have the opportunity of choice when the moment arrives for the whole race. After this period the race, having blossomed, tends towards its dissolution. A few individuals of it will have outstripped its progress and attained Adeptship or Mahatmaship. The main body, who have chosen aright, but who have not attained salvation, pass into the subjective condition, there to await the influx of the human life wave into the next globe, which they are the first souls to people; the deliberate choosers of evil, whose lives are passed in great spiritual wickedness (for evil done for the sheer love of evil *per se*), sever the connection with the Divine Spirit, or the Monad, which forever abandons the human Ego. Such Egos pass into the misery of the eighth sphere, as far as we understand, there to remain until the separation between what they had thus cultivated and the personal Ísvara or divine spark is complete. But this tenet has never been explained to us by the Masters, who have always refused to answer and to explain it conclusively. At the next Manvantara that Divine Spark will probably begin again the long evolutionary journey, being cast into the stream of life at the source and passing upward again through all the lower forms.

So long as the connection with the Divine Monad is not severed, this annihilation of personality cannot take place. Something of that personality will always remain attached to the immortal Ego. Even after such severance the human being may live on, a man among men – a soulless being. This disappointment, so to call it, of the Divine Spark by depriving it of its chosen vehicle constitutes the “sin against the Holy Ghost,” [Mark 3:28-30] which its very nature forbade it to pardon, because it cannot continue an association with principles which have become degraded and vitiated in the absolute sense, so that they no longer respond to cyclic or evolutionary impulses, but, weighted by their own nature, sink to the lowest depths of matter. The connection, once wholly broken, cannot in the nature of Being be resumed. But innumerable opportunities for return offer themselves throughout the dissolving process, which lasts thousands of years.

There is also a fate that comes to even Adepts of the Good Law which is somewhat similar to a loss of “heaven” after its enjoyment for incalculable periods of time. When the Adept has reached a certain very high point in his evolution he may, by a mere wish, become what the Hindus call a “Deva” – or lesser god. If he does this, then, although he will enjoy the bliss and power of that state for a vast length of time, he will not at the next Pralaya partake of the conscious life “in the bosom of the Father,” but has to pass down into matter at the next new “creation,” performing certain functions that could not now be made clear, and has to come up again through the elemental world; but this fate is not like that of the Black Magician who falls into Avichi. And again between the two he can choose the middle state and become a Nirmānakāya – one who gives up the bliss of Nirvana and remains in conscious existence outside of his body after its death; in order to help Humanity. This is the greatest sacrifice he can do for mankind. By advancement from one degree of interest and comparative attainment to another as above stated, the student hastens the advent of the moment of choice, after which his rate of progress is greatly intensified.

It may be added that Theosophy is the only system of religion and philosophy which gives satisfactory explanation of such problems as these:

*First.* The object, use, and inhabitation of other planets than this earth, which planets serve to complete and prolong the evolutionary course, and to fill the required measure of the universal experience of souls.

*Second.* The geological cataclysms of earth; the frequent absence of intermediate types in its fauna; the occurrence of architectural and other relics of races now lost, and as to which ordinary science has nothing but vain conjecture; the nature of extinct civilizations and the causes of their extinction; the persistence of savagery and the unequal development of existing civilizations; the differences, physical and internal, between the various races of men; the line of future development.

*Third.* The contrasts and unisons of the world’s faiths, and the common foundation underlying them all.

*Fourth.* The existence of evil, of suffering, and of sorrow – a hopeless puzzle to the mere philanthropist or theologian.

*Fifth.* The inequalities in social condition and privilege; the sharp contrasts between wealth and poverty, intelligence and stupidity, culture and ignorance, virtue and vileness; the appearance of men of genius in families destitute of it, as well as other facts in conflict with the law of heredity; the frequent cases of unfitness of environment around individuals, so sore as to embitter disposition, hamper aspiration, and paralyze endeavor; the violent antithesis between character and condition; the occurrence of accident, misfortune and untimely death – all of them problems solvable only by either the conventional theory of Divine caprice or the Theosophic doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation.

*Sixth.* The possession by individuals of psychic powers – clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc., as well as the phenomena of psychometry and statuvolism [self-hypnotism].

*Seventh.* The true nature of genuine phenomena in spiritualism, and the proper antidote to superstition and to exaggerated expectation.

*Eighth.* The failure of conventional religions to greatly extend their areas, reform abuses, reorganize society, expand the idea of brotherhood, abate discontent, diminish crime, and elevate humanity; and an apparent inadequacy to realize in individual lives the ideal they professedly uphold.

The above is a sketch of the main features of Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion. Its details are to be found in the rapidly-growing literature upon the subject.

## Theosophy Generally Stated

William Q. Judge, *Lucifer*, Vol. VIII, December, 1893 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 2:135-139

[From the Official Report, World's Parliament of Religions {1893}]

The claim is made that an impartial study of history, religion and literature will show the existence from ancient times of a great body of philosophical, scientific and ethical doctrine forming the basis and origin of all similar thought in modern systems. It is at once religious and scientific, asserting that religion and science should never be separated. It puts forward sublime religious and ideal teachings, but at the same time shows that all of it can be demonstrated to reason, and that authority other than that has no place, thus preventing the hypocrisy which arises from asserting dogmas on authority which no one can show as resting on reason. This ancient body of doctrine is known as the "Wisdom-Religion" and was always taught by adepts or initiates therein who preserve it through all time. Hence, and from other doctrines demonstrated, it is shown that man, being spirit and immortal, is able to perpetuate his real life and consciousness, and has done so during all time in the persons of those higher flowers of the human race who are members of an ancient and high brotherhood who concern themselves with the soul development of man, held by them to include every process of evolution on all planes. The initiates, being bound by the law of evolution, must work with humanity as its development permits. Therefore from time to time they give out again and again the same doctrine which from time to time grows obscured in various nations and places. This is the Wisdom-Religion, and they are the keepers of it. At times they come to nations as great teachers and "saviors," who only re-promulgate the old truths and system of ethics. This therefore holds that humanity is capable of infinite perfection both in time and quality, the saviors and adepts being held up as examples of that possibility.

From this living and presently acting body of perfected men H. P. Blavatsky declared she received the impulse to once more bring forward the old ideas, and from them also received several keys to ancient and modern doctrines that had been lost during modern struggles toward civilization, and also that she was furnished by them with some doctrines really ancient but entirely new to the present day in any exoteric shape. These she wrote among the other keys furnished by her to her fellow members and the world at large. Added, then, to the testimony through all time found in records of all nations we have this modern explicit assertion that the ancient learned and humanitarian body of adepts still exists on this earth and takes an interest in the development of the race.

Theosophy postulates an eternal principle called the unknown, which can never be cognized except through its manifestations. This eternal principle is in and is every thing and being; it periodically and eternally manifests itself and recedes again from manifestation. In this ebb and flow evolution proceeds and itself is the progress of the manifestation. The perceived universe is the manifestation of this unknown, including spirit and matter, for Theosophy holds that those are but the two opposite poles of the one unknown principle. They coexist, are not separate nor separable from each other, or, as the Hindu scriptures say, there is no particle of matter without spirit, and no particle of spirit without matter. In manifesting itself the spirit-matter differentiates on seven planes, each more dense on the way down to the plane of our senses than its predecessor, the substance in all being the same only differing in degree. Therefore from this view the whole universe is alive, not one atom of it being in any sense dead. It is also conscious and intelligent, its consciousness and intelligence being present on all planes though obscured on this one. On this plane of ours the spirit focalizes itself in all human beings who choose to permit it to do so, and the refusal to permit it is the cause of ignorance, of sin, of all sorrow and suffering. In all ages some have come to this high state, have grown to be as gods, are partakers actively in the work of nature, and go on from century to century widening their consciousness and increasing the scope of their government in nature. This is the destiny of all beings, and hence at the outset Theosophy postulates this perfectibility of the race, removes the idea of innate unregenerable wickedness, and offers a purpose and an aim for life which is consonant with the longings of the soul and with its real nature, tending at the same time to destroy pessimism with its companion, despair.

In Theosophy the world is held to be the product of the evolution of the principle spoken of from the very lowest first forms of life guided as it proceeded by intelligent perfected beings from other and older evolutions, and compounded also of the egos or individual spirits for and by whom it emanates. Hence man as we know him is held to be a conscious spirit, the flower of evolution, with other and lower classes of egos below him in the lower kingdoms, all however coming up and destined one day to be on the same human stage as we now are, we then being higher still. Man's consciousness being thus more perfect is able to pass from one to another of the planes of differentiation mentioned. If he mistakes any one of them for the reality that he is in his essence, he is deluded; the object of evolution then is to give him complete self-consciousness so that he may go on to higher stages in the

progress of the universe. His evolution after coming on the human stage is for the getting of experience, and in order to so raise up and purify the various planes of matter with which he has to do, that the voice of the spirit may be fully heard and comprehended.

He is a religious being because he is a spirit encased in matter, which is in turn itself spiritual in essence. Being a spirit he requires vehicles with which to come in touch with all the planes of nature included in evolution, and it is these vehicles that make of him an intricate, composite being, liable to error, but at the same time able to rise above all delusions and conquer the highest place. He is in miniature the universe, for he is as spirit, manifesting himself to himself by means of seven differentiations. Therefore is he known in Theosophy as a sevenfold being. The Christian division of body, soul, and spirit is accurate so far as it goes, but will not answer to the problems of life and nature, unless, as is not the case, those three divisions are each held to be composed of others, which would raise the possible total to seven. The spirit stands alone at the top, next comes the spiritual soul or Buddhi as it is called in Sanskrit. This partakes more of the spirit than any below it, and is connected with Manas or mind, these three being the real trinity of man, the imperishable part, the real thinking entity living on the earth in the other and denser vehicles by its evolution. Below in order of quality is the plane of the desires and passions shared with the animal kingdom, unintelligent, and the producer of ignorance flowing from delusion. It is distinct from the will and judgment, and must therefore be given its own place. On this plane is gross life, manifesting, not as spirit from which it derives its essence, but as energy and motion on this plane. It being common to the whole objective plane and being everywhere, is also to be classed by itself, the portion used by man being given up at the death of the body. Then last, before the objective body, is the model or double of the outer physical case. This double is the astral body belonging to the astral plane of matter, not so dense as physical molecules, but more tenuous and much stronger, as well as lasting. It is the original of the body permitting the physical molecules to arrange and show themselves thereon, allowing them to go and come from day to day as they are known to do, yet ever retaining the fixed shape and contour given by the astral double within. These lower four principles or sheaths are the transitory perishable part of man, not himself, but in every sense the instrument he uses, given up at the hour of death like an old garment, and rebuilt out of the general reservoir at every new birth. The trinity is the real man, the thinker, the individuality that passes from house to house, gaining experience at each rebirth, while it suffers and enjoys according to its deeds – it is the one central man, the living spirit-soul.

Now this spiritual man, having always existed, being intimately concerned in evolution, dominated by the law of cause and effect, because in himself he is that very law, showing moreover on this plane varieties of force of character, capacity, and opportunity, his very presence must be explained, while the differences noted have to be accounted for. The doctrine of reincarnation does all this. It means that man as a thinker, composed of soul, mind and spirit, occupies body after body in life after life on the earth which is the scene of his evolution, and where he must, under the very laws of his being, complete that evolution, once it has been begun. In any one life he is known to others as a personality, but in the whole stretch of eternity he is one individual, feeling in himself an identity not dependent on name, form, or recollection.

This doctrine is the very base of Theosophy, for it explains life and nature. It is one aspect of evolution, for as it is re-embodiment in meaning, and as evolution could not go on without re-embodiment, it is evolution itself, as applied to the human soul. But it is also a doctrine believed in at the time given to Jesus and taught in the early ages of Christianity, being now as much necessary to that religion as it is to any other to explain texts, to reconcile the justice of God with the rough and merciless aspect of nature and life to most mortals, and to throw a light perceptible by reason on all the problems that vex us in our journey through this world. The vast, and under any other doctrine unjust, difference between the savage and the civilized man as to both capacity, character, and opportunity can be understood only through this doctrine, and coming to our own stratum the differences of the same kind may only thus be explained. It vindicates Nature and God, and removes from religion the blot thrown by men who have postulated creeds which paint the creator as a demon. Each man's life and character are the outcome of his previous lives and thoughts. Each is his own judge, his own executioner, for it is his own hand that forges the weapon which works for his punishment, and each by his own life reaches reward, rises to heights of knowledge and power for the good of all who may be left behind him. Nothing is left to chance, favor, or partiality, but all is under the governance of law. Man is a thinker, and by his thoughts he makes the causes for woe or bliss; for his thoughts produce his acts. He is the centre for any disturbance of the universal harmony, and to him as the centre the disturbance must return so as to bring about equilibrium, for nature always works towards harmony. Man is always carrying on a series of thoughts, which extend back to the remote past, continually making action and reaction. He is thus responsible for all his thoughts and acts, and in that his complete responsibility is established; his own spirit is

the essence of this law and provides for ever compensation for every disturbance and adjustment for all effects. This is the law of Karma or justice, sometimes called the ethical law of causation. It is not foreign to the Christian scriptures, for both Jesus and St. Paul clearly enunciated it. Jesus said we should be judged as we gave judgment and should receive the measure meted to others. St. Paul said: "Brethren, be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap." And that sowing and reaping can only be possible under the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation.

But what of death and after? Is heaven a place or is it not? Theosophy teaches, as may be found in all sacred books, that after death the soul reaps a rest. This is from its own nature. It is a thinker, and cannot during life fulfill and carry out all nor even a small part of the myriads of thoughts entertained. Hence when at death it casts off the body and the astral body, and is released from the passions and desires, its natural forces have immediate sway and it thinks its thoughts out on the soul plane, clothed in a finer body suitable to that existence. This is called Devachan. It is the very state that has brought about the descriptions of heaven common to all religions, but this doctrine is very clearly put in the Buddhist and Hindu religions. It is a time of rest, because the physical body being absent the consciousness is not in the completer touch with visible nature which is possible on the material plane. But it is a real existence, and no more illusionary than earth life; it is where the essence of the thoughts of life that were as high as character permitted, expands and is garnered by the soul and mind. When the force of these thoughts is fully exhausted the soul is drawn back once more to earth, to that environment which is sufficiently like unto itself to give it the proper further evolution. This alternation from state to state goes on until the being rises from repeated experiences above ignorance, and realizes in itself the actual unity of all spiritual beings. Then it passes on to higher and greater steps on the evolutionary road.

No new ethics are presented by Theosophy, as it is held that right ethics are for ever the same. But in the doctrines of Theosophy are to be found the philosophical and reasonable basis for ethics and the natural enforcement of them in practice. Universal Brotherhood is that which will result in doing unto others as you would have them do unto you, and in your loving your neighbor as yourself – declared as right by all teachers in the great religions of the world.

## Theosophy as a Guide in Life

Tract probably written by William Q. Judge, *Echoes of the Orient*, 3:67-71

This is a practical age, and every system or theory is challenged to give proofs of what it may accomplish in action. How very little is gained by mere belief is the standing reproach to Churches. Their diversified Creeds have been steadily evolving through the centuries as new problems in theology or science arose, and today the separated sects have an outfit of every possible belief on every possible theme. No small proportion of these themes are in regions remote from practical life, as also from any means of proof. They concern such questions as the number and nature of Divine Beings, the character and bearing of the Divine Will, the fixedness of the future life, the best form of ecclesiastical sacraments, etc. – all of them with little facility of demonstration and with no utility when demonstrated. Moreover, it is quite evident that, whether there be One God or Three, whether He predestinates or not, whether evil-doers are damned eternally or temporarily, whether Baptism is efficacious towards pardon, the various sects have not made this earth more worthy of the Divine care or diminished the evils which religion should cure. As conservators of morals, abaters of sin, regenerators of society, Churches are assuredly a lamentable failure. It is not merely that society remains unregenerated, but that nobody now expects them to regenerate it. A copious provision of minute creeds has clearly done nothing to extirpate evil.

This being so, it is just as certain that the addition of another creed will not do so. The two classes interested in human progress are the philanthropic and the devout, and both, when any unfamiliar scheme for such progress is submitted to them, are sure to point out that mere beliefs have wholly failed. They say, with entire correctness, that not a new platform or Church is needed, but something with an object and an impulsion hitherto untried. If Theosophy has no better aim than have the sects, if it imparts no motive stronger than do they, if it can show no results more distinct and valuable, it may as well be rejected now as after a futile trial. But, on the other hand, if it holds out a better prospect and a finer spur, if it can prove that these have actually operated where conventional ones have failed, it is entitled to a hearing. The doctrinal question is subordinate, though, of course, an ethical system is more hopeful if upon a rational basis.

Let us see if the unfamiliar system known as “Theosophy,” and which has lately received so much attention from the thinking world, possesses any qualities warranting its substitution for the religions around it. They have not reformed mankind; can It?

Now 1st – *Theosophy abolishes the cause of all of the sin, and most of the misery, of life.* That cause is selfishness. Every form of dishonesty, violence, outrage, fraud, even discourtesy, comes from the desire to promote one’s own ends, even if the rights of others have to be sacrificed thereby. All aggression upon fellow-men, all attempts to appropriate their comfort, possessions, or plans, all efforts to belittle, outshine, or humiliate them, express the feeling that self-gratification is to be sought before all else. This is equally true of personal vices, as well as of that personal contempt for Divine authority which we may call “impiety.” Hence the root of all evil conduct towards God, towards other men, or towards one-self is self-love, self-love so strong as to sacrifice everything rather than its own indulgence.

From this indulgence follow two things. First, the pains of envy, disappointment, jealousy, and all the mean and biting passions which attend the ever-present thought of self, and the utter loss of all those finer, gentler joys which are the fruit of beneficence and altruism. Second, the restraining measures which society, for its own protection, is obliged to put upon aggression in its coarser forms, – the workhouses, jails, and gibbets from which no land of civilization and churches is free. And if we wish to realize what would be the effect of a universal reign of unselfishness among men, we may picture a land without courts, prisons, and policemen, a society without speculation, chicanery, or deceit, a community whereof every heart was as vacant of envy and guile as it certainly would be of unhappiness and pain. The root of universal sorrow would be eradicated, the stream dried at its source.

Now this is what Theosophy enjoins. Its cardinal doctrine is the absolute equality of human rights and the universal obligation to respect them. If my neighbor’s possessions – of feeling, property, happiness, what not – are as much to be regarded as are mine, and if I feel that, I shall not invade them. Still more. If I perceive the true fraternity of man, if I am in accord with the law of sympathy it evokes, if I realize that the richest pleasure comes from giving rather than receiving good, I shall not be passively unaggressive, I shall be actively beneficent. In other words, I shall be a true philanthropist. And in being this I shall have gained the highest reach of happiness to self, for “he that loseth his

life, the same shall save it" [cf. *Luke*, 9:34]. You say that this is a Christian text? Very well; it is also the epitome of Theosophy.

Then 2nd – *Theosophy sounds ceaselessly the truth that every act of right or wrong shall receive its due reward.* Most religious systems say otherwise. Usually they provide a "vicarious" plan by which punishment is to be dodged and unearned bliss secured. But if awards may be transferred, so may duties, and thus chaos is introduced into the moral order of the universe. Moreover, the palpable injustices of human life, those injustices which grieve the loving heart and sting the bitter one, are unaccounted for. All the inequalities and paradoxes and uncertainties so thick around us are insoluble. *Why* evil flourishes and good withers may not be known. Night settles down on the most important of human questions.

Theosophy illuminates it at once. It insists that moral causes are no less effective than are physical, and that its due effect, in harm or benefit, is infallibly attached to every moral act. There is no escape, no loss, no uncertainty; the law is absolutely unflinching and irresistible. Every penny of debt must be paid, by or to the individual himself. Not by any means necessarily in one life, but somewhere and somehow along the great chain is rigorous justice done; for the effect of causes generated on the moral plane may have to exhaust themselves in physical circumstances.

If unselfishness constitutes the method towards social regeneration, Karma – for such is the name of this doctrine of justice – must constitute its stimulus. Nothing fails; – no good, no evil, can die without its fruit. The result of a deed is as certain as the deed. How can a system be unpractical when it abolishes every bar to the law of causation, and makes practice the key to its whole operation?

Then 3rd – *Theosophy holds that every man is the framer of his own destiny.* All the theological apparatus of "elections" and "predestinations" and "foreordinations" it breaks indignantly to bits. The semi-material theories of "luck," and "fate," and "chance" fare no better. Every other theory which shifts responsibility or paralyzes effort is swept away. Theosophy will have none of them. It insists that we can be only that which we have willed to be, that no power above or below will thwart or divert us, that our destiny is in our hands. We may perceive the beauty of that conception of the future which embodies it in a restoration to the Divine fullness through continuous purgation of all that is sensuous and selfish and belittling, and, so perceiving, may struggle on towards that distant goal; or self-besotted, eager only for the transient and the material, we may hug closely our present joys, heedless alike of others and of Karmic law; but, whatever be the ideal, whatever the effort, whatever the result, it is ours alone. No Divinity will greet the conqueror as a favorite of Heaven; no Demon will seize the lost in a predestined clutch. What we are we have made ourselves; what we shall be is ours to make.

Here comes in the fact of Reincarnation. No one life is adequate to a man's development. Again and again must he come to earth, to taste its quality, to lay up its experience and its discipline, each career on earth determining the nature of its successor. Two things follow: 1st, our present state discloses what we have accomplished in past lives; 2nd, our present habits decide what the next life shall be. The formative power is lodged in us; our aspiration prompting, our will effecting, the aim desired. Surely it is the perfection of fairness that every man shall be what he wishes to be!

Of all the many schemes for human melioration which history has recorded and humanity tried, is there one so rational, so just, so impartial, so elevating, so motivated, as that presented by Theosophy? Artificial distinctions and conceptions are wholly expunged. Fanciful ambitions have absolutely no place. Mechanical devices are completely absent. The root of all separations and enmities – selfishness – is exposed and denounced. The inflexibility of moral law is vigorously declaimed. The realization of individual aim is made entirely individual. Thus sweeping away every artifice and annulling every check devised by theologians, opening the path to the highest ideal of religious fervor, insuring that not an item is lost in the long account each man runs up in his many lives, handing over to each the determination and the acquirement of his chosen aim, Theosophy does what no rival system has done or can do, – affirms the moral consciousness, vindicates the moral sense, spurs the moral motive. And thus it is both practical and practicable.

Thus, too, it becomes a guide in life. Once given the aim before a man and the certainty that every act affects that aim, the question of the expediency of any act is at once determined. Is an act selfish, unfraternal, aggressive? It is then untheosophical. Is it conducive to unselfishness, spirituality, progress? Then Theosophy affirms it. The test is simple and uncomplicated, and, because so, feasible. He who would be guided through the intricacies of life need

seek no priest or intercessor, but, illuminated with the Divine Spirit ever present in his inner man, stimulated by the vision of ultimate reunion with the Supreme, assured that each effort has its inseparately-joined result, conscious that in himself is the responsibility for its adoption, may go on in harmony, hope, and happiness, free from misgivings as to justice or success, and strong in the faith that he who has conformed to Nature and her laws shall be conformed to the destiny which she predicts for *Man*.

### **Methods of Theosophical Work**

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. VI, August 1891 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 1:204-5

In my experience with the Theosophical Society I have noticed a disposition on the part of some members to often object to the methods of others or to their plans on the ground that they are unwise, or not suitable, or what not. These objections are not put in a spirit of discord, but more often arise merely from a want of knowledge of the working of the laws which govern our efforts.

H.P.B. always said – following the rules laid down by high teachers – that no proposal for theosophical work should be rejected or opposed provided the proposer has the sincere motive of doing good to the movement and to his fellows. Of course that does not mean that distinctly bad or pernicious purposes are to be forwarded. Seldom, however, does a sincere theosophist propose such bad acts. But they often desire to begin some small work for the Society, and are frequently opposed by those who think the juncture unfavorable or the thing itself unwise. These objections always have at bottom the assumption that there is only one certain method to be followed. One man objects to the fact that a Branch holds open public meetings, another that it does not. Others think the Branch should be distinctly metaphysical, still more that it should be entirely ethical. Sometimes when a member who has not much capacity proposes an insignificant work in his own way, his fellows think it ought not to be done. But the true way is to bid good-speed to every sincere attempt to spread theosophy, even if you cannot agree with the method. As it is not your proposal, you are not concerned at all in the matter. You praise the desire to benefit; nature takes care of results.

A few examples may illustrate. Once in New York a most untrue newspaper article about theosophy appeared. It was a lying interview. All that it had in it true was the address of an official of the T.S. It was sent by an enemy of the Society to a gentleman who had long desired to find us. He read it, took down the address, and became one of our most valued members. In England a lady of influence had desired to find out the Society's place but could not. By accident a placard that some members thought unwise fell into her hands noticing an address on theosophy in an obscure place. She attended, and there met those who directed her to the Society. In the same town a member who is not in the upper classes throws cards about at meetings directing those who want to know theosophical doctrines where to go. In several cases these chance cards, undignifiedly scattered, have brought into the ranks excellent members who had no other means of finding out about the Society. Certainly the most of us would think that scattering cards in this manner is too undignified to be our work.

But no one method is to be insisted on. Each man is a potency in himself, and only by working on the lines which suggest themselves to him can he bring to bear the forces that are his. We should deny no man and interfere with none; for our duty is to discover what we ourselves can do without criticizing the actions of another. The laws of karmic action have much to do with this. We interfere for a time with good results to come when we attempt to judge according to our own standards the methods of work which a fellow member proposes for himself. Ramifying in every direction are the levers that move and bring about results, some of those levers - absolutely necessary for the greatest of results - being very small and obscure. They are all of them human beings, and hence we must carefully watch that by no word of ours the levers are obstructed. If we attend strictly to our own duty all will act in harmony, for the duty of another is dangerous for us. Therefore if any member proposes to spread the doctrines of theosophy in a way that seems wise to him, wish him success even if his method be one that would not commend itself to you for your own guidance.

WILLIAM BREHON, F.T.S. {William Q. Judge}

### **Musings on the True Theosophist's Path**

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. I, August, 1886; October 1886; February 1887 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 1:17-24

“The way of inward peace is in all things to conform to the pleasure and disposition of the Divine Will. Such as would have all things succeed and come to pass according to their own fancy, are not come to know this way; and therefore lead a harsh and bitter life; always restless and out of humor, without treading the way of peace.” [*Golden Thoughts from The Spiritual Guide of Miguel Molinos, The Quietest*, David Bryce & Son, Glasgow, 1883, p. 34.]

Know then, oh Man, that he who seeks the hidden way, can only find it through the door of life. In the hearts of all, at some time, there arises the desire for knowledge. He who thinks his desire will be fulfilled, as the little bird in the nest, who has only to open his mouth to be fed; will very truly be disappointed.

In all nature we can find no instance where effort of some kind is not required. We find there is a natural result from such effort. He who would live the life or find wisdom can only do so by continued effort. If one becomes a student, and learns to look partially within the veil, or has found within his own being something that is greater than his outer self, it gives no authority for one to sit down in idleness or fence himself in from contact with the world. Because one sees the gleam of the light ahead he cannot say to his fellow “I am holier than thou” or draw the mantle of seclusion around himself.

The soul develops like the flower, in God's sunlight, and unconsciously to the soil in which it grows. Shut out the light and the soil grows damp and sterile, the flower withers or grows pale and sickly. Each and every one is here for a good and wise reason. If we find partially the why we are here, then is there the more reason that we should by intelligent contact with life, seek in it the further elucidation of the problem. It is not the study of ourselves so much, as the thought for others that opens this door. The events of life and their causes lead to knowledge. They must be studied when they are manifested in daily life.

There is no idleness for the Mystic. He finds his daily life among the roughest and hardest of the labors and trials of the world perhaps, but goes his way with smiling face and joyful heart, nor grows too sensitive for association with his fellows, nor so extremely spiritual as to forget that some other body is perhaps hungering for food.

It was said by one who pretended to teach the mysteries, “It is needful that I have a pleasant location and beautiful surroundings.” He who is a true Theosophist will wait for nothing of the sort, either before teaching; or what is first needful, learning. It would perhaps, be agreeable, but if the Divine Inspiration comes only under those conditions, then indeed is the Divine afar from the most of us. He only can be a factor for good or teach how to approach the way, who forgetting his own surroundings, strives to beautify and illumine those of others. The effort must be for the good of others, not the gratifying of our own senses, or love for the agreeable or pleasant.

Giving thought to self will most truly prevent and overthrow your aims and objects, particularly when directed toward the occult.

Again there arises the thought “I am a student, a holder of a portion of the mystic lore.” Insidiously there steals in the thought “Behold I am a little more than other men, who have not penetrated so far.” Know then, oh man, that you are not as great even as they. He who thinks he is wise is the most ignorant of men, and he who begins to *believe* he is wise is in greater danger than any other man who lives.

You think, oh man, that because you have obtained a portion of occult knowledge, that it entitles you to withdraw from contact with the rest of mankind. It is not so. If you have obtained true knowledge it forces you to meet all men not only half way, but more than that to seek them. It urges you not to retire but, seeking contact, to plunge into the misery and sorrow of the world, and with your cheering word, if you have no more (the Mystic has little else) strive to lighten the burden for some struggling soul.

You dream of fame. We know no such thing as fame. He who seeks the upward path finds that all is truth; that evil is the good gone astray. Why should we ask for fame? It is only the commendation of those we strive to help.

Desire neither notice, fame nor wealth. Unknown you are in retirement. Being fameless you are undisturbed in your seclusion, and can walk the broad face of the earth fulfilling your duty, as commanded, unrecognized.

If the duty grows hard, or you faint by the way, be not discouraged, fearful or weary of the world. Remember that “Thou may’st look for silence in tumult, solitude in company, light in darkness, forgetfulness in pressures, vigor in dependency, courage in fear, resistance in temptation, peace in war, and quiet in tribulation.” [Ibid., p. 40.]

## Part II

“Work as those work who are ambitious. – Respect life as those do who desire it. – Be happy as those who live for happiness.” – *Light on the Path*

We are tried in wondrous ways, and in the seemingly unimportant affairs of life, there often lie the most dangerous of the temptations.

Labor, at best, is frequently disagreeable owing either to mental or physical repugnance. When he who seeks the upward path, begins to find it, labor grows more burdensome, while at the time, he is, owing to his physical condition, not so well fitted to struggle with it. This is all true, but there must be no giving in to it. It must be forgotten. He *must work*, and if he cannot have the sort he desires or deems best suited to him, then must he take and perform that which presents itself. It is that which he most needs. It is not intended either, that he do it to have it done. It is intended that he work as if it was the object of his life, as if his whole heart was in it. Perhaps he may be wise enough to know that there is something else, or that the future holds better gifts for him; still this also must to all intents be forgotten, while he takes up his labor, as if there were no tomorrow.

Remember that life is the outcome of the Ever-Living. If you have come to comprehend a little of the mystery of life, and can value its attractions according to their worth; these are no reasons why you should walk forth with solemn countenance to blight the enjoyments of other men. Life to them is as real, as the mystery is to you. Their time will come as yours has, so hasten it for them, if you can, by making life brighter, more joyous, better.

If it be your time to fast, put on the best raiment you have, and go forth, not as one who fasts, but as one who lives for life.

Do your sighing and crying within you. If you can not receive the small events of life and their meanings without crying them out to all the world, think you that you are fitted to be trusted with the mysteries?

The doing away with one or certain articles of diet, *in itself*, will not open the sealed portals. If this contained the key, what wise beings must the beasts of the field be, and what a profound Mystic must Nebuchadnezzar have been, after he was “turned out to grass”!

There are some adherents of a faith, which has arisen in the land, who deem it wise to cast away all things that are distasteful to them; to cut asunder the ties of marriage because they deem it will interfere with their spiritual development, or because the other pilgrim is not progressed enough. Brothers, there lives not the man who is wise enough to sit as a judge upon the spiritual development of any living being. He is not only unwise but blasphemous who say to another: “Depart! you impede my exalted spiritual development.”

The greatest of all truths lies frequently in plain sight, or veiled in contraries. The impression has gone abroad that the Adept or the Mystic of high degree has only attained his station by forsaking the association of his fellow creatures or refusing the marriage tie. It is the belief of very wise Teachers that all men who had risen to the highest degrees of Initiation, have at some time passed through the married state. Many men, failing in the trials, have ascribed their failure to being wedded, precisely as that other coward, Adam, after being the first transgressor cried out “It was Eve.”

One of the most exalted of the Divine Mysteries lies hidden here – therefore, oh Man, it is wise to cherish that which holds so much of God and seek to know its meaning; not by dissolution and cutting asunder, but by binding and strengthening the ties. Our most Ancient Masters knew of this and Paul also speaks of it. (*Ephesians 5:32*).

Be patient, kindly and wise, for perhaps in the next moment of life, the light will shine out upon thy companion, and you discover that you are but a blind man, claiming to see. Remember this, that you own not one thing in this world.

Your wife is but a gift, your children are but loaned to you. All else you possess is given to you only while you use it wisely. Your body is not yours, for Nature claims it as her property. Do you not think, Oh Man, that it is the height of arrogance for you to sit in judgment upon any other created thing, while you, a beggar, are going about in a borrowed robe?

If misery, want and sorrow are thy portion for a time, be happy that it is not death. If it is death be happy there is no more of life.

You would have wealth, and tell of the good you would do with it. Truly will you lose your way under these conditions. It is quite probable, that you are as rich as you ever will be, therefore, desire to do good with what you have – and *do it*. If you have nothing, know that it is best and wisest for you. Just so surely as you murmur and complain just so surely will you find that “from him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath” [*Matthew 13:12*]. This sounds contradictory, but in reality is in most harmonious agreement. Work in life and the Occult are similar; all is the result of your own effort and will. You are not rash enough to believe that you will be lifted up into Heaven like the Prophet of old – but you really hope some one will come along and give you a good shove toward it.

Know then, Disciples, that you only can lift yourselves by your own efforts. When this is done, you may have the knowledge that you will find many to accompany you on your heretofore lonely journey; but neither they nor your Teacher will be permitted to push or pull you one step onward.

This is all a very essential part of your preparation and trial for Initiation.

You look and wait for some great and astounding occurrence, to show you that you are going to be permitted to enter behind the veil; that you are to be Initiated. It will never come. He only who studies all things and learns from them, as he finds them, will be permitted to enter, and for him there are no flashing lightnings or rolling thunder. He who enters the door, does so as gently and imperceptibly, as the tide rises in the night time.

Live well your life. Seek to realize the meaning of every event. Strive to find the Ever Living and wait for more light. The True Initiate does not fully realize what he is passing through, until his degree is received. If you are striving for light and Initiation, remember this, that your cares will increase, your trials thicken, your family make new demands upon you. He who can understand and pass through these patiently, wisely, placidly – may hope.

### Part III

If you desire to labor for the good of the world, it will be unwise for you to strive to include it all at once in your efforts. If you can help elevate or teach but one soul – that is a good beginning, and more than is given to many.

Fear nothing that is in Nature and visible. Dread no influence exerted by sect, faith, or society. Each and every one of them originated upon the same basis – Truth, or a portion of it at least. You may not assume that you have a greater share than they, it being needful only that you find all the truth each one possesses. You are at war with none. It is peace you are seeking, therefore it is best that the good in everything is found. For this brings peace.

It has been written that he who lives the Life shall know the doctrine. Few there be who realize the significance of The Life.

It is not by intellectually philosophizing upon it, until reason ceases to solve the problem, nor by listening in ecstatic delight to the ravings of an *Elemental clothed* – whose hallucinations are but the offspring of the Astral – that the life is realized. Nor will it be realized by the accounts of the experiences of other students. For there be some who will not realize Divine Truth itself, when written, unless it be properly punctuated or expressed in flowery flowing words.

Remember this: that as you live your life each day with an uplifted purpose and unselfish desire, each and every event will bear for you a deep significance – an occult meaning – and as you learn their import, so do you fit yourself for higher work.

There are no rose-gardens upon the way in which to loiter about, nor fawning slaves to fan one with golden rods of ostrich plumes. The Ineffable Light will not stream out upon you every time you may think you have turned up the wick, nor will you find yourself sailing about in an astral body, to the delight of yourself and the astonishment of the rest of the world, simply because you are making the effort to find wisdom.

He who is bound in any way – he who is narrow in his thoughts – finds it doubly difficult to pass onward. You may equally as well gain wisdom and light in a church as by sitting upon a post while your nails grow through your hands. It is not by going to extremes or growing fanatical in any direction that the life will be realized.

Be temperate in all things, most of all in the condemnation of other men. It is unwise to be intemperate or drunken with wine. It is equally unwise to be drunken with temperance. Men would gain the powers; or the way of working wonders. Do you know, O man, what the powers of the Mystic are? Do you know that for each gift of this kind he gives a part of himself? That it is only with mental anguish, earthly sorrow, and almost his heart's blood, these gifts are gained? Is it true, think you, my brother, that he who truly possesses them desires to sell them at a dollar a peep, or any other price? He who would trade upon these things finds himself farther from his goal than when he was born.

There *are* gifts and powers. Nor just such as you have created in your imagination, perhaps. Harken to one of these powers: He who has passed onward to a certain point, finds that the hearts of men lie spread before him as open book, and from there onward the motives of men are clear. In other words he can read the hearts of men. But not selfishly; should he but once use this knowledge selfishly, the book is closed – and he reads no more. Think you, my brothers, he would permit himself to *sell* a page out of this book?

Time – that which does not exist outside the inner circle of this little world – seems of vast importance to the physical man. There comes to him at times, the thought that he is not making any progress, and that he is receiving nothing from some Mystic source. From the fact that he has the thought that no progress is being made the evidence is gained that he is working onward. Only the dead in living bodies need fear. That which men would receive from Mystic sources is frequently often repeated, and in such a quiet, unobtrusive voice, that he who is waiting to hear it shouted in his ear, is apt to pass on unheeding.

Urge no man to see as yourself, as it is quite possible you may see differently when you awake in the morning. It is wiser to let the matter rest without argument. No man is absolutely convinced by that. It is but blowing your breath against the whirlwind.

It was at one time written over the door: "Abandon Hope, all ye who enter here." It has taken hundreds of years for a few to come to the realization that the wise men had not the slightest desire for the company of a lot of hopeless incurables in the mysteries. There is to be abandoned hope for the gratification of our passions, our curiosities, our ambition or desire for gain. There is also another Hope – the true; and he is a wise man who comes to the knowledge of it. Sister to Patience, they together are the Godmothers of Right Living, and two of the Ten who assist the Teacher.

AMERICAN MYSTIC

## **Universal Brotherhood a Fact in Nature**

William Q. Judge, Talk given at World's Parliament of Religions, September, 1893 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 2:143-8

I have been requested to speak on the subject of Universal Brotherhood as a fact in nature; not as a theory, not as a Utopian dream which can never be realized; not as a fact in society, not as a fact in government, but as a fact in nature. That is, that Universal Brotherhood is an actual thing, whether it is recognized or whether it is not. Christian priests have claimed for some years, without right, that Christianity introduced the idea of Universal Brotherhood. The reason the claim was made, I suppose, was because those who made it did not know that other religions at other times had the same doctrine. It is found in the Buddhist scriptures, it is found in the Chinese books, it is found in the Parsee books, it is found everywhere in the history of the world, long before the first year of the Christian Era began. So it is not a special idea from the Christian Scriptures. Every nation, then, every civilization has brought forward this doctrine, and the facts of history show us that, more than at any other time, the last eighteen hundred years have seen this doctrine violated in society, in government, and in nations. So that at last men have come to say, "Universal Brotherhood is very beautiful; it is something that we all desire, but it is impossible to realize." With one word they declare the noble doctrine, and with the other they deny the possibility of its ever being realized.

Why is this the case? Why is it that although Christianity and other religions have brought forward this doctrine, it has been violated? We cannot deny that it has been. The history of even the last few years proves it. The history of the last forty years in America, without going any farther back, proves that this doctrine has been violated in the West. How could it have been a doctrine that the Americans believed in when they had slavery in their midst? How could it have been believed in by the French when they stretched out their hand and demanded of Siam, a weak and powerless nation, that it must give up to them its own property? How could it have been believed in by the Germans and French when they constructed engines of war and went into battle and destroyed each other by the thousand? Does not the American War of the Rebellion and the vast amount of treasure wasted and the thousands slain in that civil war prove conclusively that Universal Brotherhood has not been practiced? It has been professed but not practiced. Now, go further back, go back in the history of the nations in Europe, without going to any other country, and what do you find? Do you not find sectarian prejudice? Their view of Universal Brotherhood has for years prevented the progress of science. Is it not true that only since science became materialized—a most remarkable thing, but it is true—I insist that since then only science has made progress. If Universal Brotherhood had been a belief of this nation, then we would not have had the burning of witches in America; nor in other countries would we have had the burning of Catholics by Protestants, nor the burning of Protestants by Catholics; we would not have had the persecutions that have stained the pages of history; and yet we have always claimed that we have had Universal Brotherhood. We have had the theory but not the practice. Now, then, has there not been something wanting? It is a beautiful doctrine. It is the only doctrine of the Theosophical Society, the only thing that any man is asked by us to subscribe to. What, then, is the matter with it? Why so many men who say that it is beautiful, but it is impossible, simply impossible? There are even some branches of the Christian church which say, "There is Jesus; why, the altruistic, noble teachings of Christ are beautiful; but no State could live three months under such doctrine." The reason that it has not prevailed in practice is that it has been denied in the heart.

The Theosophist who knows anything about life insists that Universal Brotherhood is not a mere theory. It is a fact, a living ever present fact, from which no nation can hope to escape; no man can escape from it, and every man who violates it violates a law, violates the greatest law of nature, which will react upon him and make him suffer. And that is why we have had suffering; that is why you have in Chicago, in London, in New York, in Berlin, in all the great cities of the world, masses of people who are claiming with violence what they call their rights and saying they must have them, and that another class is oppressing them; and danger lurks in every corner because men are insisting on Universal Brotherhood. This noble doctrine has already become a danger. The reason of all these things is that men have denied the fact. Now, we propose to show you, if we can, that it is a fact.

If you will notice you will find that when it rains over a certain area vast numbers of men are affected similarly. The rain has to fall on the fields in order that the harvest may grow, so that afterwards it may be gathered, and all the farmers are affected together by the rain. If you examine society you will find that at the same hour every day almost all the people are doing exactly the same thing. At a certain hour in the morning thousands of your citizens are going down that railway or rush all together to catch the train and at another few moments afterward they are rushing out of the train to get to business, all doing the same thing, one common thought inspiring them. That is one of the proofs—a small one—in social and business life that they are affected together, they are all united. Then in the evening they will come home at the same hour, and if you could see, at the same hour you would see them all eating

together and digesting together, and then later on they are all lying down together at the same hour. Are they not united even in their social life? Brothers even in that? And what do we see here in business? Lately I have felt it; every man has felt it, and many women; doubtless all have felt it; lately we have had a financial crisis, perhaps have it yet, in which dollars have been scarce, during which men have discovered that there are only just so many dollars and half dollars to each person in the country, and we have altogether been suffering from that panic all over this vast country. Suffering, why? Because commercially we are united and cannot get out of it. China even is affected by it, and Japan. India, they say, was the cause of it. Some men say the reason for this panic is that India put the price of rupees down, and we who produce so much silver began to feel it. I do not know that is the reason. But I think there is another cause. I think the American nation is so fond of luxury, so fond of fine clothes, so fond of having a heap of money, that it has gone too far and there was bound to come a reaction, because it is all united together with the whole world, and when it spread itself out too far the slightest touch broke the fabric. That is the reason, and that is another proof of Universal Brotherhood. We are all united, not only with each other here, but with the entire world.

Now, then, go further still materially and you find that all men are alike. We have the same sort of bodies, a little different perhaps in height, weight, and extension, but as human beings we are all alike, all the same color in one country, all the same shape in any country, so that as mere bodies of flesh they are united, they are the same. We know every man and woman has exuding from him or her what is called perspiration. The doctors will tell you there is a finer perspiration you cannot see, the invisible perspiration which goes out a short distance around about us; we know it comes out from every person, and the emanations of each person are affecting every other person, being interchanged always. All those in this room are being affected by these emanations and also by the ideas of each other, and the ideas of the speakers speaking to you. So it is in every direction; wherever you go, wherever you look, we are united; in whatever plane, the plane of mind as well as the plane of the body; the plane of the emotions, of the spirit, what not, we are all united, and it is a fact from which we cannot escape. Now, then, further: science is beginning to admit what the old Theosophists have always said, that there is going on every minute in every person a death, a dissolution, a disappearance. It used to be taught and thought in the West that we could see matter, that this table is made of matter. It is admitted today by your best scientific men in every part of Western civilization that you do not see matter at all; it is only the phenomena of matter we see; and it is my senses which enable me to perceive these phenomena. It is not matter at all, and so we do not see matter. Now admitting that, they go further and say there is a constant change in matter so-called; that is, this table is in motion. This is not a purely Theosophical theory. Go to any doctor of Physics and he will admit to you as I have stated it. This table is in motion; every molecule is separate from every other, and there is space between them, and they are moving. So it is with every man; he is made of atoms and they are in motion. Then how is it we remain the same size and weight nearly always from the moment of maturity until death? We eat tons of meat and vegetables but remain the same. It is not because of the things you have eaten. In addition to that the atoms are alive, constantly moving, coming and going from one person to another; and this is the modern doctrine today as well as it was the doctrine of ancient India. They call it the momentary dissolution of atoms; that is to say, to put it in another way, I am losing, all of you in this room are losing, a certain number of atoms, but they are being replaced by other atoms. Now, where do these other atoms come from? Do they not come from the people in this room? These atoms help to rebuild your body as well as does the food you eat. And we are exuding atoms from our minds, and we are receiving into ourselves the atoms other men have used. For, remember, science teaches you, and Theosophy has always insisted, that matter is invisible before it is turned into this combination of the life cycle, which makes it visible, makes it tangible to us. So these atoms leave us in a stream and rush into other people. And therefore the atoms of good men go into bad men, the atoms impressed by bad men go into good men, and vice versa. In that way as well as others we are affecting everybody in this world; and the people in Chicago who are living mean, selfish lives are impressing these invisible atoms with mean and selfish characters, and these mean and selfish atoms will be distributed by other men, and by you again to your and their detriment. That is another phase of Universal Brotherhood. It teaches us to be careful to see that we use and keep the atoms in our charge in such a condition that they shall benefit others to whom they shall go.

There is another view of Universal Brotherhood, and I don't pretend to exhaust the argument on this point, for I have not the time nor force to state all that is put forward in the Theosophical books and literature and thought. That is, that there is in this world an actual Universal Brotherhood of men and women, of souls, a brotherhood of beings who practice Universal Brotherhood by always trying to influence the souls of men for their good. I bring to you the message of these men; I bring to you the words of that brotherhood. Why will you longer call yourselves miserable men and women who are willing to go to a Heaven where you will do nothing? Do you not like to be gods? Do you

not want to be gods? I hear some men say, "What, a god! Impossible!" Perhaps they do not like the responsibility. Why, when you get to that position you will understand the responsibility. This actual Brotherhood of living men says, Why, men of the West, why will you so long refuse to believe you are gods? We are your brothers and we are gods with you. Be then as gods! Believe that you are gods, and then, after experience and attainment, you will have a place consciously in the great Brotherhood which governs the entire world, but cannot go against the law. This great Brotherhood of living men, living souls, would, if they could, alter the face of civilization; they would, if they could, come down and make saints of every one of you; but evolution is the law and they cannot violate it; they must wait for you. And why will you so long be satisfied to believe that you are born in original sin and cannot escape? I do not believe in any such doctrine as that. I do not believe I was born in original sin. I believe that I am pretty bad, but that potentially I am a god, and I propose to take the inheritance if it is possible. For what purpose? So that I may help all the rest to do the same thing, for that is the law of Universal Brotherhood; and the Theosophical Society wishes to enforce it on the West, to make it see this great truth, that we are as gods, and are only prevented from being so in fact by our own insanity, ignorance, and fear to take the position.

So, then, we insist that Universal Brotherhood is a fact in nature. It is a fact for the lowest part of nature; for the animal kingdom, for the vegetable kingdom, and the mineral kingdom. We are all atoms, obeying the law together. Our denying it does not disprove it. It simply puts off the day of reward and keeps us miserable, poor, and selfish. Why, just think of it! If all in Chicago, in the United States, would act as Jesus has said, as Buddha has said, as Confucius said, as all the great ethical teachers of the world have said, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," would there be any necessity for legal measures and policemen with clubs in this park as you had them the other day? No, I think there would be no necessity, and that is what one of this great Brotherhood has said. He said all the troubles of the world would disappear in a moment if men would only do one-quarter of what they could and what they ought. It is not God who is to damn you to death, to misery. It is yourself. And the Theosophical Society desires above all things, not that you should understand spiritualism, not that wonderful occult works should be performed, but to understand the constitution of matter and of Life as they are, which we can never understand but by practicing right ethics. Live with each other as brothers; for the misery and the trouble of the world are of more importance than all the scientific progress that may be imagined. I conclude by calling upon you by all that humanity holds dear to remember what I say, and whether Christians, Atheists, Jews, Pagans, Heathen, or Theosophists, try to practice Universal Brotherhood, which is the universal duty of all men.

### **What Our Society Needs Most**

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. VII, September, 1892 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 1:279-81

The first object of our Society is the formation of a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood. This is a practical object and at the same time a fact in nature. It has been long regarded by the greater number of men as an Utopian ideal, one that might be held up, talked about, desired, but impossible of attainment. And it was no wonder that people so regarded it, because the ordinary religious view of God, nature, and man placed everything on a selfish basis, offered personal distinction in heaven to the saints who might die in the odor of sanctity, and thus made impossible the realization of this beautiful dream. But when the Theosophical philosophy shows that there is a unity among beings not only in their better natures but also on the physical plane, our first object becomes most practical. For if all men are brothers in fact, that is, joined one to another by a tie which no one can break, then the formation of the nucleus for the future brotherhood is something that has to do with all the affairs of man, affects civilizations, and leads to the physical as well as moral betterment of each member of the great family.

This first object means philanthropy. Each Theosophist should therefore not only continue his private or public acts of charity, but also strive to so understand Theosophical philosophy as to be able to expound it in a practical and easily understood manner, so that he may be a wider philanthropist by ministering to the needs of the inner man. This inner man is a thinking being who feeds upon a right or wrong philosophy. If he is given one which is wrong, then, becoming warped and diseased, he leads his instrument, the outer man, into bewilderment and sorrow.

Now as Theosophical theories were and are still quite strange, fascinating, and peculiar when contrasted with the usual doctrines of men and things, very many members have occupied themselves with much metaphysical speculation or with diving into the occult and the wonderful, forgetting that the higher philanthropy calls for a spreading among men of a right basis for ethics, for thought, for action. So we often find Theosophists among themselves debating complicated doctrines that have no present application to practical life, and at the same time other members and some enquirers breathing a sigh of relief when anyone directs the inquiries into such a channel as shall cause all the doctrines to be extended to daily life and there applied.

What we most need is such a Theosophical education as will give us the ability to expound Theosophy in a way to be understood by the ordinary person. This practical, clear exposition is entirely possible. That it is of the highest importance there can be no doubt whatever. It relates to and affects ethics, every day life, every thought, and consequently every act. The most learned, astute, and successful church, the Roman Catholic, proceeds on this basis. Should we refrain from a good practise because a bigot takes the same method? The priests of Rome do not explain, nor attempt to explain or expound, the highly metaphysical and obscure, though important, basis of their various doctrines. They touch the people in their daily life, a knowledge of their own system in all its details enabling them to put deep doctrine into every man's language, although the learning of the preacher may be temporarily concealed. With them the appeal is to fear; with us it is to reason and experience. So we have a natural advantage which ought not to be overlooked.

High scholarship and a knowledge of metaphysics are good things to have, but the mass of the people are neither scholars nor metaphysicians. If our doctrines are of any such use as to command the efforts of sages in helping on to their promulgation, then it must be that those sages – our Masters – desire the doctrines to be placed before as many of the mass as we can reach. This our Theosophical scholars and metaphysicians can do by a little effort. It is indeed a little difficult, because slightly disagreeable, for a member who is naturally metaphysical to come down to the ordinary level of human minds in general, but it can be done. And when one does do this, the reward is great from the evident relief and satisfaction of the enquirer.

It is pre-eminently our duty to be thus practical in exposition as often as possible. Intellectual study only of our Theosophy will not speedily better the world. It must, of course, have effect through immortal ideas once more set in motion, but while we are waiting for those ideas to bear fruit among men a revolution may break out and sweep us away. We should do as Buddha taught his disciples, preach, practise, promulgate, and illustrate our doctrines. He spoke to the meanest of men with effect, although having a deeper doctrine for greater and more learned minds. Let us, then, acquire the art of practical exposition of ethics based on our theories and enforced by the fact of Universal Brotherhood.

## **How Should We Treat Others**

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. X, February, 1896 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 1:501-5

The subject relates to our conduct toward and treatment of our fellows, including in that term all people with whom we have any dealings. No particular mode of treatment is given by Theosophy. It simply lays down the law that governs us in all our acts, and declares the consequences of those acts. It is for us to follow the line of action which shall result first in harmony now and forever, and second, in the reduction of the general sum of hate and opposition in thought or act which now darkens the world.

The great law which Theosophy first speaks of is the law of karma, and this is the one which must be held in view in considering the question. Karma is called by some the "law of ethical causation," but it is also the law of action and reaction; and in all departments of nature the reaction is equal to the action, and sometimes the reaction from the unseen but permanent world seems to be much greater than the physical act or word would appear to warrant on the physical plane. This is because the hidden force on the unseen plane was just as strong and powerful as the reaction is seen by us to be. The ordinary view takes in but half of the facts in any such case and judges wholly by superficial observation.

If we look at the subject only from the point of view of the person who knows not of Theosophy and of the nature of man, nor of the forces Theosophy knows to be operating all the time, then the reply to the question will be just the same as the everyday man makes. That is, that he has certain rights he must and will and ought to protect; that he has property he will and may keep and use any way he pleases; and if a man injure him he ought to and will resent it; that if he is insulted by word or deed he will at once fly not only to administer punishment on the offender, but also try to reform, to admonish, and very often to give that offender up to the arm of the law; that if he knows of a criminal he will denounce him to the police and see that he has meted out to him the punishment Provided by the law of man. Thus in everything he will proceed as is the custom and as is thought to be the right way by those who live under the Mosaic retaliatory law.

But if we are to inquire into the subject as Theosophists, and as Theosophists who know certain laws and who insist on the absolute sway of karma, and as people who know what the real constitution of man is, then the whole matter takes on, or ought to take on, a wholly different aspect.

The untheosophical view is based on separation, the Theosophical upon unity absolute and actual. Of course if Theosophists talk of unity but as a dream or a mere metaphysical thing, then they will cease to be Theosophists, and be mere professors, as the Christian world is today, of a code not followed. If we are separate one from the other the world is right and resistance is a duty, and the failure to condemn those who offend is a distinct breach of propriety, of law, and of duty. But if we are all united as a physical and psychical fact, then the act of condemning, the fact of resistance, the insistence upon rights on all occasions – all of which means the entire lack of charity and mercy – will bring consequences as certain as the rising of the sun tomorrow.

What are those consequences, and why are they?

They are simply, this, that the real man, the entity, the thinker, will react back on you just exactly in, proportion to the way you act to him, and this reaction will be in another life, if not now, and even if now felt will still return in the next life.

The fact that the person whom you condemn, or oppose, or judge seems now in this life to deserve it for his acts in this life, does not alter the other fact that his nature will react against you when the time comes. The reaction is a law not subject to nor altered by any sentiment on your part. He may have, truly, offended you and even hurt you, and done that which in the eye of man is blameworthy, but all this does not have anything to do with the dynamic fact that if you arouse his enmity by your condemnation or judgment there will be a reaction on you, and consequently on the whole of society in any century when the reaction takes place. This is the law and the fact as given by the Adepts, as told by all sages, as reported by those who have seen the inner side of nature, as taught by our philosophy and easily provable by anyone who will take the trouble to examine carefully. Logic and small facts of one day or one life, or arguments on lines laid down by men of the world, who do not know the real power and place of thought nor the real nature of man, cannot sweep this away. After all argument and all logic it will remain. The logic used against it is always lacking in certain premises based on facts, and while seeming to be good logic, because the

missing facts are unknown to the logician, it is false logic. Hence an appeal to logic that ignores facts which we know are certain is of no use in this inquiry. And the ordinary argument always uses a number of assumptions which are destroyed by the actual inner facts about thought, about karma, about the reaction by the inner man.

The Master "K.H.," once writing to Mr. Sinnett in *The Occult World* [p. 131; Conger, pp. 32-3], and speaking for his whole order and not for himself only, distinctly wrote that the man who goes to denounce a criminal or an offender works not with nature and harmony but against both, and that such act tends to destruction instead of construction. Whether the act be large or small, whether it be the denunciation of a criminal, or only your own insistence on rules or laws or rights, does not alter the matter or take it out of the rule laid down by that Adept. For the only difference between the acts mentioned is a difference of degree alone; the act is the same in kind as the violent denunciation of a criminal. Either this Adept was right or wrong. If wrong, why do we follow the philosophy laid down by him and his messenger, and concurred in by all the sages and teachers of the past? If right, why this swimming in an adverse current, as he said himself, why this attempt to show that we can set aside karma and act as we please without consequences following us to the end of time? I know not. I prefer to follow the Adept, and especially so when I see that what he says is in line with facts in nature and is a certain conclusion from the system of philosophy I have found in Theosophy.

I have never found an insistence on my so-called rights at all necessary. They preserve themselves, and it must be true if the law of karma is the truth that no man offends against me unless I in the past have offended against him.

In respect to man, karma has no existence without two or more persons being considered. You act, another person is affected, karma follows. It follows on the thought of each and not on the act, for the other person is moved to thought by your act. Here are two sorts of karma, yours and his, and both are intermixed. There is the karma or effect on you of your own thought and act, the result on you of the other person's thought; and there is the karma on or with the other person consisting of the direct result of your act and his thoughts engendered by your act and thought. This is all permanent. As affecting you there may be various effects. If you have condemned, for instance, we may mention some: (a) the increased tendency in yourself to indulge in condemnation, which will remain and increase from life to life; (b) this will at last in you change into violence and all that anger and condemnation may naturally lead to; (c) an opposition to you is set up in the other person, which will remain forever until one day both suffer for it, and this may be in a tendency in the other person in any subsequent life to do you harm and hurt you in the million ways possible in life, and often also unconsciously. Thus it may all widen out and affect the whole body of society. Hence no matter how justifiable it may seem to you to condemn or denounce or punish another, you set up cause for sorrow in the whole race that must work out some day. And you must feel it.

The opposite conduct, that is, entire charity, constant forgiveness, wipes out the opposition from others, expends the old enmity and at the same time makes no new similar causes. Any other sort of thought or conduct is sure to increase the sum of hate in the world, to make cause for sorrow, to continually keep up the crime and misery in the world. Each man can for himself decide which of the two ways is the right one to adopt.

Self-love and what people call self-respect may shrink from following the Adept's view I give above, but the Theosophist who wishes to follow the law and reduce the general sum of hate will know how to act and to think, for he will follow the words of the Master of H.P.B. who said: "Do not be ever thinking of yourself and forgetting that there are others; for you have no karma of your own, but the karma of each one is the karma of all." And these words were sent by H.P.B. to the American Section and called by her words of wisdom, as they seem also to me to be, for they accord with law. They hurt the personality of the nineteenth century, but the personality is for a day, and soon it will be changed if Theosophists try to follow the law of charity as enforced by the inexorable laws of karma. We should all constantly remember that if we believe in the Masters we should at least try to imitate them in the charity they show for our weakness and faults. In no other way can we hope to reach their high estate, for by beginning thus we set up a tendency which will one day perhaps bring us near to their development; by not beginning we put off the day forever.

F.T.S.

## Points of Agreement in All Religions

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. IX, July, 1894 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 1:435-41

[An address delivered April 17, 1894, before the Parliament of Religions at San Francisco, Calif.]

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: Let me read you a few verses from some of the ancient Scriptures of the world, from the old Indian books held sacred by the Brahmins of Hindostan.

What room for doubt and what room for sorrow is there in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind and only differ from each other in degree? – [*Īśā Upanishad* 7]

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all is lighted. – [*Mundaka-Up.* 2.2.10]

Lead me from the unreal to the real!  
Lead me from darkness to light!  
Lead me from death to immortality!  
– [*Bṛihadâraṇyaka-Upanishad* 1.3.28]

Seeking for refuge, I go to that God who is the light of His own thoughts; He who first creates Brahman and delivers the Vedas to him; who is without parts, without actions, tranquil, without fault, the highest bridge to immortality, like a fire that has consumed its fuel.” – [*Śvetâśvatara-Upanishad* 6.18-19]

Such are some of the verses, out of many thousands, which are enshrined in the ancient Hindu Vedas beloved by those we have called “heathen”; those are the sentiments of the people we have called idolaters only.

As the representative of the Theosophical movement I am glad to be here, and to be assigned to speak on what are the points of agreement in all religions. I am glad because Theosophy is to be found in all religions and all sciences. We, as members of the Theosophical Society, endorse to the fullest extent those remarks of your chairman in opening, when he said, in effect, that a theology which stayed in one spot without advancing was not a true theology, but that we had advanced to where theology should include a study of man. Such a study must embrace his various religions, both dead and living. And pushing that study into those regions we must conclude that man is greatly his own revealer, has revealed religion to himself, and therefore that all religions must include and contain truth; that no one religion is entitled to a patent or exclusive claim upon truth or revelation, or is the only one that God has given to man, or the only road along which man can walk to salvation. If this be not true, then your Religious Parliament is no Parliament, but only a body of men admiring themselves and their religion. But the very existence of this Parliament proclaims the truth of what I have said, and shows the need which the Theosophical Society has for nineteen years been asserting, of a dutiful, careful, and brotherly inquiry into all the religions of the world, for the purpose of discovering what is the central truth upon which each and every religion rests, and what the original fountain from which they have come. This careful and tolerant inquiry is what we are here for today; for that the Theosophical Society stands and has stood; for toleration, for unity, for the final and irrevocable death of all dogmatism.

But if you say that religion must have been revealed, then surely God did not wait for several millions of years before giving it to those poor beings called men. He did not, surely, wait until He found one poor Semitic tribe to whom He might give it late in the life of the race? Hence He must have given it in the very beginning, and therefore all present religions must arise from one fount.

What are the great religions of the world and from whence have they come? They are Christianity, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Mohammedanism. The first named is the youngest, with all its warring sects, with Mormonism as an offshoot and with Roman Catholicism boldly claiming sole precedence and truth.

Brahmanism is the old and hoary religion of India, a grown-up, fully-developed system long before either Buddhism or Christianity was born. It extends back to the night of time, and throws the history of religion far, far beyond any

place where modern investigators were once willing to place even the beginning of religious thought. Almost the ancient of ancients, it stands in far-off India, holding its holy Vedas in its hands, calmly waiting until the newer West shall find time out of the pursuit of material wealth to examine the treasures it contains.

Buddhism, the religion of Ceylon, parts of China, of Burma and Japan and Tibet, comes after its parent Brahmanism. It is historically older than Christianity and contains the same ethics as the latter, the same laws and the same examples, similar saints and identical fables and tales relating to Lord Buddha, the Savior of Men. It embraces today, after some twenty-five hundred years of life, more people than any other religion, for two-thirds of the human family profess it.

Zoroastrianism also fades into the darkness of the past. It too teaches ethics such as we know. Much of its ritual and philosophy is not understood, but the law of brotherly love is not absent from it; it teaches justice and truth, charity and faith in God, together with immortality. In these it agrees with all, but it differs from Christianity in not admitting a vicarious salvation, which it says is not possible.

Christianity of today is modern Judaism, but the Christianity of Jesus is something different. He taught forgiveness, Moses taught retaliation, and that is the law today in Christian State and Church. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" is still the recognized rule, but Jesus taught the opposite. He fully agreed with Buddha, who, preaching 500 years before the birth of the Jewish reformer, said we must love one another and forgive our enemies. So modern Christianity is not the religion of Jesus; but Buddhism and the religion of Jesus accord with one another in calling for charity, complete tolerance, perfect non-resistance, absolute self-abnegation.

If we compare Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism together on the points of ritual, dogmas, and doctrines, we find not only agreement but a marvellous similarity as well, which looks like an imitation on the part of the younger Christianity. Did the more modern copy the ancient? It would seem probable. And some of the early Christian Fathers were in the habit of saying, as we find in their writings, that Christianity brought nothing new into the world, that it existed from all time.

If we turn to ritual, so fully exemplified in the Roman Catholic Church, we find the same practices and even similar clothing and altar arrangements in Buddhism, while many of the prescribed rules for the altar and approaching or leaving it are mentioned very plainly in far more ancient directions governing the Brahman when acting as priest. This similarity was so wonderful in the truthful account given by the Catholic priest Abbé Huc that the alarmed Church first explained that the devil, knowing that Christianity was coming, went ahead and invented the whole thing for the Buddhists by a species of *ante facto* copying, so as to confound innocent Catholics therewith; and then they burned poor Abbé Huc's book. As to stations of the cross, now well known to us, or the rosary, confession, convents, and the like; all these are in the older religion. The rosary was long and anciently used in Japan, where they had over one hundred and seventy-two sorts. And an examination of the mummies of old Egypt reveals rosaries placed with them in the grave, many varieties being used. Some of these I have seen. Could we call up the shades of Babylon's priests, we should doubtless find the same rituals there.

Turning to doctrines, that of salvation by faith is well known in Christianity. It was the cause of a stormy controversy in the time of St. James. But very strangely, perhaps, for many Christians, the doctrine is a very old Brahmanical one. They call it "The Bridge Doctrine," as it is the great Bridge. But with them it does not mean a faith in some particular emanation of God, but God is its aim, God is the means and the way, and God the end of the faith; by complete faith in God, without an intermediary, God will save you. They also have a doctrine of salvation by faith in those great sons of God, Krishna, Rama, and others; complete faith in either of those is for them a way to heaven, a bridge for the crossing over all sins. Even those who were killed by Krishna, in the great war detailed in the *Râmâyana*, went straight to heaven because they looked at him, as the thief on the cross looking at Jesus went to Paradise. In Buddhism is the same doctrine of faith. The twelve great sects of Buddhism in Japan have one called the Sect of the Pure Land. This teaches that Amitabha vowed that any one who calls three times on his name would be born into his pure Land of Bliss. He held that some men may be strong enough to prevail against the enemy, but that most men are not, and need some help from another. This help is found in the power of the vow of Amita Buddha, who will help all those who call on his name. The doctrine is a modified form of vicarious atonement, but it does not exclude the salvation by works which the Christian St. James gives out.

Heaven and Hell are also common to Christianity, Buddhism, and Brahmanism. The Brahman calls it Svarga; the Buddhist, Devachan; and we, Heaven. Its opposite is Naraka and Avîchi. But names apart, the descriptions are the same. Indeed, the hells of the Buddhists are very terrible, long in duration and awful in effect. The difference is that the heaven and hell of the Christian are eternal, while the others are not. The others come to an end when the forces which cause them are exhausted. In teaching of more than one heaven there is the same likeness, for St. Paul spoke of more than a single heaven to one of which he was rapt away, and the Buddhist tells of many, each being a grade above or below some other. Brahman and Buddhist agree in saying that when heaven or hell is ended for the soul, it descends again to rebirth. And that was taught by the Jews. They held that the soul was originally pure, but sinned and had to wander through rebirth until purified and fit to return to its source.

In priesthood and priestcraft there is a perfect agreement among all religions, save that the Brahman instead of being ordained a priest is so by birth. Buddha's priesthood began with those who were his friends and disciples. After his death they met in council, and subsequently many councils were held, all being attended by priests. Similar questions arose among them as with the Christians, and identical splits occurred, so that now there are Northern and Southern Buddhism and the twelve sects of Japan. During the life of Buddha the old query of admitting women arose and caused much discussion. The power of the Brahman and Buddhist priests is considerable, and they demand as great privileges and rights as the Christian ones.

Hence we are bound to conclude that dogmatically and theologically these religions all agree. Christianity stands out, however, as peculiarly intolerant – and in using the word “intolerant” I but quote from some priestly utterances regarding the World's Fair Parliament – for it claims to be the only true religion that God has seen fit to reveal to man.

The great doctrine of a Savior who is the son of God – God himself is not an original one with Christianity. It is the same as the extremely ancient one of the Hindus called the doctrine of the Avatâra. An Avatâra is one who comes down to earth to save man. He is God incarnate. Such was Krishna, and such even the Hindus admit was Buddha, for he is one of the great ten Avatâras. The similarity between Krishna or Cristna and Christ has been very often remarked. He came 5,600 years ago to save and benefit man, and his birth was in India, his teaching being Brahmanical. He, like Jesus, was hated by the ruler, Kansa, who desired to destroy him in advance, and who destroyed many sons of families in order to accomplish his end, but failed. Krishna warred with the powers of darkness in his battles with Râvana, whom he finally killed. The belief about him was that he was the incarnation of God. This is in accord with the ancient doctrine that periodically the Great Being assumes the form of man for the preservation of the just, the establishment of virtue and order, and the punishment of the wicked. Millions of men and women read every day of Krishna in the Ramayana of Tulsi Das. His praises are sung each day and reiterated at their festivals. Certainly it seems rather narrow and bigoted to assume that but one tribe and one people are favored by the appearance among them of an incarnation in greater measure of God.

Jesus taught a secret doctrine to his disciples. He said to them that he taught the common people in stories of a simple sort, but that the disciples could learn of the mysteries. And in the early age of Christianity that secret teaching was known. In Buddhism is the same thing, for Buddha began with one vehicle or doctrine, proceeded after to two, and then to a third. He also taught a secret doctrine that doubtless agreed with the Brahmins who had taught him at his father's court. He gave up the world, and later gave up eternal peace in Nirvana, so that he might save men. In this the story agrees with that of Jesus. And Buddha also resisted Mâra, or the Devil, in the wilderness. Jesus teaches that we must be as perfect as the Father, and that the kingdom of heaven is within each. To be perfect as the Father we must be equal with him, and hence here we have the ancient doctrine taught of old by the Brahmins that each man is God and a part of God. This supports the unity of humanity as a spiritual whole, one of the greatest doctrines of the time prior to Christianity, and now also believed in Brahmanism.

That the universe is spiritual in essence, that man is a spirit and immortal, and that man may rise to perfection, are universal doctrines. Even particular doctrines are common to all the religions. Reincarnation is not alone in Hinduism or Buddhism. It was believed by the Jews, and not only believed by Jesus but he also taught it. For he said that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias “who was for to come.” Being a Jew he must have had the doctrines of the Jews, and this was one of them. And in *Revelation* we find the writer says: “Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out” [3:12].

The words “no more” infer a prior time of going out.

The perfectibility of man destroys the doctrine of original sin, and it was taught by Jesus, as I said. Reincarnation is a necessity for the evolution of this perfection, and through it at last are produced those Saviors of the race of whom Jesus was one. He did not deny similar privileges to others, but said to his disciples that they could do even greater works than he did. So we find these great Sages and Saviors in all religions. There are Moses and Abraham and Solomon, all Sages. And we are bound to accept the Jewish idea that Moses and the rest were the reincarnations of former persons. Moses was in their opinion Abel the son of Adam; and their Messiah was to be a reincarnation of Adam himself who had already come the second time in the person of David. We take the Messiah and trace him up to David, but refuse, improperly, to accept the remainder of their theory.

Descending to every-day-life doctrines, we find that of Karma. or that we must account and receive for every act. This is the great explainer of human life. It was taught by Jesus and Matthew and St. Paul. The latter explicitly said: "Brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap" [*Galations* 6:7]

This is Karma of the Brahman and Buddhist, which teaches that each life is the outcome of a former life or lives, and that every man in his rebirths will have to account for every thought and receive measure for the measure given by him before.

In ethics all these religions are the same. and no new ethic is given by any. Jesus was the same as his predecessor Buddha, and both taught the law of love and forgiveness. A consideration of the religions of the past and today from a Theosophical standpoint will support and confirm ethics. We therefore cannot introduce a new code, but we strive by looking into all religions to find a firm basis, not due to fear, favor, or injustice, for the ethics common to all. This is what Theosophy is for and what it will do. It is the reformer of religion, the unifier of diverse systems, the restorer of justice to our theory of the universe. It is our past, our present, and our future; it is our life, our death, and our immortality.

## Aphorisms on Karma

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. VII, March 1893 & *Echoes of the Orient*, 1:333-6

The following, among others not yet used, were given to me by teachers, among them being H. P. Blavatsky. Some were written, others communicated in other ways. To me they were declared to be from manuscripts not now accessible to the general public. Each one was submitted for my judgment and reason; and just as they, aside from any authority, approved themselves to my reason after serious consideration of them, so I hope they will gain the approval of those my fellow workers to whom I now publish them. – William Q. Judge

- (1) There is no Karma unless there is a being to make it or feel its effects.
- (2) Karma is the adjustment of effects flowing from causes, during which the being upon whom and through whom that adjustment is effected experiences pain or pleasure.
- (3) Karma is an undeviating and unerring tendency in the Universe to restore equilibrium, and it operates incessantly.
- (4) The apparent stoppage of this restoration to equilibrium is due to the necessary adjustment of disturbance at some other spot, place, or focus which is visible only to the Yogi, to the Sage, or the perfect Seer: there is therefore no stoppage, but only a hiding from view.
- (5) Karma operates on all things and beings from the minutest conceivable atom up to Brahmâ. Proceeding in the three worlds of men, gods, and the elemental beings, no spot in the manifested universe is exempt from its sway.
- (6) Karma is not subject to time, and therefore he who knows what is the ultimate division of time in this Universe knows Karma.
- (7) For all other men Karma is in its essential nature unknown and unknowable.
- (8) But its action may be known by calculation from cause to effect; and this calculation is possible because the effect is wrapped up in and is not succedent to the cause.
- (9) The Karma of this earth is the combination of the acts and thoughts of all beings of every grade which were concerned in the preceding Manvantara or evolutionary stream from which ours flows.
- (10) And as those beings include Lords of Power and Holy Men, as well as weak and wicked ones, the period of the earth's duration is greater than that of any entity or race upon it.  
[‘race’ does not refer to ethnicity, but concerns life-waves of incarnating human beings.]
- (11) Because the Karma of this earth and its races began in a past too far back for human minds to reach, an inquiry into its beginning is useless and profitless.
- (12) Karmic causes already set in motion must be allowed to sweep on until exhausted, but this permits no man to refuse to help his fellows and every sentient being.
- (13) The effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects.
- (14) In the life of worlds, races, nations, and individuals, Karma cannot act unless there is an appropriate instrument provided for its action.
- (15) And until such appropriate instrument is found, that Karma related to it remains unexpended.
- (16) While a man is experiencing Karma in the instrument provided, his other unexpended Karma is not exhausted through other beings or means, but is held reserved for future operation; and lapse of time during which no operation of that Karma is felt causes no deterioration in its force or change in its nature.
- (17) The appropriateness of an instrument for the operation of Karma consists in the exact connection and relation of the Karma with the body, mind, intellectual and psychical nature acquired for use by the Ego in any life.
- (18) Every instrument used by any Ego in any life is appropriate to the Karma operating through it.
- (19) Changes may occur in the instrument during one life so as to make it appropriate for a new class of Karma, and this may take place in two ways: (a) through intensity of thought and the power of a vow, and (b) through natural alterations due to complete exhaustion of old causes.
- (20) As body and mind and soul have each a power of independent action, any one of these may exhaust, independently of others, some Karmic causes more remote from or nearer to the time of their inception than those operating through other channels.
- (21) Karma is both merciful and just. Mercy and Justice are only opposite poles of a single whole; and Mercy without Justice is not possible in the operations of Karma. That which man calls Mercy and Justice is defective, errant, and impure.

- (22) Karma may be of three sorts (*a*) Presently operative in this life through the appropriate instruments; (*b*) that which is being made or stored up to be exhausted in the future; (*c*) Karma held over from past life or lives and not operating yet because inhibited by inappropriateness of the instrument in use by the Ego, or by the force of Karma now operating.
- (23) Three fields of operation are used in each being by Karma: (*a*) the body and the circumstances; (*b*) the mind and intellect; (*c*) the psychic and astral planes.
- (24) Held-over Karma or present Karma may each, or both at once, operate in all of the three fields of Karmic operation at once, or in either of those fields a different class of Karma from that using the others may operate at the same time.
- (25) Birth into any sort of body and to obtain the fruits of any sort of Karma is due to the preponderance of the line of Karmic tendency.
- (26) The sway of Karmic tendency will influence the incarnation of an Ego, or any family of Egos, for three lives at least, when measures of repression, elimination, or counteraction are not adopted.
- (27) Measures taken by an Ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and to counteract by setting up different causes, will alter the sway of Karmic tendency and shorten its influence in accordance with the strength or weakness of the efforts expended in carrying out the measures adopted.
- (28) No man but a sage or true seer can judge another's Karma. Hence while each receives his deserts appearances may deceive, and birth into poverty or heavy trial may not be punishment for bad Karma, for Egos continually incarnate into poor surroundings where they experience difficulties and trials which are for the discipline of the Ego and result in strength, fortitude, and sympathy.
- (29) Race-Karma influences each unit in the race through the law of Distribution. National Karma operates on the members of the nation by the same law more concentrated. Family Karma governs only with a nation where families have been kept pure and distinct; for in any nation where there is a mixture of family – as obtains in each Kaliyuga period – family Karma is in general distributed over a nation. But even at such periods some families remain coherent for long periods, and then the members feel the sway of family Karma. The word “family” may include several smaller families.
- (30) Karma operates to produce cataclysms of nature by concatenation through the mental and astral planes of being. A cataclysm may be traced to an immediate physical cause such as internal fire and atmospheric disturbance, but these have been brought on by the disturbance created through the dynamic power of human thought.
- (31) Egos who have no Karmic connection with a portion of the globe where a cataclysm is coming on are kept without the latter's operation in two ways: (*a*) by repulsion acting on their inner nature, and (*b*) by being called and warned by those who watch the progress of the world.

### **One Fundamental Law**

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 217

The radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature – from Star to mineral Atom, from the highest Dhyan Chohan to the smallest infusoria, in the fullest acceptance of the term, and whether applied to the spiritual, intellectual, or physical worlds – this is the one fundamental law in Occult Science.

### **Three Fundamental Propositions**

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 14-20

The Secret Doctrine establishes three fundamental propositions: –

(a) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought – in the words of Mandukya, “unthinkable and unspeakable.”

To render these ideas clearer to the general reader, let him set out with the postulate that there is one absolute Reality which antecedes all manifested, conditioned, being. This Infinite and Eternal Cause – dimly formulated in the “Unconscious” and “Unknowable” of current European philosophy – is the rootless root of “all that was, is, or ever shall be.” It is of course devoid of all attributes and is essentially without any relation to manifested, finite Being. It is “Be-ness” rather than Being (in Sanskrit, Sat), and is beyond all thought or speculation.

This “Be-ness” is symbolised in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand, absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. On the other, absolute Abstract Motion representing Unconditioned Consciousness. Even our Western thinkers have shown that Consciousness is inconceivable to us apart from change, and motion best symbolises change, its essential characteristic. This latter aspect of the one Reality, is also symbolised by the term “The Great Breath,” a symbol sufficiently graphic to need no further elucidation. Thus, then, the first fundamental axiom of the Secret Doctrine is this metaphysical One Absolute-Be-ness – symbolised by finite intelligence as the theological Trinity.

It may, however, assist the student if a few further explanations are given here.

Herbert Spencer has of late so far modified his Agnosticism, as to assert that the nature of the “First Cause,”\* which the Occultist more logically derives from the “Causeless Cause,” the “Eternal,” and the “Unknowable,” may be essentially the same as that of the Consciousness which wells up within us: in short, that the impersonal reality pervading the Kosmos is the pure noumenon of thought. This advance on his part brings him very near to the esoteric and Vedantin tenet.\*

\* The “first” presupposes necessarily something which is the “first brought forth,” “the first in time, space, and rank – and therefore finite and conditioned. The “first” cannot be the absolute, for it is a manifestation. Therefore, Eastern Occultism calls the Abstract All the “Causeless One Cause,” the “Rootless Root,” and limits the “First Cause” to the Logos, in the sense that Plato gives to this term.

\* See Mr. Subba Row’s four able lectures on the Bhagavad Gita, “Theosophist,” February, 1887.

Parabrahm (the One Reality, the Absolute) is the field of Absolute Consciousness, i.e., that Essence which is out of all relation to conditioned existence, and of which conscious existence is a conditioned symbol. But once that we pass in thought from this (to us) Absolute Negation, duality supervenes in the contrast of Spirit (or consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object.

Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter are, however, to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being whether subjective or objective.

Considering this metaphysical triad as the Root from which proceeds all manifestation, the great Breath assumes the character of precosmic Ideation. It is the *fons et origo* of force and of all individual consciousness, and supplies the guiding intelligence in the vast scheme of cosmic Evolution. On the other hand, precosmic root-substance (Mulaprakriti) is that aspect of the Absolute which underlies all the objective planes of Nature.

Just as pre-Cosmic Ideation is the root of all individual consciousness, so pre-Cosmic Substance is the substratum of matter in the various grades of its differentiation.

Hence it will be apparent that the contrast of these two aspects of the Absolute is essential to the existence of the “Manifested Universe.” Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle† of matter that consciousness wells up as “I am I,” a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. Again, apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction, and no emergence of consciousness could ensue.

† Called in Sanskrit : “Upadhi.”

The “Manifested Universe,” therefore, is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its existence as “manifestation.” But just as the opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are but aspects of the One Unity in which they are synthesized, so, in the manifested Universe, there is “that” which links spirit to matter, subject to object.

This something, at present unknown to Western speculation, is called by the occultists Fohat. It is the “bridge” by which the “Ideas” existing in the “Divine Thought” are impressed on Cosmic substance as the “laws of Nature.” Fohat is thus the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation; or, regarded from the other side, it is the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation, the “Thought Divine” transmitted and made manifest through the Dhyana Chohans,\* the Architects of the visible World. Thus from Spirit, or Cosmic Ideation, comes our consciousness; from Cosmic Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualised and attains to self – or reflective – consciousness; while Fohat, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life.

\* Called by Christian theology: Archangels, Seraphs, etc., etc.

The following summary will afford a clearer idea to the reader. (1.) The Absolute; the Parabrahm of the Vedantins or the one Reality,

Sat, which is, as Hegel says, both Absolute Being and Non-Being. (2.) The first manifestation, the impersonal, and, in philosophy, unmanifested Logos, the precursor of the “manifested.” This is the “First Cause,” the

“Unconscious” of European Pantheists. (3.) Spirit-matter, Life; the “Spirit of the Universe,” the Purusha and

Prakriti, or the second Logos. (4.) Cosmic Ideation, Mahat or Intelligence, the Universal World-Soul; the Cosmic Noumenon of Matter, the basis of the intelligent operations in and of Nature, also called Maha-Buddhi.

The One Reality; its dual aspects in the conditioned Universe. Further, the Secret Doctrine affirms: – (b.) The Eternity of the Universe in toto as a boundless plane; periodically “the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,” called “the manifesting stars,” and the “sparks of Eternity.” “The Eternity of the Pilgrim”† is like a wink of the Eye of Self-Existence (Book of Dzyan.) “The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux.” (See Part II., “Days and Nights of Brahmâ.”)

† “Pilgrim” is the appellation given to our Monad (the two in one) during its cycle of incarnations. It is the only immortal and eternal principle in us, being an indivisible part of the integral whole – the Universal Spirit, from which it emanates, and into which it is absorbed at the end of the cycle. When it is said to emanate from the one spirit, an awkward and incorrect expression has to be used, for lack of appropriate words in English. The Vedantins call it Sutratma (Thread-Soul), but their explanation, too, differs somewhat from that of the occultists; to explain which difference, however, is left to the Vedantins themselves.

This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.

Moreover, the Secret Doctrine teaches: –

(c) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul – a spark of the former – through the Cycle of Incarnation (or “Necessity”) in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle, – or the over-soul, – has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations. This is why the Hindus say that the Universe is Brahma and Brahmâ, for Brahma is in every atom of the universe, the six principles in Nature being all the outcome – the variously differentiated aspects – of the seventh and one, the only reality in the Universe whether Cosmical or micro-cosmical; and also why the permutations (psychic, spiritual and physical), on the plane of manifestation and form, of the sixth (Brahmâ the vehicle of Brahma) are viewed by metaphysical antiphrasis as illusive and Mayavic. For although the root of every atom individually and of every form collectively, is that seventh principle or the one Reality, still, in its manifested phenomenal and temporary appearance, it is no better than an evanescent illusion of our senses. (See, for clearer definition, Addendum “Gods, Monads and Atoms,” and also “Theophania,” “Bodhisatvas and Reincarnation,” etc., etc.)

In its absoluteness, the One Principle under its two aspects (of Parabrahmam and Mulaprakriti) is sexless, unconditioned and eternal. Its periodical (manvantaric) emanation – or primal radiation – is also One, androgynous and phenomenally finite. When the radiation radiates in its turn, all its radiations are also androgynous, to become male and female principles in their lower aspects. After Pralaya, whether the great or the minor Pralaya (the latter leaving the worlds in *statu quo*\*), the first that re-awakes to active life is the plastic A’kâsa, Father- Mother, the Spirit and Soul of Ether, or the plane on the surface of the Circle. Space is called the “Mother” before its Cosmic activity, and Father-Mother at the first stage of re-awakening. (See Comments, Stanza II.) In the Kabala it is also Father-Mother-Son. But whereas in the Eastern doctrine, these are the Seventh Principle of the manifested Universe, or its “Atma-Buddhi-Manas” (Spirit, Soul, Intelligence), the triad branching off and dividing into the seven cosmical and seven human principles, in the Western Kabala of the Christian mystics it is the Triad or Trinity, and with their occultists, the male-female Jehovah, Jah-Havah. In this lies the whole difference between the esoteric and the Christian trinities. The Mystics and the Philosophers, the Eastern and Western Pantheists, synthesize their pregenetic triad in the pure divine abstraction. The orthodox, anthropomorphize it. Hiranyagarbha, Hari, and Sankara – the three hypostases of the manifesting “ Spirit of the Supreme Spirit “ (by which title Prithivi – the Earth – greets Vishnu in his first Avatar) – are the purely metaphysical abstract qualities of formation, preservation, and destruction, and are the three divine Avasthas (lit. hypostases) of that which “does not perish with created things” (or Achyuta, a name of Vishnu); whereas the orthodox Christian separates his personal creative Deity into the three personages of the Trinity, and admits of no higher Deity. The latter, in Occultism, is the abstract Triangle; with the orthodox, the perfect Cube. The creative god or the aggregate gods are regarded by the Eastern philosopher as Bhrantidarsanatah – “false apprehension,” something “conceived of, by reason of erroneous appearances, as a material form,” and explained as arising from the illusive conception of the Egotistic personal and human Soul (lower fifth principle). It is beautifully expressed in a new translation of Vishnu Purâna. “That Brahmâ in its totality has essentially the aspect of Prakriti, both evolved and unevolved (Mulaprakriti), and also the aspect of Spirit and the aspect of Time. Spirit, O twice born, is the leading aspect of the Supreme Brahma.\* The next is a twofold aspect, – Prakriti, both evolved and unevolved, and is the time last.” Kronos is shown in the Orphic theogony as being also a generated god or agent.

\* It is not the physical organisms that remain in statu quo, least of all their psychical principles, during the great Cosmic or even Solar pralayas, but only their Akâsic or astral “photographs.” But during the minor pralayas, once over-taken by the “Night,” the planets remain intact, though dead, as a huge animal, caught and embedded in the polar ice, remains the same for ages.

\* Thus Spencer, who, nevertheless, like Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, only reflects an aspect of the old esoteric philosophers, and hence lands his readers on the bleak shore of Agnostic despair – reverently formulates the grand mystery; “ that which persists unchanging in quantity, but ever changing in form, under these sensible appearances which the Universe presents to us, is an unknown and unknowable power, which we are obliged to recognise as without limit in Space and without beginning or end in time.” It is only daring Theology – never Science or philosophy – which seeks to gauge the Infinite and unveil the Fathomless and Unknowable.

At this stage of the re-awakening of the Universe, the sacred symbolism represents it as a perfect Circle with the (root) point in the Centre. This sign was universal, therefore we find it in the Kabala also. The Western Kabala, however, now in the hands of Christian mystics, ignores it altogether, though it is plainly shown in the Zohar. These sectarians begin at the end, and show as the symbol of pregenetic Kosmos this sign, calling it “ the Union of the Rose and Cross,” the great mystery of occult generation, from whence the name – Rosicrucians (Rose Cross)!

As may be judged, however, from the most important, as the best known of the Rosicrucians’ symbols, there is one which has never been hitherto understood even by modern mystics. It is that of the “Pelican” tearing open its breast to feed its seven little ones – the real creed of the Brothers of the Rosie-Cross and a direct outcome from the Eastern Secret Doctrine. Brahma (neuter) is called Kalahansa, meaning, as explained by Western Orientalists, the Eternal Swan or goose (see Stanza III., Comment. 8), and so is Brahmâ, the Creator. A great mistake is thus brought under notice ; it is Brahma (neuter) who ought to be referred to as Hansa-vahana (He who uses the swan as his Vehicle) and not Brahmâ the Creator, who is the real Kalahansa, while Brahma (neuter) is hamsa, and “ A-hamsa,” as will be explained in the Commentary. Let it be understood that the terms Brahmâ and Parabrahmam are not used here because they belong to our Esoteric nomenclature, but simply because they are more familiar to the students in the West. Both are the perfect equivalents of our one, three, and seven vowelled terms, which stand for the One All, and the One “All in all.”

Such are the basic conceptions on which the Secret Doctrine rests.

## The Stanzas of Dzyan

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 26-34

“Nor Aught nor Nought existed; yon bright sky  
Was not, nor heaven’s broad roof outstretched above. What covered all? what sheltered? what concealed? Was it the  
water’s fathomless abyss?  
There was not death – yet there was nought immortal, There was no confine betwixt day and night ;  
The only One breathed breathless by itself,  
Other than It there nothing since has been.  
Darkness there was, and all at first was veiled  
In gloom profound – an ocean without light –  
The germ that still lay covered in the husk  
Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.  
.....  
Who knows the secret? who proclaimed it here? Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?  
The Gods themselves came later into being –  
Who knows from whence this great creation sprang? That, whence all this great creation came,  
Whether Its will created or was mute,  
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,  
He knows it – or perchance even He knows not.”  
“Gazing into eternity . . .  
Ere the foundations of the earth were laid,  
.....  
Thou wert. And when the subterranean flame  
Shall burst its prison and devour the frame . . . Thou shalt be still as Thou wert before  
And knew no change, when time shall be no more. Oh! endless thought, divine Eternity.”

## COSMIC EVOLUTION.

In Seven Stanzas translated from the Book of Dzyan.

### STANZA I.

1. The eternal parent wrapped in her ever invisible robes had slumbered once again for seven eternities.
2. Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration.
5. Universal mind was not, for there were no Ah-hi to contain it.
4. The seven ways to bliss were not. The great causes of misery were not, for there was no one to produce and get ensnared by them.
5. Darkness alone filled the boundless all, for father, mother and son were once more one, and the son had not awakened yet for the new wheel, and his pilgrimage thereon.
6. The seven sublime lords and the seven truths had ceased to be, and the Universe, the son of Necessity, was immersed in Paranishpanna, to be outbreathed by that which is and yet is not. Naught was.
7. The causes of existence had been done away with; the visible that was, and the invisible that is, rested in eternal non-being – the one being.
8. Alone the one form of existence stretched boundless, infinite, causeless, in dreamless sleep; and life pulsed unconscious in universal space, throughout that all-presence which is sensed by the opened eye of the Dangma.
9. But where was the Dangma when the Alaya of the universe was in Paramartha and the great wheel was Anupadaka?

### STANZA II.

1. . . . Where were the builders, the luminous sons of Manvantaric dawn? . . . In the unknown darkness in their Ah-hi Paranishpanna. The producers of form from no-form – the root of the world – the Devamatri and Svâbhâvat, rested in the bliss of non-being.
2. . . . Where was silence? Where the ears to sense it? No, there was neither silence nor sound; naught save ceaseless eternal breath, which knows itself not.

3. The hour had not yet struck; the ray had not yet flashed into the Germ; the Matripadma had not yet swollen.
4. Her heart had not yet opened for the one ray to enter, thence to fall, as three into four, into the lap of Maya.
5. The seven sons were not yet born from the web of light. Darkness alone was father-mother, Svâbhâvat; and Svâbhâvat was in darkness.
6. These two are the Germ, and the Germ is one. The Universe was still concealed in the Divine thought and the Divine bosom . . . .

#### STANZA III.

1. . . . The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The mother swells, expanding from within without, like the bud of the lotus.
  2. The vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness: the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life . . .
  3. Darkness radiates light, and light drops one solitary ray into the mother-deep. The ray shoots through the virgin egg the ray causes the eternal egg to thrill, and drop the non-eternal germ, which condenses into the world-egg.
  4. Then the three fall into the four. The radiant essence becomes seven inside, seven outside. The luminous egg, which in itself is three, curdles and spreads in milk-white curds throughout the depths of mother, the root that grows in the depths of the ocean of life.
  5. The root remains, the light remains, the curds remain, and still Oeaoohoo is one.
  6. The root of life was in every drop of the ocean of immortality, and the ocean was radiant light, which was fire, and heat, and motion. Darkness vanished and was no more; it disappeared in its own essence, the body of fire and water, or father and mother.
  7. Behold, oh Lanoo! The radiant child of the two, the unparalleled refulgent glory: Bright Space Son of Dark Space, which emerges from the depths of the great dark waters. It is Oeaoohoo the younger, the \* \* \* He shines forth as the son; he is the blazing Divine Dragon of Wisdom; the One is Four, and Four takes to itself Three,† and the Union produces the Sapta, in whom are the seven which become the Tridasa (or the hosts and the multitudes). Behold him lifting the veil and unfurling it from east to west. He shuts out the above, and leaves the below to be seen as the great illusion. He marks the places for the shining ones, and turns the upper into a shoreless sea of fire, and the one manifested into the great waters.
- † In the English translation from the Sanskrit the numbers are given in that language, Eka, Chatur, etc., etc. It was thought best to give them in English.
8. Where was the germ and where was now darkness? Where is the spirit of the flame that burns in thy lamp, oh Lanoo? The germ is that, and that is light, the white brilliant son of the dark hidden father.
  9. Light is cold flame, and flame is fire, and fire produces heat, which yields water: the water of life in the great mother.
  10. Father-Mother spin a web whose upper end is fastened to spirit – the light of the one darkness – and the lower one to its shadowy end, matter; and this web is the universe spun out of the two substances made in one, which is Svâbhâvat.
  11. It expands when the breath of fire is upon it; it contracts when the breath of the mother touches it. Then the sons dissociate and scatter, to return into their mother's bosom at the end of the great day, and re-become one with her; when it is cooling it becomes radiant, and the sons expand and contract through their own selves and hearts; they embrace infinitude.
  12. Then Svâbhâvat sends Fohat to harden the atoms. Each is a part of the web. Reflecting the "Self-Existent Lord" like a mirror, each becomes in turn a world.

#### STANZA IV.

1. . . . Listen, ye Sons of the Earth, to your instructors – the Sons of the Fire. Learn, there is neither first nor last, for all is one: number issued from no number.
2. Learn what we who descend from the Primordial Seven, we who are born from the Primordial Flame, have learnt from our fathers . . . .
3. From the effulgency of light – the ray of the ever-darkness – sprung in space the re-awakened energies; the one from the egg, the six, and the five. Then the three, the one, the four, the one, the five – the twice seven the sum total. And these are the essences, the flames, the elements, the builders, the numbers, the arupa, the rupa, and the force of Divine Man – the sum total. And from the Divine Man emanated the forms, the sparks, the sacred animals, and the messengers of the sacred fathers within the holy four.

4. This was the army of the voice – the divine mother of the seven. The sparks of the seven are subject to, and the servants of, the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh of the seven. These “sparks” are called spheres, triangles, cubes, lines, and modellers; for thus stands the Eternal Nidana – the Oeaoohoo, which is:

5. “Darkness” the boundless, or the no-number, Adi-Nidana Svâbhâvat : –

I. The Adi-Sanat, the number, for he is one.

II. The voice of the Lord Svâbhâvat, the numbers, for he is one and nine.

III. The “formless square.”

And these three enclosed within the O are the sacred four; and the ten are the arupa universe. Then come the “sons,” the seven fighters, the one, the eighth left out, and his breath which is the light-maker.

6. Then the second seven, who are the Lipika, produced by the three. The rejected son is one. The “Son-suns” are countless.

#### STANZA V.

1. The Primordial Seven, the First Seven Breaths of the Dragon of Wisdom, produce in their turn from their Holy Circumgyrating Breaths the Fiery Whirlwind.

2. They make of him the messenger of their will. The Dzyu becomes Fohat, the swift son of the Divine sons whose sons are the Lipika, runs circular errands. Fohat is the steed and the thought is the rider. He passes like lightning through the fiery clouds; takes three, and five, and seven strides through the seven regions above, and the seven below. He lifts his voice, and calls the innumerable sparks, and joins them.

3. He is their guiding spirit and leader. When he commences work, he separates the sparks of the Lower Kingdom that float and thrill with joy in their radiant dwellings, and forms there-with the germs of wheels. He places them in the six directions of space, and one in the middle – the central wheel.

4. Fohat traces spiral lines to unite the sixth to the seventh – the crown; an army of the Sons of Light stands at each angle, and the Lipika in the middle wheel. They say: This is good, the first Divine world is ready, the first is now the second. Then the “Divine Arupa” reflects itself in Chhaya Loka, the first garment of the Anupadaka.

5. Fohat takes five strides and builds a winged wheel at each corner of the square, for the four holy ones and their armies.

6. The Lipika circumscribe the triangle, the first one, the cube, the second one, and the pentacle within the egg. It is the ring called “Pass Not” for those who descend and ascend. Also for those who during the Kalpa are progressing towards the great day “Be with us.” Thus were formed the Rupa and the Arupa: from one light seven lights; from each of the seven, seven times seven lights. The wheels watch the ring . . . .

#### STANZA VI.

1. By the power of the Mother of Mercy and Knowledge – Kwan-Yin – the “triple “ of Kwan-shai-Yin, residing in Kwan-yin-Tien, Fohat, the Breath of their Progeny, the Son of the Sons, having called forth, from the lower abyss, the illusive form of Sien- Tchang and the Seven Elements:\*

\* Verse 1 of Stanza VI. is of a far later date than the other Stanzas, though still very ancient. The old text of this verse, having names entirely unknown to the Orientalists would give no clue to the student.

2. The Swift and Radiant One produces the Seven Laya Centres, against which none will prevail to the great day “Be-with-Us,” and seats the Universe on these Eternal Foundations surrounding Tsien-Tchan with the Elementary Germs.

3. Of the Seven – first one manifested, six concealed, two manifested, five concealed; three manifested, four concealed; four produced, three hidden; four and one tsan revealed, two and one half concealed; six to be manifested, one laid aside. Lastly, seven small wheels revolving; one giving birth to the other.

4. He builds them in the likeness of older wheels, placing them on the Imperishable Centres.

How does Fohat build them? he collects the fiery dust. He makes balls of fire, runs through them, and round them, infusing life thereinto, then sets them into motion; some one way, some the other way. They are cold, he makes them hot. They are dry, he makes them moist. They shine, he fans and cools them. Thus acts Fohat from one twilight to the other, during Seven Eternities.

5. At the fourth, the sons are told to create their images. One third refuses – two obey.

The curse is pronounced; they will be born on the fourth, suffer and cause suffering; this is the first war.

6. The older wheels rotated downwards and upwards . . . . The mother's spawn filled the whole. There were battles fought between the Creators and the Destroyers, and battles fought for space; the seed appearing and re-appearing continuously.

7. Make thy calculations, Lanoo, if thou wouldest learn the correct age of thy small wheel. Its fourth spoke is our mother. Reach the fourth "fruit" of the fourth path of knowledge that leads to Nirvana, and thou shalt comprehend, for thou shalt see . . . .

#### STANZA VII.

1. Behold the beginning of sentient formless life.

First the Divine, the one from the Mother-Spirit; then the Spiritual; the three from the one, the four from the one, and the five from which the three, the five, and the seven. These are the three-fold, the four-fold downward; the "mind-born" sons of the first Lord; the shining seven.

It is they who are thou, me, him, oh Lanoo. They, who watch over thee, and thy mother earth.

2. The one ray multiplies the smaller rays. Life precedes form, and life survives the last atom of form. Through the countless rays proceeds the life-ray, the one, like a thread through many jewels.

3. When the one becomes two, the threefold appears, and the three are one; and it is our thread, oh Lanoo, the heart of the man-plant called Saptasarma.

4. It is the root that never dies; the three-tongued flame of the four wicks. The wicks are the sparks, that draw from the three-tongued flame shot out by the seven – their flame – the beams and sparks of one moon reflected in the running waves of all the rivers of earth.

5. The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat. It journeys through the Seven Worlds of Maya. It stops in the first, and is a metal and a stone; it passes into the second and behold – a plant; the plant whirls through seven changes and becomes a sacred animal. From the combined attributes of these, Manu, the thinker is formed. Who forms him? the seven lives, and the one life. Who completes him? The five-fold Lha. And who perfects the last body? Fish, sin, and soma . . . .

6. From the first-born the thread between the Silent Watcher and his Shadow becomes more strong and radiant with every change. The morning sun-light has changed into noon-day glory . . . .

7. This is thy present wheel, said the Flame to the Spark. Thou art myself, my image, and my shadow. I have clothed myself in thee, and thou art my Vahan to the day, "Be with us," when thou shalt re-become myself and others, thyself and me. Then the builders, having donned their first clothing, descend on radiant earth and reign over men – who are themselves . . . .

Thus ends this portion of the archaic narrative, dark, confused, almost incomprehensible. An attempt will now be made to throw light into this darkness, to make sense out of this apparent non-sense.

## The Stanzas of Dzyan

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, II, pp. 14-21

In primeval times, a maiden, Beauteous Daughter of the Ether, Passed for ages her existence  
In the great expanse of Heaven,

.....

Seven hundred years she wandered, Seven hundred years she laboured, Ere her first-born was delivered.

.....

Ere a beauteous duck descending, Hastens toward the water-mother.

.....

Lightly on the knee she settles,

Finds a nesting-place befitting,

Where to lay her eggs in safety,

Lays her eggs within, at pleasure,

Six, the golden eggs she lays them, Then a Seventh, an egg of iron . . . .”

(*Kalevala*, Rune I.)

## ANTHROPOGENESIS IN THE SECRET VOLUME.

(verbatim extracts.\*)

\* Only forty-nine Slokas out of several hundred are here given. Not every verse is translated verbatim. A periphrasis is sometimes used for the sake of clearness and intelligibility, where a literal translation would be quite unintelligible.

### I.

1. The Lha which turns the fourth is subservient to the Lha of the Seven, they who revolve driving their chariots around their Lord, the One Eye. His breath gave life to the Seven; it gave life to the first.

2. Said the Earth: – “Lord of the Shining Face ; my house is empty . . . send thy sons to people this wheel. Thou hast sent thy seven sons to the Lord of Wisdom. Seven times doth he see thee nearer to himself, seven times more doth he feel thee. Thou hast forbidden thy servants, the small rings, to catch thy light and heat, thy great bounty to intercept on its passage. Send now to thy servant the same.”

3. Said the “Lord of the Shining Face”: – “I shall send thee a fire when thy work is commenced. Raise thy voice to other Lokas; apply to thy father, the Lord of the Lotus, for his sons . . . thy people shall be under the rule of the Fathers. Thy men shall be mortals. The men of the Lord of Wisdom, not the Lunar Sons, are immortal. Cease thy complaints. Thy seven skins are yet on thee . . . thou art not ready. Thy men are not ready.”

4. After great throes she cast off her old three and put on her new seven skins, and stood in her first one.

### II.

5. The wheel whirled for thirty crores more. It constructed rupas: soft stones that hardened; hard plants that softened. Visible from invisible, insects and small lives. She shook them off her back whenever they overran the mother. . . . After thirty crores she turned round. She lay on her back; on her side . . . She would call no sons of Heaven, she would ask no sons of Wisdom. She created from her own bosom. She evolved water-men, terrible and bad.

6. The water-men terrible and bad she herself created from the remains of others, from the dross and slime of her first, second, and third, she formed them. The Dhyani came and looked – The Dhyani from the bright Father-mother, from the white regions they came, from the abodes of the immortal mortals.

7. Displeased they were. Our flesh is not there. No fit rupas for our brothers of the fifth. No dwellings for the lives. Pure waters, not turbid, they must drink. Let us dry them.

8. The flames came. The fires with the sparks; the night fires and the day fires. They dried out the turbid dark waters. With their heat they quenched them. The Lhas of the High, the Lhamayin of below, came. They slew the forms which were two- and four-faced. They fought the goat- men, and the dog-headed men, and the men with fishes’ bodies.

9. Mother-water, the great sea, wept. She arose, she disappeared in the moon which had lifted her, which had given her birth.

10. When they were destroyed, Mother-earth remained bare. She asked to be dried.

### III.

11. The Lord of the Lords came. From her body he separated the waters, and that was Heaven above, the first Heaven.

12. The great Chohans called the Lords of the Moon, of the airy bodies. "Bring forth men, men of your nature. Give them their forms within. She will build coverings without. Males- females will they be. Lords of the Flame also . . . ."

13. They went each on his allotted land: seven of them each on his lot. The Lords of the Flame remain behind. They would not go, they would not create.

### IV.

14. The Seven Hosts, the "Will-born Lords," propelled by the Spirit of Life-giving, separate men from themselves, each on his own zone.

15. Seven times seven Shadows of future men were born, each of his own colour and kind. Each inferior to his father. The fathers, the boneless, could give no life to beings with bones. Their progeny were Bhûta, with neither form nor mind. Therefore they are called the Chhaya.

16. How are the Manushya born? The Manus with minds, how are they made? The fathers called to their help their own fire; which is the fire that burns in Earth. The Spirit of the Earth called to his help the Solar Fire. These three produced in their joint efforts a good Rupa. It could stand walk, run, recline, or fly. Yet it was still but a Chhaya, a shadow with no sense . . . .

17. The breath needed a form; The Fathers gave it. The breath needed a gross body; the Earth moulded it. The breath needed the Spirit of Life; the Solar Lhas breathed it into its form. The breath needed a Mirror of its Body; "We gave it our own," said the Dhyanis. The Breath needed a Vehicle of Desires; "It has it," said the Drainer of Waters. But Breath needs a mind to embrace the Universe; "We cannot give that," said the Fathers. "I never had it," said the Spirit of the Earth. "The form would be consumed were I to give it mine." said the Great Fire . . . . Man remained an empty senseless Bhûta . . . . Thus have the boneless given life to those who became men with bones in the third.

### V.

18. The first were the sons of Yoga. Their sons the children of the Yellow Father and the White Mother.

19. The Second Race was the product by budding and expansion, the A-Sexual from the Sexless.\* Thus was, O Lanoo, the Second Race produced.

\* The idea and the spirit of the sentence is here given, as a verbal translation would convey very little to the reader.

20. Their fathers were the self-born. The self-born, the Chhaya from the brilliant bodies of the Lords, the Fathers, the Sons of Twilight.

21. When the Race became old, the old waters mixed with the fresher waters. When its drops became turbid, they vanished and disappeared in the new stream, in the hot stream of life. The outer of the first became the inner of the second. The old Wing became the new Shadow, and the Shadow of the Wing.

### VI.

22. Then the second evolved the Egg-born, the third. The sweat grew, its drops grew, and the drops became hard and round. The Sun warmed it; the Moon cooled and shaped it; the wind fed it until its ripeness. The white swan from the starry vault overshadowed the big drop. The egg of the future race, the Man-swan of the later third. First male-female, then man and woman.

23. The self-born were the Chhayas : the Shadows from the bodies of the Sons of Twilight.

### VII.

24. The Sons of Wisdom, the Sons of Night, ready for re- birth, came down, they saw the vile forms of the First Third, "We can choose," said the Lords, "we have wisdom." Some entered the Chhaya. Some projected the Spark. Some deferred till the Fourth. From their own Rupa they filled the Kama. Those who entered became Arhats. Those who received but a spark, remained destitute of knowledge; the spark burned low. The third remained mind-less.

Their Jivas were not ready. These were set apart among the Seven. They became narrow-headed. The Third were ready. "In these shall we dwell," said the Lords of the Flame.

25. How did the Manâsa, the Sons of Wisdom, act? They rejected the Self-born. They are not ready. They spurned the Sweat-born. They are not quite ready. They would not enter the first Egg-born.

26. When the Sweat-born produced the Egg-born, the twofold and the mighty, the powerful with bones, the Lords of Wisdom said: "Now shall we create."

27. The Third Race became the Vahan of the Lords of Wisdom. It created "Sons of Will and Yoga," by Kriyasakti it created them, the Holy Fathers, Ancestors of the Arhats. . .

#### VIII.

28. From the drops of sweat; from the residue of the substance; matter from dead bodies of men and animals of the wheel before; and from cast-off dust, the first animals were produced.

29. Animals with bones, dragons of the deep, and flying Sarpas were added to the creeping things. They that creep on the ground got wings. They of the long necks in the water became the progenitors of the fowls of the air.

30. During the third Race the boneless animals grew and changed: they became animals with bones, their Chhayas became solid.

31. The animals separated the first. They began to breed. The two-fold man separated also. He said: "Let us as they; let us unite and make creatures." They did.

32. And those which had no spark took huge she-animals unto them. They begat upon them dumb Races. Dumb they were themselves. But their tongues untied. The tongues of their progeny remained still. Monsters they bred. A race of crooked red-hair-covered monsters going on all fours. A dumb race to keep the shame untold.

#### IX.

33. Seeing which, the Lhas who had not built men, wept, saying: –

34. "The Amanâsa have defiled our future abodes. This is Karma. Let us dwell in the others. Let us teach them better, lest worse should happen. They did . . . .

35. Then all men became endowed with Manas. They saw the sin of the mindless.

36. The Fourth Race developed speech.

37. The One became Two; also all the living and creeping things that were still one, giant fish-birds and serpents with shell-heads.

#### X.

38. Thus two by two on the seven zones, the Third Race gave birth to the Fourth-Race men; the gods became no-gods; the sura became a-sura.

39. The first, on every zone, was moon-coloured; the second yellow like gold; the third red; the fourth brown, which became black with sin. The first seven human shoots were all of one complexion. The next seven began mixing.

40. Then the Fourth became tall with pride. We are the kings, it was said; we are the gods.

41. They took wives fair to look upon. Wives from the mindless, the narrow-headed. They bred monsters. Wicked demons, male and female, also Khado (dakini), with little minds.

42. They built temples for the human body. Male and female they worshipped. Then the Third Eye acted no longer.

#### XI.

43. They built huge cities. Of rare earths and metals they built, and out of the fires vomited, out of the white stone of the mountains and of the black stone, they cut their own images in their size and likeness, and worshipped them.

44. They built great images nine yatis high, the size of their bodies. Inner fires had destroyed the land of their fathers. The water threatened the fourth.

45. The first great waters came. They swallowed the seven great islands.

46. All Holy saved, the Unholy destroyed. With them most of the huge animals, produced from the sweat of the earth.

#### XII.

47. Few men remained: some yellow, some brown and black, and some red remained. The Moon-coloured were gone forever.
48. The fifth produced from the Holy stock remained; it was ruled over by the first divine Kings.
49. . . . Who re-descended, who made peace with the fifth, who taught and instructed it . . . . .

## **Diagram of Meditation**

[Apparently the diagram was part and parcel of esoteric instruction of H.P.B., as recorded by E. T. Sturdy.]

First conceive of UNITY by Expansion in space and infinite in Time.

(Either with or without self-identification.)

Then meditate logically and consistently on this in reference to states of consciousness. Then the normal state of our consciousness must be moulded by: –

### **ACQUISITIONS**

Perpetual Presence in imagination in all Space and Time.

From this originates a substratum of memory which does not cease in dreaming or waking. Its manifestation is courage.

With memory of universality all dread vanishes during the dangers and trials of life.

Continued attempt at attitude of mind to all existing things, which is neither love, hate nor indifference.

Different in external activity to each, because in each the capacity alters. Mentality the same to all.

Equilibrium and constant calm. Greater ease in practising the “virtues,” which are really the outcome of wisdom, for benevolence, sympathy, justice, etc., arise from the intuitive identification of the individual with others, although unknown to the personality.

The Perception in all embodied beings of Limitation only.

Criticism without praise or blame.

NOTE: Acquisition is completed by the conception “I am all Space and Time.”

Beyond that . . . (It cannot be said).

### **DEPRIVATIONS**

Constant refusal to think of reality of: –

Separations and Meetings. Associations with Places. Times and Forms.

Futile longings. Expectations. Sad memories. Broken-heartedness.

The Distinction. Friend and Foe.

Resulting in absence of anger and bias. (Replaced by judgement.)

Possessions.

Vanity, Remorse.

Personality.

Vanity, Remorse.

Greed, Selfishness, Ambition.

Sensation.

Gluttony, Lust, etc.

NOTE: These deprivations are produced by the perpetual imagination – without self-delusion\* – of “I am without;” the recognition of their being the source of bondage, ignorance and strife. ‘Deprivation’ is completed by the meditation: “I am without attributes.”

\*) There is no risk of self-delusion if the personality is deliberately forgotten.

General Note: All the passions and virtues interblend with each other. Therefore the diagram gives only general hints.

### **Copy of a Letter**

H. P. Blavatsky, Received in one from H.P.B. postmarked May 10th, 1887, *The Path*, 1935, p. 232

[The following is from a copy which is held in the archives of the Theosophical Headquarters at Point Loma (now Pasadena) and together with the heading is reproduced *verbatim et literatim*.]

You say you are a “sad case” and yet you have in your heart so great a love for humanity and for the individual members of the race that you are haunted day and night by thoughts of their suffering, ignorance and pain. It is such as you who hold the human race from falling into that bottomless pit of emptiness where despair is forgotten and where effort is unknown.

My dear friend, for that you are, being truly the friend of all who are looking for the light, do not forget that you are living in a very dark and sad Maya of intensely physical life. The whole busy continent of America is eaten up by materialism and when an effort is made towards psychic life it results only in dragging that psychic life into matter where it dies as a volatile gas escapes in the hands of one who is not expert. The sadness of this fact colors your letter. You know that any school founded amongst you would at once become a school of practical magic working in order to produce results in matter. This is quite true. The reason is that even those who are most in earnest among you have no true psychic aspirations. Remedy this in yourself and endeavor to remedy it in others by word and example.

Desire no results which are forms of power. Desire only, in your efforts, to reach nearer to the center of life (which is the same in the Universe and in yourself) which makes you careless whether you are strong or weak, learned or unlearned. It is your divinity; it is the divinity we all share. But its existence is not credited by those who look only for money or power or success in material effort. (I include intellect in matter.)

Lean I pray you in thought and feeling away from these external problems which you have written down in your letter; draw on the breath of the great life throbbing in us all and let faith (which is unlearned knowledge) carry you through your life as a bird flies in the air – undoubtingly. Only remember one thing – when once you fling yourself on the great life of Nature, the force that keeps the world in motion and our pulses beating and which has within it, in its heart, a supreme and awful power – once having done that, you can never again claim back your life. You must let yourself swing with the motions of the spheres. You must live for other men and with them; not for yourself. You will do this, I am sure. – H. P. Blavatsky

### **The Golden Stairs to the Temple of Wisdom**

H. P. Blavatsky, *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 12:591

Behold the truth before you: A clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one’s co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science (Gupta-Vidya) depicts – these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.

## **Aquarian Axioms**

[Ancient axioms from a compilation made by H.P. Blavatsky in 1890.]

1. Life is built up by the sacrifice of the individual to the whole. Each cell in the living body must sacrifice itself to the perfection of the whole; when it is otherwise, disease and death enforce the lesson.
2. Harmony is the law of life, discord its shadow; whence springs suffering, the teacher, the awakener of consciousness.
3. To obtain the knowledge of Self is a greater achievement than to command the elements or to know the future.
4. Self-knowledge is unattainable by what men usually call 'self-analysis'. It is not reached by reasoning or any brain-powers.
5. Real Self-knowledge is the awakening to consciousness of the divine nature of man.
6. Will creates intelligently; Desire blindly and unconsciously.
7. When desire is for the purely abstract – when it has lost all trace or tinge of 'self' – then it has become pure.
8. Spirituality is not what we understand by the words 'virtue' and 'goodness'. It is the power of perceiving formless, spiritual essences.
9. The discovery and right use of the true essence of Being this is the whole secret of life.
10. You cannot build a Temple of Truth by hammering dead stones. Its foundations must precipitate themselves like crystals from the Solution of Life.

## **On "Time"**

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, 1:37

Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced; but "lies asleep." The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future, from that part which we call the past. Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change – or the same – for the billionth part of a second; and the sensation we have of the actuality of the division of "time" known as the present, comes from the blurring of that momentary glimpse, or succession of glimpses, of things that our senses give us, as those things pass from the region of ideals which we call the future, to the region of memories that we name the past. In the same way we experience a sensation of duration in the case of the instantaneous electric spark, by reason of the blurred and continuing impression on the retina. The real person or thing does not consist solely of what is seen at any particular moment, but is composed of the sum of all its various and changing conditions from its appearance in the material form to its disappearance from the earth. It is these "sum totals" that exist from eternity in the "future," and pass by degrees through matter, to exist for eternity in the "past." No one could say that a bar of metal dropped into the sea came into existence as it left the air, and ceased to exist as it entered the water, and that the bar itself consisted only of that cross-section thereof which at any given moment coincided with the mathematical plane that separates, and, at the same time, joins, the atmosphere and the ocean. Even so of persons and things, which, dropping out of the to-be into the has-been, out of the future into the past – present momentarily to our senses a cross-section, as it were, of their total selves, as they pass through time and space (as matter) on their way from one eternity to another: and these two constitute that "duration" in which alone anything has true existence, were our senses but able to cognize it there.

## The Science of Life

H. P. Blavatsky, *Lucifer*, November, 1887

What is Life? Hundreds of the most philosophical minds, scores of learned well-skilled physicians, have asked themselves the question, but to little purpose. The veil thrown over primordial Kosmos and the mysterious beginnings of life upon it, has never been withdrawn to the satisfaction of earnest, honest science. The more the men of official learning try to penetrate through its dark folds, the more intense becomes that darkness, and the less they see, for they are like the treasure-hunter, who went across the wide seas to look for that which lay buried in his own garden.

What is then this Science? Is it biology, or the study of life in its general aspect? No. Is it physiology, or the science of organic function? Neither; for the former leaves the problem as much the riddle of the Sphinx as ever; and the latter is the science of death far more than that of life. Physiology is based upon the study of the different organic functions and the organs necessary to the manifestations of life, but that which science calls living matter, is, in sober truth, dead matter. Every molecule of the living organs contains the germ of death in itself, and begins dying as soon as born, in order that its successor-molecule should live only to die in its turn. An organ, a natural part of every living being, is but the medium for some special function in life, and is a combination of such molecules. The vital organ, the whole, puts the mask of life on, and thus conceals the constant decay and death of its parts. Thus, neither biology nor physiology are the science, nor even branches of the Science of Life, but only that of the appearances of life. While true philosophy stands Oedipus-like before the Sphinx of life, hardly daring to utter the paradox contained in the answer to the riddle propounded, materialistic science, as arrogant as ever, never doubting its own wisdom for one moment, biologises itself and many others into the belief that it has solved the awful problem of existence. In truth, however, has it even so much as approached its threshold? It is not, surely, by attempting to deceive itself and the unwary in saying that life is but the result of molecular complexity, that it can ever hope to promote the truth. Is vital force, indeed, only a "phantom," as Du-Bois Reymond calls it? For his taunt that "life," as something independent, is but the asylum ignorantiae of those who seek refuge in abstractions, when direct explanation is impossible, applies with far more force and justice to those materialists who would blind people to the reality of facts, by substituting bombast and jaw-breaking words in their place. Have any of the five divisions of the functions of life, so pretentiously named – Archebiosis, Biocrosis, Biodiaeresis, Biocaenosis and Bioparadosis (1), ever helped a Huxley or a Haeckel to probe more fully the mystery of the generations of the humblest ant – let alone of man? Most certainly not. For life, and everything pertaining to it, belongs to the lawful domain of the metaphysician and psychologist, and physical science has no claim upon it. "That which hath been, is that which shall be; and that which hath been is named already – and it is known that it is MAN" – is the answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. But "man" here, does not refer to physical man – not in its esoteric meaning, at any rate. Scalpels and microscopes may solve the mystery of the material parts of the shell of man: they can never cut a window into his soul to open the smallest vista on any of the wider horizons of being.

It is those thinkers alone, who, following the Delphic injunction, have cognized life in their inner selves, those who have studied it thoroughly in themselves, before attempting to trace and analyze its reflection in their outer shells, who are the only ones rewarded with some measure of success. Like the fire-philosophers of the Middle Ages, they have skipped over the appearances of light and fire in the world of effects, and centred their whole attention upon the producing arcane agencies. Thence, tracing these to the one abstract cause, they have attempted to fathom the MYSTERY, each as far as his intellectual capacities permitted him. Thus they have ascertained that (1) the seemingly living mechanism called physical man, is but the fuel, the material, upon which life feeds, in order to manifest itself; and (2) that thereby the inner man receives as his wage and reward the possibility of accumulating additional experiences of the terrestrial illusions called lives.

One of such philosophers is now undeniably the great Russian novelist and reformer, Count Lef N. Tolstoi. How near his views are to the esoteric and philosophical teachings of higher Theosophy will be found on the perusal of a few fragments from a lecture delivered by him at Moscow before the local Psychological Society.

Discussing the problem of life, the Count asks his audience to admit, for the sake of argument, an impossibility. Says the lecturer:

Let us grant for a moment that all that which modern science longs to learn of life, it has learnt, and now knows; that the problem has become as clear as day; that it is clear how organic matter has, by simple

adaptation, come to be originated from inorganic material; that it is as clear how natural forces may be transformed into feelings, will, thought, and that finally, all this is known, not only to the city student, but to every village schoolboy, as well.

I am aware, then, that such and such thoughts and feelings originate from such and such motions. Well, and what then? Can I, or cannot I, produce and guide such motions, in order to excite within my brain corresponding thoughts? The question – what are the thoughts and feelings I ought to generate in myself and others, remains still, not only unsolved, but even untouched.

Yet it is precisely this question which is the one fundamental question of the central idea of life.

Science has chosen as its object a few manifestations that accompany life; and mistaking (2) the part for the whole, called these manifestations the integral total of life . . . .

The question inseparable from the idea of life is not *whence* life, but *how one should live* that life: and it is only by first starting with this question that one can hope to approach some solution in the problem of existence.

The answer to the query “How are we to live?” appears so simple to man that he esteems it hardly worth his while to touch upon it.

. . . One must live the best way one can – that’s all. This seems at first sight very simple and well known to all, but it is by far neither as simple nor as well known as one may imagine . . . .

The idea of life appears to man in the beginning as a most simple and self-evident business. First of all, it seems to him that life is in himself, in his own body. No sooner, however, does one commence his search after that life, in any one given *spot* of the said body, than one meets with difficulties. Life is not in the hair, nor in the nails; neither is it in the foot nor the arm, which may both be amputated; it is not in the blood, it is not in the heart, and it is not in the brain. It is everywhere and it is nowhere. It comes to this: Life cannot be found in any of its dwelling-places. Then man begins to look for life in Time; and that, too, appears at first a very easy matter . . . . Yet again, no sooner has he started on his chase than he perceives that here also the business is more complicated than he had thought. Now, I have lived fifty-eight years, so says my baptismal church record. But I know that out of these fifty-eight years I slept over twenty. How then? have I lived all these years, or have I not? Deduct the months of my gestation, and those I passed in the arms of my nurse, and shall we call this life, also? Again, out of the remaining thirty-eight years, I know that a good half of that time I slept while moving about; and thus, I could no more say in this case, whether I lived during that time or not. I may have lived a little, and vegetated a little. Here again, one finds that in time, as in the body, life is everywhere, yet nowhere. And now the question naturally arises, whence, then, that life which I can trace to nowhere? Now – will I learn . . . . But it so happens that in this direction also, what seemed to me so easy at first, now seems impossible. I must have been searching for something else, not for my life, assuredly. Therefore, once we have to go in search of the whereabouts of life – if search we have to – then it should be neither in space nor in time, neither as cause nor effect, but as a something which I cognize within myself as quite independent from Space, time and causality.

That which remains to do now is to study self. But how do I cognize life in myself?

This is how I cognize it. I know, to begin with, that I live; and that I live wishing for myself everything that is good, wishing this since I can remember myself, to this day, and from morn till night. All that lives outside of myself is important in my eyes, but only in so far as it co-operates with the creation of that which is productive of my welfare. The Universe is important in my sight only because it can give me, pleasure.

Meanwhile, something else is bound up with this knowledge in me of my existence. Inseparable from the life I feel, is another cognition allied to it; namely, that besides myself, I am surrounded with a whole world of living creatures, possessed, as I am myself, of the same instinctive realization of their exclusive lives; and that all these creatures live for their own objects, which objects are foreign to me; that those creatures do not know, nor do they care to know, anything of my pretensions to an exclusive life, and that all these creatures, in order to achieve success in their objects, are ready to annihilate me at any moment. But this is not all. While watching the destruction of creatures similar in all to myself, I also know that for me too, for that precious ME in whom alone life is represented, a very speedy and inevitable destruction is lying in wait.

It is as if there were two "I's" in man; it is as if they could never live in peace together; it is as if they were eternally struggling, and ever trying to expel each other.

One "I" says, "I alone am living as one should live, all the rest only seems to live. Therefore, the whole *raison d'être* for the universe is in that I may be made comfortable."

The other "I" replies, "The universe is not for thee at all, but for its own aims and purposes, and it cares little to know whether thou art happy or unhappy."

Life becomes a dreadful thing after this!

One "I" says, "I only want the gratification of all my wants and desires, and that is why I need the universe."

The other "I" replies, "All animal life lives only for the gratification of its wants and desires. It is the wants and desires of animals alone that are gratified at the expense and detriment of other animals; hence the ceaseless struggle between the animal species. Thou art an animal, and therefore thou hast to struggle. Yet, however successful in thy struggle, the rest of the struggling creatures must sooner or later crush thee."

Still worse! life becomes still more dreadful . . . .

But the most terrible of all, that which includes in itself the whole of the foregoing, is that: –

One "I" says, "I want to live, to live for ever."

And that the other "I" replies, "Thou shalt surely, perhaps in a few minutes, die; as also shall die all those thou lovest, for thou and they are destroying with every motion your lives, and thus approaching ever nearer suffering, death, all that which thou so hatest, and which thou fearest above anything else."

This is the worst of all . . . .

To change this condition is impossible . . . . One can avoid moving, sleeping, eating, even breathing, but one cannot escape from thinking. One thinks, and that thought, my thought, is poisoning every step in my life, as a personality.

No sooner has man commenced a conscious life than that consciousness repeats to him incessantly without respite, over and over the same thing again. "To live such life as you feel and see in your past, the life lived by animals and many men too, lived in that way, which made you become what you are now – is no longer possible. Were you to attempt doing so, you could never escape thereby the struggle with all the world of creatures which live as you do – for their personal objects; and then those creatures will inevitably destroy you." . . .

To change this situation is impossible. There remains but one thing to do, and that is always done by him who, beginning to live, transfers his objects in life outside of himself, and aims to reach them . . . . But, however far he places them outside his personality, as his mind gets clearer, none of these objects will satisfy him.

Bismarck, having united Germany, and now ruling Europe – if his reason has only thrown any light upon the results of his activity – must perceive, as much as his own cook does who prepares a dinner that will be devoured in an hour's time, the same unsolved contradiction between the vanity and foolishness of all he has done, and the eternity and reasonableness of that which exists for ever. If they only think of it, each will see as clearly as the other; firstly, that the preservation of the integrity of Prince Bismarck's dinner, as well as that of powerful Germany, is solely due: the preservation of the former – to the police, and the preservation of the latter – to the army; and that, so long only as both keep a good watch. Because there are famished people who would willingly eat the dinner, and nations which would fain be as powerful as Germany. Secondly, that neither Prince Bismarck's dinner, nor the might of the German Empire, coincide with the aims and purposes of universal life, but that they are in flagrant contradiction with them. And thirdly, that as he who cooked the dinner, so also the might of Germany, will both very soon die, and that so shall perish, and as soon, both the dinner and Germany. That which shall survive alone is the Universe, which will never give one thought to either dinner or Germany, least of all to those who have cooked them.

As the intellectual condition of man increases, he comes to the idea that no happiness connected with his personality is an achievement, but only a necessity. Personality is only that incipient state from which begins life, and the ultimate limit of life . . .

Where, then, does life begin, and where does it end, I may be asked? Where ends the night, and where does day commence? Where, on the shore, ends the domain of the sea, and where does the domain of land begin?

There is day and there is night; there is land and there is sea; there is life and there is no life.

Our life, ever since we became conscious of it, is a pendulum-like motion between two limits.

One limit is, an absolute unconcern for the life of the infinite Universe, an energy directed only toward the gratification of one's own personality.

The other limit is a complete renunciation of that personality, the greatest concern with the life of the infinite Universe, in full accord with it, the transfer of all our desires and good will from one's self, to that infinite Universe and all the creatures outside of us. (3)

The nearer to the first limit, the less life and bliss, the closer to the second, the more life and bliss. Therefore, man is ever moving from one end to the other; i.e., he lives. THIS MOTION IS LIFE ITSELF.

And when I speak of life know that the idea of it is indissolubly connected in my conceptions with that of conscious life. No other life is known to me except conscious life, nor can it be known to anyone else.

We call life, the life of animals, organic life. But this is no life at all, only a certain state or condition of life manifesting to us.

But what is this consciousness or mind, the exigencies of which exclude personality and transfer the energy of man outside of him and into that state which is conceived by us as the blissful state of love?

What is conscious mind? Whatsoever we may be defining, we have to define it with our conscious mind. Therefore, with what shall we define mind? . . .

If we have to define all with our mind, it follows that conscious mind cannot be defined. Yet all of us, we not only know it, but it is the only thing which is given to us to know undeniably . . .

It is the same law as the law of life, of everything organic, animal or vegetable, with that one difference that we see the consummation of an intelligent law in the life of a plant. But the law of conscious mind, to which we are subjected, as the tree is subjected to its law, we see it not, but fulfil it . . .

We have settled that life is that which is not our life. It is herein that lies hidden the root of error. Instead of studying that life of which we are conscious within ourselves, absolutely and exclusively – since we can know of nothing else – in order to study it, we observe that which is devoid of the most important factor and faculty of our life namely, intelligent consciousness. By so doing, we act as a man who attempts to study an object by its shadow or reflection does.

If we know that substantial particles are subjected during their transformation to the activity of the organism; we know it not because we have observed or studied it, but simply because we possess a certain familiar organism united to us, namely the organism of our animal, which is but too well known to us as the material of our life; i.e. that upon which we are called to work and to rule by subjecting it to the law of reason . . . No sooner has man lost faith in life, no sooner has he transferred that life into that which is no life, than he becomes wretched, and sees death . . . A man who conceives life such as he finds it in his consciousness, knows neither misery, nor death: for all the good in life for him is in the subjection of his animal to the law of reason, to do which is not only in his power, but takes place unavoidably in him. The death of particles in the animal being, we know. The death of

animals and of man, as an animal, we know; but we know nought about the death of conscious mind, nor can we know anything of it, just because that conscious mind is the very life itself. And Life can never be Death . . .

The animal lives an existence of bliss, neither seeing nor knowing death, and dies without cognizing it. Why then should man have received the gift of seeing and knowing it, and why should death be so terrible to him that it actually tortures his soul, often forcing him to kill himself out of sheer fear of death? Why should it be so? Because the man who sees death is a sick man, one who has broken the law of his life, and lives no longer a conscious existence. He has become an animal himself, an animal which also has broken the law of life.

The life of man is an aspiration to bliss, and that which he aspires to is given to him. The light lit in the soul of man is bliss and life, and that light can never be darkness, as there exists – verily there exists for man – only this solitary light which burns within his soul.

We have translated this rather lengthy fragment from the Report of Count Tolstoi's superb lecture, because it reads like the echo of the finest teachings of the universal ethics of true theosophy. His definition of life in its abstract sense, and of the life every earnest Theosophist ought to follow, each according to, and in the measure of, his natural capacities – is the summary and the Alpha and the Omega of practical psychic, if not spiritual life. There are sentences in the lecture which, to the average theosophist, will seem too hazy, and perhaps incomplete. Not one will he find, however, which could be objected to by the most exacting, practical occultist. It may be called a treatise on the Alchemy of Soul. For that "solitary" light in man, which burns for ever, and can never be darkness in its intrinsic nature, though the "animal" outside us may remain blind to it – is that "Light" upon which the Neo-Platonists of the Alexandrian school, and after them the Rosecroix and especially the Alchemists, have written volumes, though to the present day their true meaning is a dark mystery to most men.

True, Count Tolstoi is neither an Alexandrian nor a modern theosophist; still less is he a Rosecroix or an Alchemist. But that which the latter have concealed under the peculiar phraseology of the Fire-philosophers, purposely confusing cosmic transmutations with Spiritual Alchemy, all that is transferred by the great Russian thinker from the realm of the metaphysical unto the field of practical life. That which Schelling would define as a realization of the identity of subject and object in the man's inner Ego, that which mites and blends the latter with the universal Soul – which is but the identity of subject and object on a higher plane, or the unknown Deity – all that Count Tolstoi has blended together without quitting the terrestrial plane. He is one of those few elect who begin with intuition and end with quasi-omniscience. It is the transmutation of the baser metals – the animal mass – into gold and silver, or the philosopher's stone, the development and manifestation of man's higher SELF which the Count has achieved. The alkahest of the inferior Alchemist is the All-geist, the all-pervading Divine Spirit of the higher Initiate; for Alchemy was, and is, as very few know to this day, as much a spiritual philosophy as it is a physical science. He who knows nought of one, will never know much of the other. Aristotle told it in so many words to his pupil, Alexander: "It is not a stone," he said, of the philosopher's stone. "It is in every man and in every place, and at all seasons, and is called the end of all philosophers," as the Vedanta is the end of all philosophies.

To wind up this essay on the Science of Life, a few words may be said of the eternal riddle propounded to mortals by the Sphinx. To fail to solve the problem contained in it, was to be doomed to sure death, as the Sphinx of life devoured the unintuitive, who would live only in their "animal." He who lives for Self, and only for Self, will surely die, as the higher "I" tells the lower "animal" in the Lecture. The riddle has seven keys to it, and the Count opens the mystery with one of the highest. For, as the author on "Hermetic Philosophy" beautifully expressed it: "The real mystery most familiar and, at the same time, most unfamiliar to every man, into which he must be initiated or perish as an atheist, is himself. For him is the elixir of life, to quaff which, before the discovery of the philosopher's stone, is to drink the beverage of death, while it confers on the adept and the eopt, the true immortality. He may know truth as it really is – Aletheia, the breath of God, or Life, the conscious mind in man."

This is "the Alcahest which dissolves all things," and Count Tolstoi has well understood the riddle.

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. Or Life-origination, Life-fusion, Life-division, Life-renewal and Life-transmission.

2. “Mistaking” is an erroneous term to use. The men of science know but too well that what they teach concerning life is a materialistic fiction contradicted at every step by logic and fact. In this particular question science is abused, and made to serve personal hobbies and a determined policy of crushing in humanity every spiritual aspiration and thought. “Pretending to mistake” would be more correct. – H.P.B.

3. This is what the Theosophists call “living the life” – in a nut-shell. – H.P.B.

### **The Omnipresent Proteus**

All original thinkers and investigators of the hidden side of nature whether materialists – those who find in matter “the promise and potency of all terrestrial life,” or spiritualists – that is, those who discover in spirit the source of all energy and of matter as well, were and are, properly Theosophists. For to be one, one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or a deity. One need but worship the spirit of living nature and try to identify oneself with it. To revere that Presence, the invisible Cause, which is yet ever manifesting itself in its incessant results; the intangible, omnipotent, and omnipresent Proteus: indivisible in its Essence, and eluding form, yet appearing under all and every form; who is here and there and everywhere and nowhere; is ALL, and NOTHING: ubiquitous yet one; the Essence filling, binding, bounding, containing everything, contained in all. It will, we think, be seen now, that whether classed as Theist, Pantheists or Atheists, such men are all near kinsmen to the rest. Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought – Godward – he is a Theosophist, an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth, with “an inspiration of his own” to solve the universal problems.

H. P. Blavatsky

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## The Path

H. P. Blavatsky, *Lucifer*, June 1890, *Mistaken Notions on the 'Secret Doctrine'*

My chief and only object was to bring into prominence that – the basic and fundamental principles of every exoteric religion – and philosophy, old or new, were from first to last but echoes of – the primeval “Wisdom Religion.” I sought to show that the TREE – OF KNOWLEDGE, like Truth itself, was One; and that, however – differing in form and color, the foliage of the twigs, the trunk – and its main branches were still those of the same old Tree, in – the shadow of which had developed and grown the (now) esoteric – religious philosophy of the races that preceded our present – mankind on earth.

This object, I believe I have carried out as far as it could – be carried, in the first two volumes of the Secret Doctrine. It – was not the occult philosophy of the esoteric teachings that I – undertook to explain to the world at large, for then the – qualification of “Secret” would have become like the secret of – “Polichinelle” shouted in the manner of a stage a parte; but – simply to give that which could be given out, and to parallel it – with the beliefs and dogmas of the past and present nations, thus – showing the original source of the latter and how disfigured they – had become. If my work is, at this day of materialistic – assumptions and universal iconoclasm, too premature for the – masses of the profane – so much the worse for those masses. But – it was not too premature for the earnest students of theosophy – – except those, perhaps, who had hoped that a treatise on such – intricate correspondences as exist between the religions and – philosophies of the almost forgotten Past, and those of the – modern day, could be as simple as a shilling “shocker” from a – railway stall. Even one system of philosophy at a time, whether – that of Kant or of Herbert Spencer, of Spinoza or of Hartmann, – requires more than a study of several years. Does it not – therefore, stand to reason that a work which compares several – dozens of philosophies and over half – a – dozen world – religions, a – work which has to unveil the roots with the greatest precautions, – as it can only hint at the secret blossoms here and there – cannot be comprehended at a first reading, nor even after several, – unless the reader elaborates for himself a system for it? . . . .

There are several ways of acquiring knowledge: (a) by – accepting blindly the dicta of the church or modern science; (b) – by rejecting both and starting to find the truth for oneself. The – first method is easy and leads to social respectability and the – praise of men; the other is difficult and requires more than – ordinary devotion to truth, a disregard for direct personal – benefits and an unwavering perseverance. Thus it was in the days – of old and so it is now, except perhaps, that such devotion to – truth has been more rare in our own day than it was of yore. – Indeed, the modern Eastern student’s unwillingness to think for – himself is now as great as Western exactions and criticism of – other people’s thoughts.

He demands and expects that his “Path” shall be engineered – with all the selfish craft of modern comfort, macadamized, laid – out with swift railways and telegraphs, and even telescopes, – through which he may, while sitting at his ease, survey the works – of other people; and while criticizing them, look out for the – easiest, in order to play at the Occultist and Amateur Student of – Theosophy. The real “Path” to esoteric knowledge is very – different. Its entrance is overgrown with the brambles of neglect, – the travesties of truth during long ages block the way, and it is – obscured by the proud contempt of self – sufficiency and with every – verity distorted out of all focus. To push over the threshold – alone, demands an incessant, often unrequited labor of years, and – once on the other side of the entrance, the weary pilgrim has to – toil up on foot, for the narrow way leads to forbidding mountain – heights, unmeasured and unknown, save to those who have reached – the cloud – capped summit before. Thus must he mount, step by step, – having to conquer every inch of ground before him by his own – exertions; moving onward, guided by strange land marks the nature – of which he can ascertain only by deciphering the weather – beaten, – half – defaced inscriptions as he treads along, for woe to him, if, – instead of studying them, he sits by coolly pronouncing them – “indecipherable.” The “Doctrine of the Eye” is maya; that of the – “Heart” alone, can make of him an elect.

Is it to be wondered that so few reach the goal, that so – many are called, but so few are chosen? Is not the reason for – this explained in three lines on page 27 of the “Voice of the – Silence”? These say that while “The first repeat in pride ‘Behold, – I know,’ the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low – confess, ‘thus have I heard’ “; and hence, become the only – “chosen.”

## Lucifer to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Greeting!

H. P. Blavatsky, *Lucifer*, Vol. I, No. 4, December, 1887, pp. 242-251 & *Blavatsky Collected Writings* VIII:268-283

MY LORD PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, –

We make use of an open letter to your Grace as a vehicle to convey to you, and through you, to the clergy, to their flocks, and to Christians generally – who regard us as the enemies of Christ – a brief statement of the position which Theosophy occupies in regard to Christianity, as we believe that the time for making that statement has arrived.

Your Grace is no doubt aware that Theosophy is not a religion, but a philosophy at once religious and scientific; and that the chief work, so far, of the Theosophical Society has been to revive in each religion its own animating spirit, by encouraging and helping enquiry into the true significance of its doctrines and observances. Theosophists know that the deeper one penetrates into the meaning of the dogmas and ceremonies of all religions, the greater becomes their apparent underlying similarity, until finally a perception of their fundamental unity is reached. This common ground is no other than Theosophy – the Secret Doctrine of the ages; which, diluted and disguised to suit the capacity of the multitude, and the requirements of the time, has formed the living kernel of all religions. The Theosophical Society has branches respectively composed of Buddhists, Hindoos, Mohammedans, Parsees, Christians and Freethinkers, who work together as brethren on the common ground of Theosophy; and it is precisely because Theosophy is not a religion, nor can for the multitude supply the place of a religion, that the success of the Society has been so great, not merely as regards its growing membership and extending influence, but also in respect to the performance of the work it has undertaken – the revival of spirituality in religion, and the cultivation of the sentiment of BROTHERHOOD among men.

We Theosophists believe that a religion is a natural incident in the life of man in his present stage of development; and that although, in rare cases, individuals may be born without the religious sentiment, a community must have a religion, that is to say, *a uniting bond – under penalty of social decay and material annihilation. We believe that no religious doctrine can be more than an attempt to picture to our present limited understandings, in the terms of our terrestrial experiences, great cosmical and spiritual truths, which in our normal state of consciousness we vaguely sense, rather than actually perceive and comprehend; and a revelation, if it is to reveal anything, must necessarily conform to the same earthbound requirements of the human intellect. In our estimation, therefore, no religion can be absolutely true, and none can be absolutely false. A religion is true in proportion as it supplies the spiritual, moral and intellectual needs of the time, and helps the development of mankind in these respects. It is false in proportion as it hinders that development, and offends the spiritual, moral and intellectual portion of man's nature. And the transcendently spiritual ideas of the ruling powers of the Universe entertained by an Oriental sage would be as false a religion for the African savage as the groveling fetishism of the latter would be for the sage, although both views must necessarily be true in degree, for both represent the highest ideas attainable by the respective individuals of the same cosmico-spiritual facts, which can never be known in their reality by man while he remains but man.*

Theosophists, therefore, are respecters of all the religions, and for the religious ethics of Jesus they have profound admiration. It could not be otherwise, for these teachings which have come down to us are the same as those of Theosophy. So far, therefore, as modern Christianity makes good its claim to be the practical religion taught by Jesus, Theosophists are with it heart and hand. So far as it goes contrary to those ethics, pure and simple, Theosophists are its opponents. Any Christian can, if he will, compare the Sermon on the Mount with the dogmas of his church, and the spirit that breathes in it, with the principles that animate this Christian civilization and govern his own life; and then he will be able to judge for himself how far the religion of Jesus enters into his Christianity, and how far, therefore, he and Theosophists are agreed. But professing Christians, especially the clergy, shrink from making this comparison. Like merchants who fear to find themselves bankrupt, they seem to dread the discovery of a discrepancy in their accounts which could not be made good by placing material assets as a set-off to spiritual liabilities. The comparison between the teachings of Jesus and the doctrines of the churches has, however, frequently been made – and often with great learning and critical acumen – both by those who would abolish Christianity and those who would reform it; and the aggregate result of these comparisons, as your Grace must be well aware, goes to prove that in almost every point the doctrines of the churches and the practices of Christians are *in direct opposition to the teachings of Jesus.*

We are accustomed to say to the Buddhist, the Mohammedan, the Hindoo, or the Parsee: “The road to Theosophy lies, for you, through your own religion.” We say this because those creeds possess a deeply philosophical and esoteric meaning, explanatory of the allegories under which they are presented to the people; but we cannot say the

same thing to Christians. The successors of the Apostles never recorded the secret doctrine of Jesus – the “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” – which it was given to them (his apostles) alone to know. [Mark, iv, 11; Matthew, xiii, 11; Luke, viii, 10.] These have been suppressed, made away with, destroyed. What have come down upon the stream of time are the maxims, the parables, the allegories and the fables which Jesus expressly intended for the spiritually deaf and blind to be revealed later to the world, and which modern Christianity either takes all literally, or interprets according to the fancies of the Fathers of the secular church. In both cases they are like cut flowers: they are severed from the plant on which they grew, and from the root whence that plant drew its life. Were we therefore, to encourage Christians, as we do the votaries of other creeds, to study their own religion for themselves, the consequence would be, not a knowledge of the meaning of its mysteries, but either the revival of mediaeval superstition and intolerance, accompanied by a formidable outbreak of mere lip-prayer and preaching – such as resulted in the formation of the 239 Protestant sects of England alone – or else a great increase of scepticism, for Christianity has no esoteric foundation known to those who profess it. For even you, Lord Primate of England, must be painfully aware that you know absolutely no more of those “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” which Jesus taught his disciples, than does the humblest and most illiterate member of your church.

It is easily understood, therefore, that Theosophists have nothing to say against the policy of the Roman Catholic Church in forbidding, or of the Protestant churches in discouraging, any such private enquiry into the meaning of the “Christian” dogmas as would correspond to the esoteric study of other religions. With their present ideas and knowledge, professing Christians are not prepared to undertake a critical examination of their faith, with a promise of good results. Its inevitable effect would be to paralyze rather than stimulate their dormant religious sentiments; for biblical criticism and comparative mythology have proved conclusively – to those, at least, who have no vested interests, spiritual or temporal, in the maintenance of orthodoxy – that the Christian religion, as it now exists, is composed of the husks of Judaism, the shreds of paganism, and the ill-digested remains of gnosticism and neo-platonism. This curious conglomerate which formed itself round the recorded sayings (a) of Jesus, has, after the lapse of ages, now begun to disintegrate, and to crumble away from the pure and precious gems of Theosophic truth which it has so long overlain and hidden, but could neither disfigure nor destroy. Theosophy not only rescues these precious gems from the fate that threatens the rubbish in which they have been so long embedded, but saves that rubbish itself from utter condemnation; for it shows that the result of biblical criticism is far from being the ultimate analysis of Christianity as each of the pieces which compose the curious mosaics of the Churches once belonged to a religion which had an esoteric meaning. It is only when these pieces are restored to the places they originally occupied that their hidden significance can be perceived, and the real meaning of the dogmas of Christianity understood. To do all this, however, requires a knowledge of the Secret Doctrine as it exists in the esoteric foundation of other religions; and this knowledge is not in the hands of the Clergy, for the Church has hidden, and since lost, the keys.

Your Grace will now understand why it is that the Theosophical Society has taken for one of its three “objects” the study of those Eastern religions and philosophies, which shed such a flood of light upon the inner meaning of Christianity; and you will, we hope, also perceive that in so doing, we are acting not as the enemies, but as the friends of the religion taught by Jesus – of true Christianity, in fact. For it is only through the study of those religions and philosophies that Christians can ever arrive at an understanding of their own beliefs, or see the hidden meaning of the parables and allegories which the Nazarene told to the spiritual cripples of Judea, and by taking which, either as matters of fact or as matters of fancy, the Churches have brought the teachings themselves into ridicule and contempt, and Christianity into serious danger of complete collapse, undermined as it is by historical criticism and mythological research, besides being broken by the sledge-hammer of modern science.

Ought Theosophists themselves, then, to be regarded by Christians as their enemies, because they believe that orthodox Christianity is, on the whole, opposed to the religion of Jesus; and because they have the courage to tell the Churches that they are traitors to the MASTER they profess to revere and serve? Far from it, indeed. Theosophists know that the same spirit that animated the words of Jesus lies latent in the hearts of Christians, as it does naturally in all men’s hearts. Their fundamental tenet is the Brotherhood of Man, the ultimate realisation of which is alone made possible by that which was known long before the days of Jesus as “the Christ spirit.” This spirit is even now potentially present in all men, and it will be developed into activity when human beings are no longer prevented from understanding, appreciating and sympathising with one another by the barriers of strife and hatred erected by priests and princes. We know that Christians in their lives frequently rise above the level of their Christianity. All Churches contain many noble, self-sacrificing, and virtuous men and women, eager to do good in their generation according to their lights and opportunities, and full of aspirations to higher things than those of earth – followers of

Jesus in spite of their Christianity. For such as these Theosophists feel the deepest sympathy; for only a Theosophist, or else a person of your Grace's delicate sensibility and great theological learning, can justly appreciate the tremendous difficulties with which the tender plant of natural piety has to contend, as it forces its root into the uncongenial soil of our Christian civilization, and tries to blossom in the cold and arid atmosphere of theology. How hard, for instance, must it not be to "love" such a God as that depicted in a well-known passage by Herbert Spencer:

The cruelty of a Fijian god who, represented as devouring the souls of the dead, may be supposed to inflict torture during the process, is small compared with the cruelty of a god who condemns men to tortures which are eternal . . . . . The visiting on Adam's descendants through hundreds of generations dreadful penalties for a small transgression which they did not commit; the damning of all men who do not avail themselves of an alleged mode of obtaining forgiveness, which most men have never heard of; and the effecting a reconciliation by sacrificing a son who was perfectly innocent, to satisfy the assumed necessity for a propitiatory victim; are modes of action which, ascribed to a human ruler, would call forth expressions of abhorrence . . . ["Religion: A Retrospect and Prospect," in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. XV, No. 83, January 1884.]

Your Grace will say, no doubt, that Jesus never taught the worship of such a god as that. Even so say we Theosophists. Yet that is the very god whose worship is officially conducted in Canterbury Cathedral, by you, my Lord Primate of England; and your Grace will surely agree with us that there must indeed be a divine spark of religious intuition in the hearts of men, that enables them to resist so well as they do, the deadly action of such poisonous theology.

If your Grace, from your high pinnacle, will cast your eyes around, you will behold a Christian civilization in which a frantic and merciless battle of man against man is not only the distinguishing feature, but the acknowledged principle. It is an accepted scientific and economic axiom to-day, that all progress is achieved through the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest; and the fittest to survive in this Christian civilization are not those who are possessed of the qualities that are recognised by the morality of every age to be the best – not the generous, the pious, the noble-hearted, the forgiving, the humble, the truthful, the honest, and the kind – but those who are strongest in selfishness, in craft, in hypocrisy, in brute force, in false pretence, in unscrupulousness, in cruelty, and in avarice. The spiritual and the altruistic are "the weak," whom the "laws" that govern the universe give as food to the egoistic and material – "the strong." That "might is right" is the only legitimate conclusion, the last word of the 19th century ethics, for the World has become one huge battlefield, on which "the fittest" descend like vultures to tear out the eyes and the hearts of those who have fallen in the fight. Does religion put a stop to the battle? Do the churches drive away the vultures, or comfort the wounded and the dying? Religion does not weigh a feather in the world at large to-day, when worldly advantage and selfish pleasures are put in the other scale; and the churches are powerless to revivify the religious sentiment among men, because their ideas, their knowledge, their methods, and their arguments are those of the Dark Ages. My Lord Primate, your Christianity is five hundred years behind the times.

So long as men disputed whether this god or that god was the true one, or whether the soul went to this place or that one after death, you, the clergy, understood the question, and had arguments at hand to influence opinion – by syllogism or torture, as the case might require; but now it is the existence of any such being as God, at all, or of any kind of immortal spirit, that is questioned or denied. Science invents new theories of the Universe which contemptuously ignore the existence of any god; moralists establish theories of ethics and social life in which the non-existence of a future life is taken for granted; in physics, in psychology, in law, in medicine, the one thing needful in order to entitle any teacher to a hearing is that no reference whatever should be contained in his ideas either to a Providence, or to a soul. The world is being rapidly brought to the conclusion that god is a mythical conception, which has no foundation in fact, or place in Nature; and that the immortal part of man is the silly dream of ignorant savages, perpetuated by the lies and tricks of priests, who reap a harvest by cultivating the fears of men that their mythical God will torture their imaginary souls to all eternity, in a fabulous Hell. In the face of all these things the clergy stand in this age dumb and powerless. The only answer which the Church knew how to make to such "objections" as these, were the rack and the faggot; and she cannot use that system of logic now.

It is plain that if the God and the soul taught by the churches be imaginary entities, then the Christian salvation and damnation are mere delusions of the mind, produced by the hypnotic process of assertion and suggestion on a

magnificent scale, acting cumulatively on generations of mild “hysteriacs.” What answer have you to such a theory of the Christian religion, except a repetition of assertions and suggestions? What ways have you of bringing men back to their old beliefs but by reviving their old habits? “Build more churches, say more prayers, establish more missions, and your faith in damnation and salvation will be revived, and a renewed belief in God and the soul will be the necessary result.” That is the policy of the churches, and their only answer to agnosticism and materialism. But your Grace must know that to meet the attacks of modern science and criticism with such weapons as assertion and habit, is like going forth against magazine guns, armed with boomerangs and leather shields. While, however, the progress of ideas and the increase of knowledge are undermining the popular theology, every discovery of science, every new conception of European advanced thought, brings the 19th century mind nearer to the ideas of the Divine and the Spiritual, known to all esoteric religions and to Theosophy.

The Church claims that Christianity is the only true religion, and this claim involves two distinct propositions, namely, that Christianity is true religion, and that there is no true religion except Christianity. It never seems to strike Christians that God and Spirit could possibly exist in any other form than that under which they are presented in the doctrines of their church. The savage calls the missionary an Atheist, because he does not carry an idol in his trunk; and the missionary, in his turn, calls everyone an Atheist who does not carry about a fetish in his mind; and neither savage nor Christian ever seem to suspect that there may be a higher idea than their own of the great hidden power that governs the Universe, to which the name of “God” is much more applicable. It is doubtful whether the churches take more pains to prove Christianity “true,” or to prove that any other kind of religion is necessarily “false”; and the evil consequences of this, their teaching, are terrible. When people discard dogma they fancy that they have discarded the religious sentiment also, and they conclude that religion is a superfluity in human life – a rendering to the clouds of things that belong to earth, a waste of energy which could be more profitably expended in the struggle for existence. The materialism of this age is, therefore, the direct consequence of the Christian doctrine that there is no ruling power in the Universe, and no immortal Spirit in man except those made known in Christian dogmas. The Atheist, my Lord Primate, is the bastard son of the Church.

But this is not all. The churches have never taught men any other or higher reason why they should be just and kind and true than the hope of reward and the fear of punishment, and when they let go their belief in Divine caprice and Divine injustice the foundations of their morality are sapped. They have not even natural morality to consciously fall back upon, for Christianity has taught them to regard it as worthless on account of the natural depravity of man. Therefore self-interest becomes the only motive for conduct, and the fear of being found out, the only deterrent from vice. And so, with regard to morality as well as to God and the soul, Christianity pushes men off the path that leads to knowledge, and precipitates them into the abyss of incredulity, pessimism and vice. The last place where men would now look for help from the evils and miseries of life is the Church because they know that the building of churches and the repeating of litanies influence neither the powers of Nature nor the councils of nations; because they instinctively feel that when the churches accepted the principle of expediency they lost their power to move the hearts of men, and can now only act on the external plane, as the supporters of the policeman and the politician.

The function of religion is to comfort and encourage humanity in its life-long struggle with sin and sorrow. This it can do only by presenting mankind with noble ideals of a happier existence after death, and of a worthier life on earth, to be won in both cases by conscious effort. What the world now wants is a Church that will tell it of Diety, or the immortal principle in man, which will be at least on a level with the ideas and knowledge of the times. Dogmatic Christianity is not suited for a world that reasons and thinks, and only those who can throw themselves into a mediaeval state of mind, can appreciate a Church whose religious (as distinguished from its social and political) function is to keep God in good humour while the laity are doing what they believe he does not approve; to pray for changes of weather; and occasionally, to thank the Almighty for helping to slaughter the enemy. It is not “medicine men,” but spiritual guides that the world looks for today – a “clergy” that will give it ideals as suited to the intellect of this century, as the Christian Heaven and Hell, God and the Devil, were to the ages of dark ignorance and superstition. Do, or can, the Christian clergy fulfil this requirement? The misery, the crime, the vice, the selfishness, the brutality, the lack of self-respect and self-control, that mark our modern civilization, unite their voices in one tremendous cry, and answer – NO!

What is the meaning of the reaction against materialism, the signs of which fill the air today? It means that the world has become mortally sick of the dogmatism, the arrogance, the self-sufficiency, and the spiritual blindness of modern science – of that same Modern Science which men but yesterday hailed as their deliverer from religious bigotry and Christian superstition, but which, like the Devil of the monkish legends, requires, as the price of its

services, the sacrifice of man's immortal soul. And meanwhile, what are the Churches doing? The Churches are sleeping the sweet sleep of endowments, of social and political influence, while the world, the flesh, and the devil, are appropriating their watchwords, their miracles, their arguments, and their blind faith. The Spiritualists – oh! Churches of Christ – have stolen the fire from your altars to illumine their séance rooms; the Salvationists have taken your sacramental wine, and make themselves spiritually drunk in the streets; the Infidel has stolen the weapons with which you vanquished him once, and triumphantly tells you that “What you advance, has been frequently said before.” Had ever clergy so splendid an opportunity? The grapes in the vineyard are ripe, needing only the right labourers to gather them. Were you to give to the world some proof, on the level of the present intellectual standard of probability, that Deity – the immortal Spirit in man – have a real existence as facts in Nature, would not men hail you as their saviour from pessimism and despair, from the maddening and brutalizing thought that there is no other destiny for man but an eternal blank, after a few short years of bitter toil and sorrow? – aye; as their saviours from the panic-stricken fight for material enjoyment and worldly advancement, which is the direct consequence of believing this mortal life to be the be-all and end-all of existence?

But the Churches have neither the knowledge nor the faith needed to save the world, and perhaps your Church, my Lord Primate, least of all, with the mill-stone of £8,000,000 a year hung round its neck. In vain you try to lighten the ship by casting overboard the ballast of doctrines which your forefathers deemed vital to Christianity. What more can your Church do now, than run before the gale with bare poles, while the clergy feebly endeavour to putty up the gaping leaks with the “revised version,” and by their social and political deadweight try to prevent the ship from capsizing, and its cargo of dogmas and endowments from going to the bottom?

Who built Canterbury Cathedral, my Lord Primate? Who invented and gave life to the great ecclesiastical organisation which makes an Archbishop of Canterbury possible? Who laid the foundation of the vast system of religious taxation which gives you £15,000 a year and a palace? Who instituted the forms and ceremonies, the prayers and litanies, which, slightly altered and stripped of art and ornament, make the liturgy of the Church of England? Who wrested from the people the proud titles of “reverend divine” and “Man of God” which the clergy of your Church so confidently assume? Who indeed, but the Church of Rome! We speak in no spirit of enmity. Theosophy has seen the rise and fall of many faiths, and will be present at the birth and death of many more. We know that the lives of religions are subject to law. Whether you inherited legitimately from the Church of Rome, or obtained by violence, we leave you to settle with your enemies and with your conscience; for mental attitude towards your Church is determined by its intrinsic worthiness. We know that if it be unable to fulfil the true spiritual function of a religion, it will surely be swept away, even though the fault lie rather in its hereditary tendencies, or in its environments, than in itself.

The Church of England, to use a homely simile, is like a train running by the momentum it acquired before steam was shut off. When it left the main track, it got upon a siding that leads nowhere. The train has nearly come to a standstill, and many of the passengers have left it for other conveyances. Those that remain are for the most part aware that they have been depending all along upon what little steam was left in the boiler when the fires of Rome were withdrawn from under it. They suspect that they may be only playing at train now; but the engineer keeps blowing his whistle and the guard goes round to examine the tickets, and the brakemen rattle their brakes, and it is not such bad fun after all. For the carriages are warm and comfortable and the day is cold, and so long as they are tipped all the company's servants are very obliging. But those who know where they want to go, are not so contented.

For several centuries the Church of England has performed the difficult feat of blowing hot and cold in two directions at once – saying to the Roman Catholics “Reason!” and to the Sceptics “Believe!” It was by adjusting the force of its two-faced blowing, that it has managed to keep itself so long from falling off the fence. But now the fence itself is giving way. Disendowment and disestablishment are in the air. And what does your Church urge in its own behalf? Its usefulness. It is useful to have a number of educated, moral, unworldly men, scattered all over the country, who prevent the world from utterly forgetting the name of religion, and who act as centres of benevolent work. But the question now is no longer one of repeating prayers, and giving alms to the poor, as it was five hundred years ago. The people have come of age, and have taken their thinking and the direction of their social, private and even spiritual affairs into their own hands, for they have found out that their clergy know no more about “things of Heaven” than they do themselves.

But the Church of England, it is said, has become so liberal that all ought to support it. Truly, one can go to all excellent imitation of the mass, or sit under a virtual Unitarian, and still be within its fold. This beautiful tolerance, however, only means that the Church has found it necessary to make itself an open common, where every one can put up his open booth, and give his special performance if he will only join in the dance of the endowments. Tolerance and liberality are contrary to the laws of the existence of any church that believes in divine damnation, and their appearance in the Church of England is not a sign of renewed life, but of approaching disintegration. No less deceptive is the energy evinced by the Church in the building of churches. If this were a measure of religion what a pious age this would be! Never was dogma so well housed before, though human beings may have to sleep by thousands in the streets, and to literally starve in the shadow of our majestic cathedrals, built in the name of Him who had not where to lay His head. But did Jesus tell you, your Grace, that religion lay not in the hearts of men, but in temples made with hands? You cannot convert your piety into stone and use it in your lives; and history shows that petrification of the religious sentiment is as deadly a disease as ossification of the heart. Were churches, however, multiplied a hundred fold, and were every clergyman to become a centre of philanthropy, it would only be substituting the work that the poor require from their fellow men but not from their spiritual teachers, for that which they ask and cannot obtain. It would but bring into greater relief the spiritual barrenness of the doctrines of the Church.

The time is approaching when the clergy will be called upon to render an account of their stewardship. Are you prepared, my Lord Primate, to explain to YOUR MASTER why you have given His children stones, when they cried to you for bread? You smile in your fancied security. The servants have kept high carnival so long in the inner chambers of the Lord's house, that they think He will surely never return. But He told you He would come as a thief in the night; and lo! He is coming already in the hearts of men. He is coming to take possession of His Father's kingdom there, where alone His kingdom is. But you know Him not! Were the Churches themselves not carried away in the flood of negation and materialism which has engulfed Society, they would recognise the quickly growing germ of the Christ-spirit in the hearts of thousands, whom they now brand as infidels and madmen. They would recognise there the same spirit of love, of self-sacrifice, of immense pity for the ignorance, the folly, and the sufferings of the world, which appeared in its purity in the heart of Jesus, as it had appeared in the hearts of other Holy Reformers in other ages; and which is the light of all true religion, and the lamp by which the *Theosophists* of all times have endeavoured to guide their steps along the narrow path that leads to salvation – the path which is trodden by every incarnation of CHRISTOS or the SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

And now, my Lord Primate, we have very respectfully laid before you the principal points of difference and disagreement between Theosophy and the Christian Churches, and told you of the oneness of Theosophy and the teachings of Jesus. You have heard our profession of faith, and learned the grievances and complaints which we lay at the door of dogmatic Christianity. We, a handful of humble individuals, possessed of neither riches nor worldly influence, but strong in our knowledge, have united in the hope of doing the work which you say that your MASTER has allotted to you, but which is so sadly neglected by that wealthy and domineering colossus – the Christian Church. Will you call this presumption, we wonder? Will you, in this land of free opinion, free speech, and free effort, venture to accord us no other recognition than the usual anathema, which the Church keeps in store for the reformer? Or may we hope that the bitter lessons of experience, which that policy has afforded the Churches in the past, will have altered the hearts and cleared the understandings of her rulers; and that the coming Year, 1888, will witness the stretching out to us of the hand of Christians in fellowship and goodwill? This would only be a just recognition that the comparatively small body called the Theosophical Society is no pioneer of the Anti-Christ, no brood of the Evil one, but the practical helper, perchance the saviour, of Christianity and that it is only endeavouring to do the work that Jesus, like Buddha, and the other "sons of God" who preceded him, has commanded all his followers to undertake, but which the Churches, having become dogmatic, are entirely unable to accomplish.

And now, if your Grace can prove that we do injustice to the Church of which you are the Head, or to popular Theology, we promise to acknowledge our error publicly. But – "SILENCE GIVES CONSENT."

## **Occult and Occultism**

Back Cover, *Studies in Occultism*, Theosophical University Press, 1987

The term OCCULT has noble, but largely forgotten origins. Derived from the Latin *occultus* meaning “hidden,” it properly defines anything which is undisclosed, concealed, or not easily perceived. Early theologians, for example, spoke of “the occult judgment of God,” while “occult philosopher” was a designation for the pre-Renaissance scientist who sought the unseen causes regulating nature’s phenomena. In astronomy, the term is still used when one stellar body *occults* another by passing in front of it, temporarily hiding it from view.

Writing a century ago, when the word had not acquired today’s mixed connotations, H. P. Blavatsky defined OCCULTISM as “altruism pure and simple” – the divine wisdom or hidden theosophy within all religions. Occultism is founded on the principle that Divinity is concealed – transcendent yet immanent – within every living being. As a spiritual discipline occultism is the renunciation of selfishness; it is the “still small path” which leads to wisdom, to the right discrimination between good and evil, and the practice of altruism.

## **What Is Occultism?**

Attributed to W. Q. Judge; *Theosophy*, October 1920, pp. 353-54 & *Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. III, pp. 260-261

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT TELLING ALL ONE KNOWS; BUT RETICENCE.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT SAYING ALL ONE SUSPECTS; BUT SILENCE.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT SPEAKING OF ALL ONE "SEES"; BUT REVERTING INWARD TO THE SOURCE OF SIGHT.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT REPEATING OF ALL ONE "HEARS"; BUT A CLOSED MOUTH LEST HEARING SHOULD ESCAPE THERE THROUGH.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT SPEAKING OF FAULTS OF OTHERS; BUT CHARITY.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT SETTING OF FIXED PLANS; BUT A FLUIDIC POSITION BALANCED IN THE GOOD LAW.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT LAYING DOWN FOR ANOTHER HIS DUTY; BUT SELF- WATCHFULNESS IN PERFORMING ONE'S OWN.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT DOING WHAT ONE WISHES AND WHEN ONE WANTS; BUT DISCIPLINE.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT LISTENING TO GOSSIP OR SLANDER; BUT GOOD-WILL TO ALL, FROM WHICH GOSSIP AND SLANDER CAN DRAW NO SUSTENANCE.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT GIVING WAY TO ANGER OR IMPATIENCE; BUT CALMNESS.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT BEING VAIN OF ONE'S LEARNING, OR PROUD; BUT HUMILITY.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT HURRYING ONE'S DAILY AFFAIRS NOR FORCING ONE'S PROGRESS; BUT KNOWING THE AMPLITUDE OF TIME IN ALL THINGS.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT DOING ALL THE GREAT WORK THERE IS TO DO; BUT THE WILL TO LABOR; THE WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT HELP OR BE A HELPER; THE JOY THAT ANOTHER DOES A TASK THE BEST.

OCCULTISM IS THE NOT STRIVING TO BE A LEADER OF MEN; BUT TO FOLLOW A LINE.

### Three Stages of Visioning Truth

G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*, pp. 301-4

The psychological opening of the human being to truth, to the ingress of the god-wisdom – in other words the training that every true theosophist undergoes – begins once he is touched and his heart is opened, begins even though he knows it not. This opening of the heart may be divided into three stages. We are familiar with these in that form of Buddhism which originated in China coming from India. In Sanskrit it is called the Dhyani form, and in Japan it is known as the Zen form of Buddhist thought. It is expressed somewhat as follows, and it applies equally well to theosophy because the Zen or the Dhyani form of Buddhism is but a branch of theosophic thought.

The student in entering the pronaos of the temple of wisdom, and later in entering the temple itself, goes through three phases of inner opening – that is the word they use. Thus, in the first phase, the mountains and the waters of the earth are mountains and waters, and they are recognized as worthy of study and of research, and their wonder is seen and sensed; but they are only mountains and only waters.

But by study and aspiration after truth, finally comes the second psychological opening of his character, of his understanding, of his being. He realizes that the mountains and the waters, however beautiful they may be and wondrous for study, are after all but aspects, appearances, phenomena of noumena behind, the effects of invisible and secret causes; and he realizes in this second phase of the opening of his being that if he wants truth he must go deeper and study the science of the mountains and of the waters of the earth. He must investigate the causes which bring them into being, the inner causes and energies which produced the mountains and the waters. He realizes that the mountains and the waters, because they are effects, phenomena, appearances, however relatively real they may be, are but illusion, maya, because the real truth is within and behind them. His whole being is enwrapped in the thought of this wonder.

Then gradually he begins to sense the profound wisdom of the old saying that the entire universe is a phenomenon and therefore illusory, but illusory only because we do not understand it aright. It does not mean that the universe does not exist. That is absurd and a wrong construction. He realizes that we do not understand it aright, that we must see behind and within. The visible should portray the invisible, the effect should teach us the underlying causes. In this phase he begins to sense his oneness – and this is the finest part of the second phase of the psychological unveiling of this system of training which the theosophist undergoes and loves so well – he begins to sense his true oneness with all that is, for he realizes that, as physical man, he is but a phenomenon, an effect; that he is in fact the product of secret and invisible causes; that behind the phenomenon of the physical man is the human spiritual noumenon. He grows very reverent and a great sense of sympathetic beauty enters into his heart because he realizes that he is but one of all beings and entities and creatures which infill the universe. He begins to sense from this moment that ethics are no mere human convention; morals are rooted in the very fabric and stuff of universal nature herself. He feels immensely his oneness with all that is: “I and my Father are One.”

This leads to the third step of psychological opening, and in this third step he realizes the wonderful paradox of all that he knew before in the two earlier states. In this third step he learns that inwards and upwards, expansively upwards, yet ever inwards, the mountains after all are the real, and the waters are after all real in a certain wondrous sense, for illusory though they may be to our relatively imperfectly evolved human understanding, nevertheless it is fundamental reality which has produced them, just as we as phenomena are brought forth.

So then we see at one and the same time that the only reality is the divine, and yet that this divine, because it is the utterly real, makes real in a certain sense even the illusory appearance of cosmic phenomena. Applying this to ourselves, we sense that the only real part of man is the divine within him; and yet precisely because this divine is reality, that very physical phenomenon which we call the physical man is in a certain marvelous sense real also. We have come back, the circle has reentered itself. We come back to the point of starting. First, there were just mountains and waters which were the only real things; and then the mountains and waters were seen to be but the garments, the clothing of secret, invisible, realities; and then the next step brought us to the realization that precisely because these are real things they could not produce essential unrealities; so that the very mountains and waters, strange paradox, are both real and unreal. Happy the man who can understand this third step.

The key to this understanding is another thought which I will again take from Dhyani-Buddhism, because it is fairly well known in the West mainly through the Zen Buddhist writings of Professor Suzuki of Japan (from whom, by the

way, I did not take this extract). This is the Zen thought. Harken carefully, please, because the significance is so slippery. “In the wind of the mountains and the sun of the lowlands, in the fall of night and the mists of dawn, it is cried aloud: That alone was, is, abides.”

The whole universe is That, and all its phenomena are the productions of divine noumena, or divine thought; so that all are essentially unified in a divine oneness. In a rather pragmatical way we can bring down this thought and say that all men are brothers, that every one is his brother’s keeper. You see the path of conduct? Any violation of this path means setting yourself in opposition to all universal nature herself.

There is a way to peace and happiness and wisdom and power. For once a man realizes that he is one with nature, and nature is one with him, his consciousness becomes, vibratorily speaking, corhythmic with the pulsings of the cosmic heart. That is why the great sages and seers can work marvels in the world: heal and raise; retain consciousness after death; transport the thinking ego to distant fields and be there in self-conscious thought and see all that passes around them; and many things more. For the universe and we are one. There is but one life and this life is also cosmic thought.

### **The Golden Rule**

James A. Long, *Expanding Horizons*, pp. 60-61

*American Indian* – Great Spirit, grant that I may not criticize my neighbor until I have walked a mile in his moccasins.

*Buddhism* – In five ways should a clansman minister to his friends and familiars – by generosity, courtesy, benevolence, by treating them as he treats himself, and by being as good as his word.

*Christianity* – All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

*Confucianism* – “Is there any one word,” asked Tzu Kung, “which could be adopted as a lifelong rule of conduct?” The Master replied: – “Is not Sympathy the word? Do not do to others what you would not like yourself.”

*Greek Philosophy* – Do not do to others what you would not wish to suffer yourself. – Isocrates  
– Treat your friends as you would want them to treat you. – Aristotle

*Hinduism* – One should not behave towards others in a way which is disagreeable to oneself. This is the essence of duty (dharma). All else results from selfish desire.

*Islam* – No one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.

*Judaism* – Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: . . .but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

*Zoroastrianism* – That nature only is good when it shall not do unto another whatever is not good for its own self.

### **Universal Brotherhood**

Katherine Tingley, *The Theosophical Path*, December 1924, p. 568

There should be in all things one single devotion, one motive, one desire and aspiration. Differences of nature and mind are inevitable; each should therefore accord to all the same toleration he asks for himself, and then the single thread of devotion will unite all into one Universal Brotherhood. The power would be immense; if this were put into operation it would send to all, along the invisible but real currents, a stream of help for mind, soul, and body, uniting all on the inner plane, and thus show the world the real power of co-operation on all the planes of force and consciousness . . . None can grow in the truest sense spiritually, unless he has suffered till his mind and heart are attuned to the heartache of the world.

### **Salutation of the Dawn**

From the Sanskrit

Listen to the Salutation of the Dawn.  
Look to this Day, for it is Life,  
the very Life of Life.  
In its brief course lie all the possibilities  
and realities of your existence.  
The Bliss of Growth –  
The Glory of Action –  
The Splendor of Beauty –  
For yesterday is already a dream and  
tomorrow is only a vision:  
but today well-lived  
makes every yesterday a dream of happiness  
and every tomorrow a vision of hope.  
Look well therefore to this day.  
Such is the Salutation of the dawn.

### **The Sacred Vedic Verse**

Veda Janani – The Mother of the Vedas

*The Path*, August 1890

Aum, – the light of the Universe, the omniscient and omnipresent; the all containing, in whose womb move all the orbs of heaven; the self-effulgent, from whom the sun and stars borrow their light; whose knowledge is perfect and immutable, whose glory is superlative; who is deathless, the life of life and dearer than life, who gives bliss to those who earnestly desire it, saves from all calamities his genuine devotees, and gives them peace and comfort; the all intelligent, who keeps in order and harmony all and each by permeating all things, on whom is dependent all that exist, the creator and giver of all glory, the illuminator of all souls and giver of every bliss, who is worthy to be embraced; the all-knowledge and all-holiness, – we contemplate and worship that He may enlighten our intellect and conscience.

## The Gayatri

Gayatri or Savitri – a verse (*Rgveda* III.62.10) recited daily by orthodox Brahmanas at morning and evening:

tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi  
dhiyo yo nah pracodayat  
Bruce C. Hall, *Sanskrit Pronunciation*.

Aum bhur bhuvah svah  
tatsaviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi  
dhiyo yo nah prachodayat. Om.

AUM. IN ALL THREE WORLDS – TERRESTRIAL, ASTRAL AND CELESTIAL –  
MAY WE MEDITATE UPON THE SPLENDOUR OF THAT DIVINE SUN  
WHO ILLUMINATES ALL. MAY ITS GOLDEN LIGHT NOURISH OUR  
UNDERSTANDING AND GUIDE US ON OUR JOURNEY TO ITS SACRED SEAT.  
OM.

Om . . . Earth . . . Heaven . . . . Let the adored light of . . . . [here follows a name which must not be pronounced]  
shelter me. Let thy Sun, O thou only One, shelter me, the unworthy . . . I shut my eyes, I shut my ears, I do not  
breathe . . . in order to see, hear and breathe thee alone. Throw light upon our thoughts [again the secret name] . . .  
H.P.B., *Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, Chapter 10

Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the worlds, that face of the true sun which is now hidden by a vase of  
golden light! so that we may see the truth and know our whole duty.

W. Q. Judge – *Abridgement of Discussions*, Number v, March 1888

O my Divinity! thou dost blend with the earth and fashion for thyself Temples of mighty power.  
O my Divinity! thou livest in the heart-life of all things and dost radiate a Golden Light that shineth forever and doth  
illumine even the darkest corners of the earth.  
O my Divinity! blend thou with me that from the corruptible I may become Incorruptible; that from imperfection I  
may become Perfection; that from darkness I may go forth in Light.  
Katherine Tingley

“O Thou Supreme Source of the Universe,  
From Whom all proceeds, to Whom all must return,  
Reveal to us the true spiritual Sun,  
Now hidden by a veil of golden light;  
That we may know the Truth, and do our whole duty,  
As we unfold on our pilgrimage through the crucible of evolution.  
Till, at length, the purified soul, through spiritual knowledge  
Shall be released from bondage,  
And trule resolved to the bosom of the One Absolute Self.”  
Gayatri, *The Theosophical Path*, Vol. XXII, No. 4, April 1922

Tat Savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi:  
Dhiyo yo nah pra chodayat!

That superexcellent splendor of the Divine Sun we meditate upon:  
May it arouse (stimulate) our minds!

G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition*, Chapter 36

Unveil, O Thou that givest sustenance to the Universe, from whom all proceeds, to whom all must return, the face of the True Sun, now hidden by a vase of Golden Light, that we may see the Truth and do our whole duty on our journey towards thy Sacred Seat.

G. de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, Chapter 11

O spiritual sun, Father in heaven, giver of life and light, enfold us in thy radiance; awaken in us thereby thy own light in our hearts, so that it may flood our pathway and guide our feet on our journey to thy sacred seat.

G. de Purucker, *Questions We All Ask*, 2:8

The Hindus called the greatest, grandest, most comprehensive verse in all the Vedas, in, 62, 10, of the *Rig-Veda* called the Gayatri, or often the Savitri. This the Hindu recites upon rising in the morning, after he makes his ablutions, before he sleeps at night. The *Rig-Veda* is the chiefest of the Vedas, and the Hindus reverently regard these two lines as the heart of *Rig-Veda*. In Sanskrit they run thus:

Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi,  
Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.

And they mean this – I will give a translation, slightly paraphrased so that you will get the heart of the great Rig-Vedic verse out of which sprang all Hindu philosophy and all Hindu yoga: “That lofty inner soul of the god’s sun, may it unite the thoughts of us, its offspring, and urge us into that union, the union of the lower with the superior, of the individual with the spirit of man, with divinity.” When this union or yoga is won, achieved, then we have those grand cases of god-men, or men-gods: Jesus the avatara, Krishna, Buddha-Gautama and all the other Buddhas, Apollonius of Tyana – there have been hundreds. When this union is less complete, we have the great teachers, less great than those just spoken of, but great.

G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*, Section 4

## **The Pledge of Kwan-Yin**

Never will I seek nor receive private, individual salvation; never will I enter into final peace alone; but forever, and everywhere, will I live and strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world from the bonds of conditioned existence.

## **Kwan-Yin Sutra**

Listen to the deeds of Kwan-Yin,  
Who wholly responds in every direction;  
Her all-embracing vow is deep as the sea,  
Inconceivable in its kalpas beyond reckoning.  
Serving thousands of millions of Buddhas,  
She has intoned the great pure vow.  
I will tell you briefly:  
Whoever hears her name, whoever sees her  
And remembers her unceasingly,  
Will extinguish the sorrows of existence.

She is ever longed for, ever sought after,  
The spotless pure ray of light,  
The Sun of Wisdom dispelling darkness,  
Subduer of misfortune of wind and fire  
Who illuminates all the world,  
The Law of Mercy, and clarifying thunder,  
The numinous cloud of compassion  
Pouring forth spiritual rain like sweet nectar  
To quench the flames of agony.

The wondrous voice of Kwan-Yin,  
The Brahmâ-voice, voice of the sweeping tide,  
Surpassing the sounds of the world,  
Is to be held firm in the mind  
Unaccompanied by even the shadow of doubt.  
For one who is pure, Kwan-Yin,  
In every pain, suffering and even death,  
Can be a centre of reliance.  
Perfect in every attainment,  
Whose compassionate eye beholds all beings,  
A boundless ocean of blessings –  
Prostrate, let all revere Kwan-Yin.

## **The Fundamental Law**

The Talmud

Rejoice not when thine enemy faileth, and let not thy heart be glad when he stumbleth. Who can deservedly be called a conqueror? He who conquers his rancorous passions and endeavours to turn his enemy into a friend. Thou shalt not say "I will love the wise, but the unwise I will hate"; but thou shalt love all mankind. Thou shalt love thy neighbour: even if he be a criminal, and has forfeited his life, practise charity towards him in the last moments. What thou wouldst not like to be done to you, do not to others: this is the fundamental law.

## **The Emerald (Smaragdine) Tablet**

Hermes Trismegistus

Truly, without Deceit, certainly and absolutely:

That which is Below corresponds to that which is Above, and that which is Above corresponds to that which is Below, in the accomplishment of the Miracle of One Thing. And just as all things have come from One, through the Mediation of One, so all things follow from this One Thing in the same way.

Its Father is the Sun; its Mother is the Moon. The Wind has carried it in his Belly. Its Nourishment is the Earth. It is the Father of every completed Thing in the whole World. Its Strength is intact if it is turned towards the Earth. Separate the Earth by Fire: the fine from the gross, gently and with great skill.

It rises from Earth to Heaven, and then it descends again to the Earth, and receives Power from Above and from Below. Thus you will have the Glory of the whole World. All Obscurity will be clear to you. This is the strong Power of all Power because it overcomes everything fine and penetrates everything solid.

In this way was the World created. From this there will be amazing Applications, because this is the Pattern. Therefore am I called Thrice Greatest Hermes, having the three parts of the Wisdom of the whole World.

Herein have I completely explained the Operation of the Sun.

## **The Paramitas**

H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 47-49

To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second. *VOTS*, p. 33

Thou seest well, Lanoo. These Portals lead the aspirant across the waters on “to the other shore” (7). Each Portal hath a golden key that openeth its gate; and these keys are: –

1. DANA, the key of charity and love immortal.
2. SHILA, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.
3. KSHANTI, patience sweet, that nought can ruffle.
4. VIRAG, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived.
5. VIRYA, the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal TRUTH, out of the mire of lies terrestrial.
6. DHYANA, whose golden gate once opened leads the Naljor [A saint, an adept.] toward the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation.
7. PRAJNA, the key to which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis. Such to the Portals are the golden keys. Before thou canst approach the last, O weaver of thy freedom, thou hast to master these Paramitas of perfection – the virtues transcendental six and ten in number – along the weary Path.

## **The Glorious “Virtues” or Paramitas**

Edited with Excerpts from H.P.B.’s *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 33 & pp. 47-48, and G. de Purucker’s *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, pp. 43-53.

To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second.

The manner in which these paramitas are to be practiced is well illustrated by the following extract from the Mahayana Sraddhotpada Sastra . . . .

### **1. DANA, the key of charity and love immortal.**

#### *Charity*

How should one practice charity (Dana)?

If someone comes and asks for anything, disciples, as far as they are able, should grant the request ungrudgingly and in a way to benefit them. If disciples see anyone in danger, they should try every means they have to rescue him and impart to him a feeling of safety. If any one comes to disciples desiring instructions in the Dharma, they should as far as they are able and according to their best judgment, try to enlighten him. And when they are doing these acts of charity, they should not cherish any desire for recompense, or gratitude, or merit or advantage, nor any worldly reward. They should seek to concentrate the mind on those universal benefits and blessings that are for all alike and, by so doing, will realise within themselves highest perfect Wisdom.

Charity

If we visualize the path as a one-way sieve then this precept comes to light wonderfully. If acts we do go out but desire for results or reciprocation do not easily come in, this is what is meant.

### **2. SHILA, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.**

#### *Uprightness*

How should one practise the virtuous precepts (Shila)?

Lay disciples, having families, should abstain from killing, stealing, adultery, lying, duplicity, frivolous talk, covetousness, malice, currying favor, and false doctrines. Unmarried disciples should, in order to avoid all hindrances, retire from the turmoil of worldly life and, abiding in solitude, should practise those ways which lead to

quietness and moderation and contentment . . . They should endeavor by their conduct to avoid all disapproval and blame, and by their example incite others to forsake evil and practise the good.

#### *Harmonious Action*

If we vibrate with the resonance of the Path we can see it clearly, but if we build up in our nature contrary (to Nature) elements, then we necessarily see a fog about us and lose our sense of location/direction.

### **3. KSHANTI, patience sweet, that nought can ruffle.**

#### *Forbearance*

How should one practise patient forbearance (Kshanti)?

As one meets with the ills of life he should not shun them nor feel aggrieved. Patiently bearing evils inflicted by others, he should cherish no resentment. He should neither be elated because of prosperity, praise, or agreeable circumstances; nor depressed because of poverty, insult, or hardship. Keeping his mind concentrated on the deep significance of the Dharma, he should under all circumstances maintain a quiet and equitable mind.

#### *Patience, Forbearance, Endurance*

As H.P.B. says regarding study of *The Secret Doctrine* – one should study the three fundamental propositions, even if it takes a lifetime to do so, without going further – Wait, for all good things come to those who wait.

### **4. VIRAG, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived.**

#### *Dispassion, Non-Attachment*

A doing only of our duty without desire for results for if we become attached it would seem we deter not only forward progress but would fill the Path and not leave it void for our passing. Attachment would necessarily draw to itself scenes of passion which would cloud the view. The attachment of the Supreme Goal however draws us toward it, to ever-increasing splendor.

### **5. VIRYA, the dauntless energy [or fortitude] that fights its way to the supernal TRUTH, out of the mire of lies terrestrial.**

#### *Dauntlessness*

How should one practise courageous vigor (Virya)?

In the practise of good deeds one should never become indolent. [complacent]. He should look upon any mental or physical suffering as the natural following of unworthy deeds done in previous incarnations, and should firmly resolve that henceforth he would only do those things which are in keeping with a spiritual life. Cherishing compassion for all beings, he should never let the thought of indolence arise, but should ever be indefatigably zealous to benefit all beings . . .

#### *Effort, Energy*

We should always make slow deliberate effort in the direction of the path, never tarry or assume we have reached an 'end,' for there are no 'ends,' just subtle and gradual transformations.

### **6. DHYANA, whose golden gate once opened leads the Narjol (A saint, and adept.) toward the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation.**

#### *Contemplation*

How should one practise meditation (Dhyana)?

Intellectual insight is gained by truthfully understanding that all things follow the law of causation, but in themselves are transitory and empty of any self-substance. There are two aspects of Dhyana: the first aspect is an effort to suppress idle thinking; the second, is a mental concentration in an effort to realise this emptiness (sunyata) of Mind-essence. At first a beginner will have to practise these separately, but as he gains mind control the two will merge into one . . . .

He should contemplate the fact, that although all things are transitory and empty yet, nevertheless, on the physical plane they have a relative value to those who are cherishing false imagination; to these ignorant ones, suffering is very real – it always has been and it always will be – immeasurable and innumerable sufferings . . . .

Because of all this, there is awakened in the mind of every earnest disciple a deep compassion for the suffering of all beings that prompts him to dauntless, earnest zeal and the making of great vows. He resolves to give all he has and all he is to the emancipation of all beings . . . . After these vows, the sincere disciple should at all times and as far as his strength and mind permit, practise those deeds which are beneficial alike to others and to himself. Whether moving, standing, sitting or lying, he should assiduously concentrate his mind on what should be wisely done and wisely left undone. This is the active aspect of Dhyana.

Meditation

Spiritual Meditation, a golden gate once opened leads the neophyte to the realm of eternal verity and ceaseless contemplation of it.

Katherine Tingley said that one should fill their mind at least half with contemplation of the spiritual. This meditation should again be deliberate and the effort or discipline of concentration is very important.

## **7. PRAJNA, the key to which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis.**

*Direct Perception or Self Knowledge*

How can one practise Intuitive Wisdom (Prajna)?

When one by the faithful practice of Dhyana attains to Samadhi, he has passed beyond discrimination and knowledge, he has realized the perfect oneness of Mind-essence. With this realisation comes an intuitive understanding of the nature of the universe . . . .he now realises the perfect Oneness of Essence, Potentiality, and Activity in Tathagatahood . . . .

Prajna-Paramita is highest, perfect Wisdom; its fruitage comes unseen, without effort, spontaneously; it merges all seeming differences whether they be evil or good into one perfect Whole . . . .

Therefore let all disciples who aspire after highest, perfect Wisdom, which is Prajna-Paramita, assiduously apply themselves to the discipline of the Noble Path for that alone will lead them to perfect realisation of Buddhahood.

*Wisdom – The directing principle of the other Paramitas*

Wisdom combined with discriminating intelligence, which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, a son of the Dhyanis.

This principle makes of wisdom a separate thing from knowledge. Knowledge is learning from the physical apparatus and wisdom is an innate understanding or intuitive glimpse. It affords us wider perception of the view of the universals and their patterns.

Such to the portals are the golden keys.

## **8. ADHISHTHANA, will approach, not only respond, to danger and difficulty. Proper method or discipline in following the Path.**

*Inflexible Courage*

A reliance on the Law (karma) to provide for everything that is, is right and that universal justice will be meted out in the end.

**9. UPEKSHA, searches for and finds the right method of applying the paramitas. The urgent wish to achieve success for the sake of being an impersonal beneficent energy in the world.**

*Discrimination*

Much akin to discernment, discrimination allows us or affords us to choose between the selfish and selfless objects as they pass our purview.

**10. PRABODHA (or SAMBUDDHI), awakenment of inner consciousness, bring knowledge and foreknowledge thus opening up glorious visions on the pathway.**

*Complete or perfect illumination or vision, or self-consciousness of one's identity with the spiritual, the culmination or crown of all. Otherwise phrased it is 'union with the buddhi.'*

A continuous exercise of the intellect in study of self, of others, and incidentally of the great religious literatures and philosophies of the world.

Awakenment or Inner Vision or Consciousness – Union with the buddhi.

A culmination or unifying combination of all the preceding into ONE.

### **The Term Paramita**

G. de Purucker, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*

Will you kindly point out the derivation of the word PARAMITA?

This is a Sanskrit word, and is compound, formed of *param*, which means 'the other shore,' in the technical sense of this word, in the beautiful Buddhist way of speaking, which means the other shore, or over the river of life, instead of this shore which is the material existence where sorrow and pain and all the rest of it exist. Thus 'the other shore' means attaining perfect enlightenment because one's consciousness has passed over all the illusions of the material world to the other shore of spiritual glory and peace and freedom and wisdom and love.

The other part of the compound *paramita* is *ita*, which comes from a Sanskrit verb meaning 'to go,' and is the past participle of this verb; and hence in English can be translated 'gone': go, gone; and *ita* is this Sanskrit past participle, meaning 'gone.' Then this past participle is turned into a noun, and this makes it *ita*; and hence, as a noun, the meaning is, by paraphrasing it, 'successful going,' or 'successful reaching.'

Thus the whole compound means 'the successful reaching of the other shore.'

Please note also – and this will make the matter a little clearer to you *paramita* means 'one who has successfully reached the other shore,' whereas, as said above, *paramita* is the compound noun describing this, and therefore is to be translated as 'the successful reaching of the other shore.'

## The Paramitas

Grace F. Knoche, *To Light a Thousand Lamps*, 2001, Chapter 13

In *The Voice of the Silence* H. P. Blavatsky epitomizes the compassionate course as follows:

To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second. – p. 33

The six glorious virtues are the paramitas the neophyte is required to master as he travels the path that leads to the highest initiatory experience. Following Mahayana Buddhist terminology, HPB presents these “transcendental virtues” or “perfections” in her *Voice* as the “golden keys” that open the portals to masterhood. Buddhist texts of both Northern and Southern Schools list them variously in number and order, and at times with a different selection of “virtues.” The words chosen for this or that “virtue,” their number, or how they are arranged are of minor importance; what counts is fidelity to the endeavor to transcend the limitations of the ordinary self.

What are these paramitas? Of the seven listed in the *Voice*, the first one is *dana*, “giving,” concern for others, being altruistic in thought, speech, and act. The second is *sila*, “ethics,” the high morality expected of the earnest disciple; the third, *kshanti*, “patience,” forbearance, endurance, is the kindly perception that others’ failings are no worse and perhaps less severe than one’s own.

As for the fourth paramita, *viraga*, “dispassion,” non-attachment to the effects upon us of the ups and downs of life: how difficult we find this and yet, if in our deepest self we cherish the bodhisattva ideal, the cultivation of *viraga* by no means condones indifference to the plight of others. Rather, it demands a wise exercise of compassion. It is interesting that to our knowledge this paramita is not given in the usual Sanskrit or Pali lists. That the *Voice* includes *viraga* has significance in that the fourth position is pivotal, midway in the series of seven. We are reminded here of the seven stages of the initiatory cycle, of which the first three are preparatory, consisting chiefly of instruction and interior discipline. (Cf. *The Mystery Schools*, pp. 41-58) In the fourth initiation the neophyte must *become* that which he has learned about, that is, he must identify with the inner realms of himself and of nature. If successful, he may attempt the three higher degrees, leading to suffering the god within to take possession of his humanity.

To become equal-minded in every circumstance, in joy and pain, success and failure, is to have attained the calm of a muni, a “sage”; it is fully to identify with the truth that whereas all that is born carries within it the seed of its decline, the indwelling wonder, the imperishable spirit, as so eloquently chanted in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, is deathless, unperturbed by the pairs of opposites. To achieve the stature of a sage may seem rather distant for us; however, when we give the practice of *viraga* a fair trial, what a release this affords from the burden of tension we needlessly inflict upon ourselves – and, alas, on others.

The fifth paramita is *virya*, “vigor,” courage, resolution; the will and energy to stand staunch for what is true, and as strenuously oppose what is false. One proficient in *virya* is indefatigable in thought and deed. With the sixth, *dhyana*, “meditation,” profound contemplation, emptying oneself of all that is less than the highest, comes a natural awakening of latent powers, to culminate eventually in oneness with the essence of Being.

Finally, the seventh, *prajna*, “enlightenment, wisdom” – “the key to which makes of man a god, creating him a bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis.” We will have become “god from mortal,” as the Orphic candidate describes this sacred moment of the seventh initiation when transcendence and immanence become *one*.

Full mastery of the paramitas, however enumerated, is naturally a long-term process, yet diligently seeking to practice them has the merit of producing more immediate benefits without risk of short-circuiting the psyche. The very decision to begin has a transforming effect on our attitude and outlook, and also on our relationship with others. Could we assess our ordinary selves from the vantage point of our wiser self, we would realize that a subtle, inner awakening is steadily in process; too subtle for us to graph, but cumulative in its effect on our present and future karma. We do not have to be “advanced” spiritually before consciously making the daily choices that distinguish the bodhisattva path from the pratyeka path. As we faithfully try to live these paramitas, not only will we be nearer to realization of the universal brotherhood we all long for, but we shall be following the way of the Compassionate Ones.

Along with the daily cultivation of the paramitas, the seedlings of altruism must be watered by the rains of compassion, notwithstanding the karmic obstructions in the nature that tend to inertia. Tsong-kha-pa, the sage of Tibet, held that the reverent practice of compassion is “the most excellent cause of Buddhahood, bearing the nature of thoroughly protecting all vulnerable sentient beings bound in the prison of cyclic existence.” (Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism, p. 101) This is *amrita-yana* or the “deathless path” in its pure interpretation. When eventually a disciple is born into “the lineage of the Tathagatas,” he experiences surpassing joy – and yet immeasurable sorrow because of the obtuseness of so large a portion of mankind. The present is heavy with the karma of past sowings by us all, but we should not discount the sowings of creative goodwill that have been nurtured through many lifetimes. If the latter seem long in maturing, we recall that Prince Siddhartha did not become Buddha all at once: as far in the past as “four immensities ago” he vowed to become bodhisattva for the sake of sorrowing mankind. For scores of consecutive lives thereafter he tended the plant of compassion until ultimately it came to “full ripeness” in his latest birth at Kapilavastu, India.

Let us take a leap back into the long, long ago – to the “moment” in eternity when Gautama felt the first stirring of love for all mankind and visioned what could and ought to be, not merely for himself but for all living beings. Then was the seed of bodhisattvahood quickened into life and, bursting seedpod, it sent down a tiny rootlet into the virgin soil of his awakening consciousness. He made an earnest resolve to become ripe in wisdom and magnanimous of heart. Projecting his vision far into the future, he wills to build a raft of the dharma that he might ferry numberless millions over the ocean of illusion and pain to the other shore of freedom and light.

Way back then the Buddha of history was an ordinary person, aspiring, yes, but also, like ourselves, with character weaknesses, karmic impediments from previous lives not yet resolved. We may presume that he stumbled now and then and had to retrieve lost ground, and also that his associates in any one life may have received mixed karmic impingements from his errors of judgment as well as from his victories over self. It is no routine matter to go counter to the general drift but, because his motive was selfless, his resolve served as a steadying influence – life after life, the bodhisattva ideal was his inspiration and guide. Assuredly his ultimate triumph and renunciation would have thrice blessed all whose karma he had affected during his long gestation from ordinary man to buddha.

Every life-spark is a bodhisattva, a christos, a god in process of becoming. Hui-neng of China, the humble servant in the temple, understood this, and when his inner eye awakened and he became a Ch’an Buddhist master he put it this way:

When not enlightened, buddhas are no other than ordinary beings; when there is enlightenment, ordinary beings at once turn into buddhas. – Cf. *The Sutra of Hui-neng*, trans. Thomas Cleary, p. 20.

The same possibility is ours: to begin now, in spite of the selfish and unruly traits that mar our nature, to sow the seeds of love and caring. Full enlightenment may be ages upon ages in the future, and although we too must make the supreme choice at the final moment of destiny, it will have been in the making all along the way. At each instant of our lives we are building into our character either the self-centeredness that eventually leads to pratyekahood, or the generosity of spirit that will impel us to take the first step on the bodhisattva path. Both paths are on the light side of nature, but there is, nonetheless, a clear distinction: as recorded in Buddhist writings, the pratyeka is compared to “the light of the moon” in contrast to the Tathagata who “resembles the thousand-rayed disk of the autumnal sun.” (Buddhaghosa, quoted in *World of the Buddha*, p. 160)

Every living being is the fruitage of a beginningless and endless outflowing from a divine seed, for within the seed-essence is the promise of what is to be: an immense potency, inert until the mystic moment when the life force bursts through and brings forth flower and fruit. Once a seed is sown in an appropriate environment, nature’s elements of earth, water, air, and fire protect and stimulate its growth. So it is with ourselves: aided by the invisible counterparts of these elements, the seed-thoughts we sow daily and nightly leave their impress on the subtle energies coursing through our planet. Since we are one humanity, however separate at times we may feel ourselves to be, we share with all others what we *are*, our finest and our meanest. What a responsibility is ours, but also what a superb opportunity. Just as we are sensitive to the lower strata of thought forces when we are despondent, just so may we resonate with the upper regions of earth’s auric atmosphere and perchance hear, if we are quiet, the subtle whisperings that inspire to wonder and noble deeds.

Many today, in their dedicated labors to relieve the suffering of millions, are manifesting a quality of mercy which may have been fanned by a gesture of friendship and understanding made by some bodhisattva-to-be in lives past. Perhaps we too have been similarly moved. The thought is deeply humbling and makes one all the more resolved to follow the lead of the Enlightened Ones who are infinitely patient and perceptive. Small wonder a Buddha of Compassion returns to teach. He is impelled to do so by the karma of all whose destinies have intersected his in former cycles; even more is he impelled by a love so all-embracing it enfolds the entirety of nature's kingdoms, a love that fortifies new aspirants and those who possibly in a future life may experience the first intimations of concern for others' well-being.

The Buddhist Confession of Faith succinctly expresses the essence of Buddhist philosophy and practice:

Buddham saranam gacchami  
Dharmam saranam gacchami  
Sangham saranam gacchami

I go to buddha for refuge  
I go to dharma for refuge  
I go to the assembly (devotees, followers) for refuge

We place our trust in Buddha as the imbodiment of the "Great Sacrifice," the supreme initiator and protector of humanity, who makes it possible for avataras and bodhisattvas periodically to illumine the fields of human consciousness.

We place our trust in dharma, in the primal truths that enlighten us on universal nature and the soul, identifying with which we glimpse our cosmic purpose.

We place our trust in sangha, the brotherhood or company of seekers, a fellowship which includes the entirety of the human life-wave.

In placing trust and loyalty in one another as brother aspirants, we share in a companionship that links us magnetically with the spiritual heart of our planet, the Brotherhood of Adepts. Insofar as we give allegiance to their purposes, we are partners in this universal fraternity which is dedicated to lifting – as far as world karma will permit – the burden of sorrow and misery and ignorance that is the scourge of humanity. If enough men and women will not only believe in, but also follow their intuitions and consciously cast their lot with the cause of compassion, there is every reason to have confidence that our civilization will one day make the leap from self-centeredness to genuine brotherhood in every phase of the human enterprise.

To quicken in aspiring human hearts the ancient vow to light their lamps from the flame of compassion is the noblest and the most beautiful ideal, and one which, if steadfastly held, gives stimulus and depth to aspiration.

## **The Paramitas and the Exalted Eightfold Path**

G. de Purucker, *Fountain-Source of Occultism & The Path of Compassion*, pp. 43-53

In Buddhist as well as in modern theosophical literature a great deal has been written about the 'glorious virtues' or paramitas, but unfortunately they have been too often looked upon as being merely a noble but relatively unattainable code of conduct, which indeed they are; but they are more than this. They are actually the rules of thought and action which the would-be chela must follow, in the beginning as best he can, but later in completeness, so that his entire life becomes governed and enlightened by them. It is only thus that the disciple can reach what the Lord Buddha called the 'other shore' (4) – the spiritual realms which have to be reached by crossing the stormy ocean of human existence, and doing so under one's own spiritual and intellectual and psychical power, with only such help as can be given him in view of his own past karma.

The idea of going to the other shore is commonly supposed to be typically Oriental, but this seems unjustified, as many Christian hymns speak of the mystical Jordan and of reaching the 'shore beyond,' a conception which appears to be more or less identic with that of Buddhism. 'This side' is the life of the world, the usual or common pursuits of men. The 'other shore' is simply the life spiritual, involving the expansion in relatively full power and function of the entire range of man's nature. In other words, to reach the 'other shore' means living at one with the divinity within, and hence partaking of the universal life in relatively full self-consciousness. The teaching of all the great religious and philosophical systems has been to urge upon their followers the fact that our real goal is to learn the lessons of manifested existence and to graduate from this experience into the cosmic life.

As the Dhammapada (verse 85) has it:

There are few people who reach the other shore;  
The others run wild on this shore.

A short Buddhist writing called the Prajna-Paramita-Hridaya Sutra or "The Heart or Essence of the Wisdom of the Passing-Over," closes with a beautiful mantra which runs as follows in the original Sanskrit:

Gate, gate, paragate, parasamgate, bodhi, svaha!  
O Wisdom! Gone, gone, gone to the other shore, landed on the other shore, Hail!

Wisdom in this context may be taken as referring to the cosmic buddhi, otherwise called Adi-buddhi or 'primeval wisdom,' and also in an individualized sense to the supreme Silent Watcher of our planetary chain, Adi-buddha. The one addressed is he who has arrived at the other shore, the triumphant pilgrim who has become self-consciously at one with the god within him and thus has successfully perceived through the maya or illusions of the phenomenal worlds. The highest ones who have attained this are jivanmuktas, 'freed monads'; those less high belong to the different grades in the several hierarchies of the Hierarchy of Compassion.

The discipline of the paramitas as H.P.B. gave them in *The Voice of the Silence* (pp. 47-8) is as follows:

DANA, the key of charity and love immortal.  
SILA, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.  
KSHANTI, patience sweet, that nought can ruffle.  
VIRAGA, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived.  
VIRYA, the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal TRUTH, out of the mire of lies terrestrial.  
DHYANA, whose golden gate once opened leads the Narjol [Naljor] toward the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation.  
PRANA, the key to which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis.

The manner in which these paramitas are to be practiced is well illustrated by the following extract from the *Mahayana Sraddhotpada Sastra* (5) which, however, mentions only six, although they are given elsewhere as seven and, when more fully enumerated, as ten:

How should one practise charity (Dana)?

If someone comes and asks for anything, disciples, as far as they are able, should grant the request ungrudgingly and in a way to benefit them. If disciples see anyone in danger, they should try every means they have to rescue him and impart to him a feeling of safety. If any one comes to disciples desiring instruction in the Dharma, they should as far as they are able and according to their best judgment, try to enlighten him. And when they are doing these acts of charity, they should not cherish any desire for recompense, or gratitude, or merit or advantage, nor any worldly reward. They should seek to concentrate the mind on those universal benefits and blessings that are for all alike and, by so doing, will realise within themselves highest perfect Wisdom.

How should one practise virtuous precepts (Sila)?

Lay disciples, having families, should abstain from killing, stealing, adultery, lying, duplicity, slander, frivolous talk, covetousness, malice, currying favor, and false doctrines. Unmarried disciples should, in order to avoid hindrances, retire from the turmoil of worldly life and, abiding in solitude, should practise those ways which lead to quietness and moderation and contentment . . . They should endeavor by their conduct to avoid all disapproval and blame, and by their example incite others to forsake evil and practise the good.

How should one practise patient forbearance (Kshanti)?

As one meets with the ills of life he should not shun them nor feel aggrieved. Patiently bearing evils inflicted by others, he should cherish no resentment. He should neither be elated because of prosperity, praise, or agreeable circumstances; nor depressed because of poverty, insult, or hardship. Keeping his mind concentrated on the deep significance of the Dharma, he should under all circumstances maintain a quiet and equitable mind.

How should one practise courageous vigor (Virya)?

In the practice of good deeds one should never become indolent. He should look upon any mental or physical suffering as the natural following of unworthy deeds done in previous incarnations, and should firmly resolve that henceforth he would only do those things which are in keeping with a spiritual life. Cherishing compassion for all beings, he should never let the thought of indolence arise, but should ever be indefatigably zealous to benefit all beings . . . .

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Intellectual insight is gained by truthfully understanding that all things follow the law of causation, but in themselves are transitory and empty of any self-substance. There are two aspects of Dhyana: the first aspect is an effort to suppress idle thinking; the second, is a mental concentration in an effort to realise this emptiness (sunyata) of Mind-essence. At first a beginner will have to practise these separately but as he gains mind control the two will merge into one . . . .

He should contemplate the fact, that although all things are transitory and empty yet, nevertheless, on the physical plane they have a relative value to those who are cherishing false imagination; to these ignorant ones, suffering is very real – it always has been and it always will be – immeasurable and innumerable sufferings . . . .

Because of all this, there is awakened in the mind of every earnest disciple a deep compassion for the suffering of all beings that prompts him to dauntless, earnest zeal and the making of great vows. He resolves to give all he has and all he is to the emancipation of all beings . . . . After these vows, the sincere disciple should at all times and as far as his strength and mind permit, practise those deeds which are beneficial alike to others and to himself. Whether moving, standing, sitting or lying, he should assiduously concentrate his mind on what should be wisely done and wisely left undone. This is the active aspect of Dhyana.

How can one practise Intuitive Wisdom (Prajna)?

When one by the faithful practice of Dhyana attains to Samadhi, he has passed beyond discrimination and knowledge, he has realised the perfect oneness of Mind-essence. With this realisation comes an intuitive understanding of the nature of the universe . . . . he now realises the perfect Oneness of Essence, Potentiality, and Activity in Tathagatahood . . . .

Prajna-Paramita is highest, perfect Wisdom; its fruitage comes unseen, without effort, spontaneously; it merges all seeming differences whether they be evil or good into one perfect Whole . . . .

Therefore let all disciples who aspire after highest, perfect Wisdom, which is Prajna-Paramita, assiduously apply themselves to the discipline of the Noble Path for that alone will lead them to perfect realisation of Buddhahood.

In order to understand and spiritually to feel the true nature of prajna, it is necessary to abandon the 'this side' view, and in spiritual comprehension to go over to the 'other shore' (para), or other manner of looking at things. On 'this side' we are involved in a sphere of consciousness of brain-mind analyses and particulars, which becomes a world of attachments and lower-plane distinctions. When we achieve this inner 'reversal,' this shifting of our consciousness upwards to the mystic 'other shore' of being, we then enter more or less successfully into a world of transcendent realities, from which we can view things in their original and spiritual oneness, beyond the maya of the deceptive veils of multiplicity; penetrate into the essential nature of these realities and cognize them as they truly are.

This condition of inner clarity and of accurate spiritual and intellectual apperception is so different from the familiar operations of our 'this-side' consciousness in our everyday world of transitory appearances, that untrained minds associate it with the conception of emptiness, vacuity. Emptiness (sunyata, to use the Buddhist term), in its true metaphysical meaning, however, should not be confounded with 'nothingness,' implying an absolute negation of real being and thus annihilation. Nor is it to be understood through the ratiocinative faculties of the brain-mind, but rather by the direct or immediate perception belonging to the high spiritual-intellectual state called prajna, which is above the mayavi distinctions of being and non-being, of particular and universal, of the many and the one.

Indeed, this high state is the intuitive knowledge and penetrating insight of the spirit-mind in man, his buddhi-manas, which is immeasurably more powerful and penetrating than is mere intellection. Such intuitive knowledge and insight lie ever active in the loftiest and most universal recesses of our consciousness. It is through the gradual awakening of the lower man into self-conscious realization of this spiritual-intellectual consciousness – which in its active manifestations is identic with prajna – that we arise from the lower realms of our consciousness and escape from the bondage of ignorance and nescience (avidya), and thus become liberated from the various kinds of both inner and outer pain. This release is the attainment of supreme enlightenment and of emancipation (mukti). In brief, prajna may perhaps best be translated as intuition, signifying that instant illumination or full knowledge which verily is godlike.

In the Prajna-Paramita group of Buddhist scriptures, prajna is regarded as the directing principle of the other paramitas, pointing to them as being the method of reaching reality. It is compared to the perceiving and understanding eye that surveys with perfect clearness of vision the horizons of life and designates the path to be followed by the aspirant. Without prajna, the other paramitas would be devoid of one of their highest elements; it guides their progressive development, somewhat as the earth provides the fields of sustenance for the growth of vegetation.

All beings in the universe possess prajna, although it is not functioning self-consciously except when the evolving entities in the course of their evolutionary pilgrimage have become at one with it. The animals have prajna, including bees and ants, as instances, but any self-conscious awareness thereof is lacking, because such self-realization of union with prajna begins only with man – at least on this earth. In its first feeble workings prajna in the human being manifests as aspiration towards illumination, love and wisdom; blossoms in the bodhisattva, and is in full bloom in the Buddhas and Christs, which is the state of perfect enlightenment.

The high chela or initiate who has successfully reached the stage where he has become the paramitas, with his consciousness crystal clear and relatively boundless, his whole being attuned to the spiritual soul of humanity, having given up his self to the selfless glory of living for all that is, is technically called a bodhisattva – 'one whose essence (sattva) is of the very nature of wisdom (bodhi).' The motive which prompts the true disciple to realize within himself supreme enlightenment is never personal gain, however exalted and spiritualized, but the urge to benefit the whole world, to raise all beings from the chains of ignorance and pain, to arouse within himself a compassionate heart for all that lives, so that every sentient being may in time attain to perfect emancipation. (Cf. Fo-Mu *Prajnaparamita*, Fas. 14, Chapter "On Wise Men.")

In the *Mahaprajnaparamita* the question is asked of Sariputra whether the bodhisattva should pay respect only to other bodhisattvas, and not "to all beings generally." To which the sage answers that he should in fact "revere them with the same feeling of self-abnegation as he does the Tathagatas." He then goes on to say:

The Bodhisattva should thus awaken a great compassionate feeling towards all beings and keep his mind completely free from arrogance and self-conceit, and let him feel in this wise: I will practise all the skillful means in order to make all sentient beings realize that which is the foremost in themselves, i.e., their Buddha-nature (buddhata). By realizing this they all become Buddhas, . . . – Hsuan-chuang, Fas. 387, Chapter xii, “On Morality.”

Prajna in the individual entity, such as a human being, holds pretty much the same position that Adi-buddhi or mahabuddhi does in the universe. One of the axioms of the esoteric wisdom is that our universe is an entity; hence we can figurate its individual universal mind or consciousness as a vast ocean of self-conscious buddhi-manasic energy points. From this standpoint, prajna may be described as the spiritual individual consciousness of every member of the hosts of dhyani-chohans or cosmic spirits. Thus when one has attained prajna-awareness, he is in self-conscious communion with the buddhi-manasic mind of the Wondrous Being of our hierarchy.

From the foregoing it should be clear that there are numerous differences in grandeur of accomplishment as among the members of a hierarchy, for there are differences in grades of attainment between the chela beginning the path and a mahatma, followed by still higher beings having an even larger realization of prajna on the ladder of achievement that extends steadily upwards until the Wondrous Being is reached. The prajna is the same in all; the differences among individuals lie in their respective manifestation of it.

There are also differences of another kind, such as that between one who has attained a relative realization of prajna and who enters nirvana, and another of similar attainment but who renounces nirvana. Here we have an important distinction based on cosmic ethics: the one who has won nirvana yet renounces it in order to turn back and help the world stands far higher ethically than does the one who enters nirvana for his own bliss. Each has reached a sufficiency of at-onement with prajna to have gained the nirvanic state, but the one who renounces it has achieved a self-conscious realization of prajna on a higher buddhic plane than the one who won nirvana and enters into it.

The key to this mystery lies in the fact that every one of the seven principles in the human constitution is septenary, and hence buddhi, which is the seat of prajna, is sevenfold. We thus see that the one entering nirvana has reached what we may define as kama-buddhi, but has gone no higher in the quality of his realization of prajna; whereas the other one who renounced nirvana has attained that condition of buddhic prajna which we may describe as either buddhi-buddhi or manas-buddhi. The buddhas and mahabuddhas are those who hold what we may call the atmic state of buddhi – and thus feel themselves absolutely and unqualifiedly self-identified with the universe.

The seven paramitas as given contain the gist of the code of conduct imbodyed in the fuller enumeration of ten paramitas, or the complete ethical decalog of occultism. The three additional paramitas are: adhishtana, upeksha, and prabodha or sambuddhi. Of these adhishtana, meaning ‘inflexible courage,’ not merely awaits danger or difficulty, but when enlightened by intuition or prajna ‘goes forwards’ and ‘stands up’ to it. Its natural place follows virya or ‘fortitude.’ The next, upeksha or ‘discrimination,’ searches for and finds the right method of applying the paramitas, and appropriately comes after dhyana. Two terms are given for the tenth paramita: prabodha, meaning ‘awakening of inner consciousness,’ bringing knowledge and foreknowledge, thus opening up glorious visions on the pathway; and sambuddhi, ‘complete or perfect illumination or vision’ or self-consciousness of one’s identity with the spiritual, the culmination or crown of all. Otherwise phrased, it is ‘union with buddhi.’

Other ‘virtues’ are occasionally included by other schools of esoteric or quasi-occult training in the Orient. As examples, satya or truth, and maitra or universal friendliness or benevolence; but when analyzed these are seen to be already imbodyed in the ten paramitas. Also it may be mentioned here that in many parts of the world there are various systems of training, most of them futile, for on careful examination they will be found to be more or less modifications of hatha-yoga, and, as pointed out, these are extremely dangerous even at the best, and at the worst will produce insanity or loss of the soul.

Strength is born from exercise, and it is the exercising of our strength in the tests and experiences of daily life that in time leads to the treading of the path. Unless the student follow the inner discipline, which is the continuous and never-failing practice of the spirit of these ten glorious virtues or paramitas as his inflexible rule of thought and of action from day to day, he will never succeed in his endeavors. It is just this discipline, this exercising of his will power and of his intelligence and of the love which should fill his heart, which eventually bring the neophyte to the new or ‘second’ birth, which produce the dvija, the ‘twice-born,’ the initiate, finally to become the master of life and of death.

The reader may be wondering just what connection the paramitas have with the much more familiar teachings of Buddhism, known respectively as the Four Noble Truths and their logical corollary the Eightfold Path. The connection is both historical and intimate, for both contain the same root-ideas, only in the more popular teaching so phrased as to furnish a code of conduct which the average worldly man is capable of following, if he desire to avoid the harassing mistakes attendant upon human life, and to attain the peace and intellectual detachment which accompany a life well and nobly lived.

Briefly, the Four High Truths are: first, that the cause of the suffering and heartache in our lives arises from attachment or ‘thirst’ – trishna; second, that this cause can be made to cease; third, that the cessation of the causes productive of human sorrow is brought about by living the life which will free the soul from its attachment to existence; and the fourth truth, leading to the extinction of the causes of suffering, is verily the Exalted Eightfold Path, to wit: “right belief, right resolve, right speech, right behavior, right occupation, right effort, right contemplation, right concentration.”

Now this course of endeavor was called by the Buddha the Middle Way, because it involved no useless or fanatical asceticism on the one hand, and no laxity of principle and of thought and consequent behavior on the other hand. It is a code, as said, that is within the reach of every man or woman, calling for no special conditions or circumstances, but able to be practiced by anyone who yearns to better his life, and to do his part in helping to bring about the surcease of the world-misery surrounding us, and of which sensitive human hearts everywhere are conscious.

It must not be supposed, however, that the chela neglects the ethical injunctions of the Eightfold Path, for this would be a misapprehension of their import. In fact, he not only practices them, but does so with far greater concentration of mind and heart than the average man, because at the same time he is striving with all his soul to raise himself to the sublime altitude of the paramitas by which he should live.

It is perhaps necessary to weigh somewhat strongly upon this point, because there is a totally erroneous idea current among some half-baked mystics that it is a part of the chela’s life to ignore normal human relations, to take small account of them, and to imagine that he is freed from his duties, even of a worldly kind, towards his fellow men. This last supposition runs directly counter to all the teaching of occultism.

The principle behind the Four High Truths and their eight corollaries is this: if the root of attachment – desire – can be cut, the soul thereupon becomes freed, and in thus liberating itself from the chains of desire which bring about attachment, the cause of sorrow is made to cease; and the way of cutting the root of attachment is by so living that gradually the thirst of the soul for the things of matter dies. When this happens, the individual is ‘free’ – he has become a relatively perfected jivanmukta, a master of life. Once he has reached this stage of utter detachment, he is a bodhisattva, and thereafter devotes himself completely to all beings and things, his heart filled with infinite compassion and his mind illuminated with the light of eternity. Thus it is that as a bodhisattva he appears again and again on earth, either as a buddha or as a bodhisattva, or indeed remains in the invisible worlds as a nirmanakaya.

The common idea regarding the bodhisattva, that he has only one more incarnation to undergo before he becomes a buddha, is correct as far as it goes, but as thus expressed is inadequate. As a matter of fact, the ideal both of esoteric theosophy and esoteric Buddhism is the bodhisattva, even more, perhaps, than the buddha, for the reason that the bodhisattva is one whose whole being and objective, whose whole work, is the doing of good unto all beings, and the bringing of them safely to the ‘other shore’; whereas the buddha, while the same thing in an extended degree, nevertheless, by the very fact of his buddhahood in the present stage of spiritual unfoldment of the human race, is on the threshold of nirvana, and usually enters therein. It is, of course, quite possible for a buddha to refuse the nirvana and to remain on earth as a bodhisattva or a nirmanakaya; and in this last case, as a Buddha of Compassion he is at once a buddha by right and a bodhisattva by choice.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the great need of understanding the inner significance of the bodhisattva doctrine, embodying as it does the spirit of occult teaching running throughout the cycle of initiatory training as well as in the nobler schools of the Mahayana. It is at once seen why in northern Buddhism the bodhisattva is so greatly honored and occupies so lofty a position in the reverence of human hearts. For the Buddhas of Compassion are such because they themselves embody this ideal when they renounce the spiritually selfish bliss of nirvanic buddhahood in order to remain in the world to work for it. Even the humblest and least educated can aspire towards this ideal.

In future aeons one must choose whether he will become one of the Buddhas of Compassion or one of the Pratyeka-Buddhas. When the choice comes, it will come as the karmic resultant of lives previously lived, for it results from the bent of one's character, the spiritual faculties aroused, the will made to be alert, responsive to command: all these will govern and in fact make the choice when the time for choosing arrives. Therefore the training starts now: becoming great in small things, one learns to become great in great things.

As a final thought, one must not be heavy in living the life which the High Eightfold Path, or indeed the paramitas, enjoin. He should joy in so doing. For I sincerely believe that everyone who practices these noble rules to some extent at least will be enormously bettered by them. Nor can we be oblivious of how greatly such consistent practice will increase the will power, strengthen the mind, enlarge the sympathies of the heart, and bring about a glorious illumination of soul, all of which in their final stages produce the mahatma – the true bodhisattva.

### **The Eightfold Path**

Gautama Buddha

This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering: it is the thirst for being which leads from birth to birth, together with lust and desire which finds gratification here and there; the thirst for pleasures, the thirst for being, the thirst for power. This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the extinction of suffering: the extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of desire, letting it go, expelling it, separating oneself from it, giving it no room. This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the path which leads to the extinction of suffering: it is this sacred eightfold path, to wit: Right Faith, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Concentration.

### **The Four Noble Truths**

G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 117

The noble truth about sorrow and pain;  
The noble truth about the cause of sorrow and pain;  
The noble truth about the cessation of sorrow and pain;  
The noble truth about the path that leads to this cessation.

These four truths may be somewhat paraphrased as follows:

1. Suffering and sorrow exist in all manifested beings.
2. There is a cause for the suffering and the sorrow that exist.
3. There is a way to render extinct the causes of the suffering and sorrow that exist.
4. There is a path, by following which the causes of the suffering and sorrow that exist are rendered extinct. This path consists in a continuous changing to betterment of the factors or samskaras of our consciousness. These factors are eight and comprise the Noble Eightfold Path.

### **The Noble Eightfold Path**

G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 117

1. Recognition of the truth of the preceding four verities.
2. Holding the objective to be attained clearly in the mind, holding it firm, with discrimination.
3. Right words, or controlled and governed speech at a times and in all places.
4. Controlled and governed action at all times and in all places.
5. Appropriate and honorable means of livelihood.
6. An inflexible will to achieve the objective visioned.
7. An eager intellect, always open for a greater truth, and ready to learn; and the cultivation of a strong and retentive memory.
8. An unveiled spiritual perception, combined with great care in thinking, which is the keynote of all the preceding items, and which expressed in other words means right meditation with a tranquil mind into which wisdom thus enters.

### **The Paramitas**

G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition*, pp. 118-119

In addition to this 'Noble Eightfold Path,' based on the Four Verities, which those especially who follow the Hinayana love, and rightly love, there are the six, seven, or indeed ten, Paramitas or Sublime Virtues studied and followed, let us hope, by the disciples of the Schools of the North – they who believe that they have received and that they have developed the teaching of the Lord Buddha's heart, and who, likewise, accept at least in their principles the teachings of his brain, the 'Eye-Doctrine' of the Hinayana.

What are these Paramitas? They are stated below, and given largely in the words of H. P. Blavatsky, as found in her noble little handbook *The Voice of the Silence*. Although a Theosophist first and foremost, she was likewise a formal Buddhist, having at one time when in Ceylon taken Pansil or the Five exoteric Vows; thus she was well qualified to speak about the doctrines of him whom she loved because she understood him far better than the rather stiff-minded European Orientalists, governed to a large extent as they have been by the psychological atmosphere of a now moribund anthropological science, combined with a mind more or less swayed by equally moribund Christian theology. These, then, are the famous Paramitas, the first seven given more or less in the words of H. P. Blavatsky:

1. The key of charity and immortal love.
2. Harmony in word and act, thus cutting at the roots of the making of future evil karman.
3. Patience, that naught can ruffle.
4. Indifference to pleasure and pain, by which illusion is conquered and truth is perceived.
5. Dauntless energy or fortitude, that finds its way to the supernal truth out of the mire of lies.
6. Spiritual meditation, a golden gate which once opened leads the chela or neophyte to the realm of eternal verity and ceaseless contemplation of it.
7. Wisdom combined with discriminating intelligence, which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, a son of the Dhyanis.

In addition to these Seven, the following three are also frequently mentioned in Buddhist literature; and they are of equal importance with the former, although they are here enumerated out of their usual order as they are commonly found in the exoteric books:

8. Proper method or discipline in following the Path.
9. The urgent wish to achieve success for the sake of being an impersonal beneficent energy in the world.
10. A continuous exercise of the intellect in study of self, of others, and incidentally of the great religious literatures and philosophies of the world.

Mind you, these ten are among the most widely accepted mystical teachings of the Northern School of Buddhism which is followed more or less faithfully by some 400 million human beings – at least let us hope so.

## The Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path

Life is suffering.

The origin of suffering is egoistic craving and attachment.

There is a way to the cessation of suffering.

This Way is the Eightfold Path:

Right Understanding;  
Right Thinking;  
Right Speech;  
Right Attitude;  
Right Livelihood;  
Right Effort;  
Right Mindfulness;  
Right Concentration.

The Four Noble Truths

1. Life means suffering.
2. The origin of suffering is attachment.
3. The cessation of suffering is attainable.
4. The path to the cessation of suffering.

1. Life means suffering.

To live means to suffer, because the human nature is not perfect and neither is the world we live in. During our lifetime, we inevitably have to endure physical suffering such as pain, sickness, injury, tiredness, old age, and eventually death; and we have to endure psychological suffering like sadness, fear, frustration, disappointment, and depression. Although there are different degrees of suffering and there are also positive experiences in life that we perceive as the opposite of suffering, such as ease, comfort and happiness, life in its totality is imperfect and incomplete, because our world is subject to impermanence. This means we are never able to keep permanently what we strive for, and just as happy moments pass by, we ourselves and our loved ones will pass away one day, too.

2. The origin of suffering is attachment.

The origin of suffering is attachment to transient things and the ignorance thereof. Transient things do not only include the physical objects that surround us, but also ideas, and -in a greater sense- all objects of our perception. Ignorance is the lack of understanding of how our mind is attached to impermanent things. The reasons for suffering are desire, passion, ardor, pursue of wealth and prestige, striving for fame and popularity, or in short: craving and clinging. Because the objects of our attachment are transient, their loss is inevitable, thus suffering will necessarily follow. Objects of attachment also include the idea of a “self” which is a delusion, because there is no abiding self. What we call “self” is just an imagined entity, and we are merely a part of the ceaseless becoming of the universe.

3. The cessation of suffering is attainable.

The cessation of suffering can be attained through nirodha. Nirodha means the unmaking of sensual craving and conceptual attachment. The third noble truth expresses the idea that suffering can be ended by attaining dispassion. Nirodha extinguishes all forms of clinging and attachment. This means that suffering can be overcome through human activity, simply by removing the cause of suffering. Attaining and perfecting dispassion is a process of many levels that ultimately results in the state of Nirvana.

Nirvana means freedom from all worries, troubles, complexes, fabrications and ideas. Nirvana is not comprehensible for those who have not attained it.

4. The path to the cessation of suffering.

There is a path to the end of suffering – a gradual path of self-improvement, which is described more detailed in the Eightfold Path <eightfoldpath.html>. It is the middle way between the two extremes of excessive self-indulgence (hedonism) and excessive self-mortification (asceticism); and it leads to the end of the cycle of rebirth. The latter quality discerns it from other paths which are merely “wandering on the wheel of becoming”, because these do not have a final object. The path to the end of suffering can extend over many lifetimes, throughout which every individual rebirth is subject to karmic conditioning. Craving, ignorance, delusions, and its effects will disappear gradually, as progress is made on the path.

### The Noble Eightfold Path

1. Right View (Wisdom)
2. Right Intention
3. Right Speech (Ethical Conduct)
4. Right Action
5. Right Livelihood
6. Right Effort (Mental Development)
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right Concentration

The Noble Eightfold Path describes the way to the end of suffering, as it was laid out by Siddhartha Gautama. It is a practical guideline to ethical and mental development with the goal of freeing the individual from attachments and delusions; and it finally leads to understanding the truth about all things. Together with the Four Noble Truths it constitutes the gist of Buddhism. Great emphasis is put on the practical aspect, because it is only through practice that one can attain a higher level of existence and finally reach Nirvana. The eight aspects of the path are not to be understood as a sequence of single steps, instead they are highly interdependent principles that have to be seen in relationship with each other.

1. Right View – Right view is the beginning and the end of the path, it simply means to see and to understand things as they really are and to realize the Four Noble Truth. As such, right view is the cognitive aspect of wisdom. It means to see things through, to grasp the impermanent and imperfect nature of worldly objects and ideas, and to understand the law of karma and karmic conditioning. Right view is not necessarily an intellectual capacity, just as wisdom is not just a matter of intelligence. Instead, right view is attained, sustained, and enhanced through all capacities of mind. It begins with the intuitive insight that all beings are subject to suffering and it ends with complete understanding of the true nature of all things. Since our view of the world forms our thoughts and our actions, right view yields right thoughts and right actions.

2. Right Intention – While right view refers to the cognitive aspect of wisdom, right intention refers to the volitional aspect, i.e. the kind of mental energy that controls our actions. Right intention can be described best as commitment to ethical and mental self-improvement. Buddha distinguishes three types of right intentions: 1. the intention of renunciation, which means resistance to the pull of desire, 2. the intention of good will, meaning resistance to feelings of anger and aversion, and 3. the intention of harmlessness, meaning not to think or act cruelly, violently, or aggressively, and to develop compassion.

3. Right Speech – Right speech is the first principle of ethical conduct in the eightfold path. Ethical conduct is viewed as a guideline to moral discipline, which supports the other principles of the path. This aspect is not self-sufficient, however, essential, because mental purification can only be achieved through the cultivation of ethical conduct. The importance of speech in the context of Buddhist ethics is obvious: words can break or save lives, make enemies or friends, start war or create peace. Buddha explained right speech as follows: 1. to abstain from false speech, especially not to tell deliberate lies and not to speak deceitfully, 2. to abstain from slanderous speech and not to use words maliciously against others, 3. to abstain from harsh words that offend or hurt others, and 4. to abstain from idle chatter that lacks purpose or depth. Positively phrased, this means to tell the truth, to speak friendly, warm, and gently and to talk only when necessary.

4. Right Action – The second ethical principle, right action, involves the body as natural means of expression, as it refers to deeds that involve bodily actions. Unwholesome actions lead to unsound states of mind, while wholesome actions lead to sound states of mind. Again, the principle is explained in terms of abstinence: right action means 1. to

abstain from harming sentient beings, especially to abstain from taking life (including suicide) and doing harm intentionally or delinquently, 2. to abstain from taking what is not given, which includes stealing, robbery, fraud, deceitfulness, and dishonesty, and 3. to abstain from sexual misconduct. Positively formulated, right action means to act kindly and compassionately, to be honest, to respect the belongings of others, and to keep sexual relationships harmless to others. Further details regarding the concrete meaning of right action can be found in the Precepts.

5. Right Livelihood – Right livelihood means that one should earn one’s living in a righteous way and that wealth should be gained legally and peacefully. The Buddha mentions four specific activities that harm other beings and that one should avoid for this reason:

1. dealing in weapons, 2. dealing in living beings (including raising animals for slaughter as well as slave trade and prostitution), 3. working in meat production and butchery, and 4. selling intoxicants and poisons, such as alcohol and drugs. Furthermore any other occupation that would violate the principles of right speech and right action should be avoided.

6. Right Effort – Right effort can be seen as a prerequisite for the other principles of the path. Without effort, which is in itself an act of will, nothing can be achieved, whereas misguided effort distracts the mind from its task, and confusion will be the consequence. Mental energy is the force behind right effort; it can occur in either wholesome or unwholesome states. The same type of energy that fuels desire, envy, aggression, and violence can on the other side fuel self-discipline, honesty, benevolence, and kindness. Right effort is detailed in four types of endeavors that rank in ascending order of perfection: 1. to prevent the arising of unarisen unwholesome states, 2. to abandon unwholesome states that have already arisen, 3. to arouse wholesome states that have not yet arisen, and 4. to maintain and perfect wholesome states already arisen.

7. Right Mindfulness – Right mindfulness is the controlled and perfected faculty of cognition. It is the mental ability to see things as they are, with clear consciousness. Usually, the cognitive process begins with an impression induced by perception, or by a thought, but then it does not stay with the mere impression. Instead, we almost always conceptualize sense impressions and thoughts immediately. We interpret them and set them in relation to other thoughts and experiences, which naturally go beyond the facticity of the original impression. The mind then posits concepts, joins concepts into constructs, and weaves those constructs into complex interpretative schemes. All this happens only half consciously, and as a result we often see things obscured. Right mindfulness is anchored in clear perception and it penetrates impressions without getting carried away. Right mindfulness enables us to be aware of the process of conceptualization in a way that we actively observe and control the way our thoughts go. Buddha accounted for this as the four foundations of mindfulness: 1. contemplation of the body, 2. contemplation of feeling (repulsive, attractive, or neutral), 3. contemplation of the state of mind, and 4. contemplation of the phenomena.

8. Right Concentration – The eighth principle of the path, right concentration, refers to the development of a mental force that occurs in natural consciousness, although at a relatively low level of intensity, namely concentration. Concentration in this context is described as one-pointedness of mind, meaning a state where all mental faculties are unified and directed onto one particular object. Right concentration for the purpose of the eightfold path means wholesome concentration, i.e. concentration on wholesome thoughts and actions. The Buddhist method of choice to develop right concentration is through the practice of meditation.

The meditating mind focuses on a selected object. It first directs itself onto it, then sustains concentration, and finally intensifies concentration step by step. Through this practice it becomes natural to apply elevated levels of concentration also in everyday situations.

## **The Four Noble Truths**

We can experience these truths, which lie at the heart of the Buddha's teachings, through direct experience. They can be viewed as:

- (1) Diagnosis of an illness;
- (2) Prognosis;
- (3) Recovery; and
- (4) Medicine to cure the disease.

The first 2 truths deal with the way things are; the last 2 point the way to freedom from suffering.

### **1. The Noble Truth of Suffering**

Besides "suffering," other translations of the Pali word *dukkha* include unsatisfactoriness, dis-ease, and instability. All these words point to the fact that no conditioned phenomenon can provide true (lasting) happiness in our lives. The first step in a spiritual life is to look very closely and honestly at our experience of life and see that there is suffering. We tend to overlook or ignore or just blindly react to the unpleasant, so it continually haunts us. Yet although physical suffering is a natural aspect of our lives, we can learn to transcend mental suffering.

**2. The Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering** Through a lack of understanding of how things truly exist, we create and recreate an independent self entity called "me."

The whole of our experience in life can be viewed through this sense of self. In consequence, various cravings govern our actions. Cravings arise for sense experiences, for "being" or "becoming" (e.g. rich, famous, loved, respected, immortal), and to avoid the unpleasant. These cravings are the root cause of suffering.

**3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering** The mind can be purified of all the mental defilements that cause suffering.

Nibbana, the ultimate peace, has been compared to the extinction of a three-fold fire of lust, ill-will, and delusion. One who has realised cessation has great purity of heart, ocean-like compassion, and penetrating wisdom.

**4. The Noble Truth of the Way to the Cessation of Suffering** The Way leading to cessation contains a thorough and profound training of body, speech, and mind. Traditionally it's outlined as the Noble Eightfold Path:

- (1) Right Understanding;
- (2) Right Intention;
- (3) Right Speech;
- (4) Right Action;
- (5) Right Livelihood;
- (6) Right Effort;
- (7) Right Mindfulness; and
- (8) Right Concentration.

On the level of morality (*sila*), the Path entails restraint and care in speech, action, and livelihood. The concentration (*samadhi*) level requires constant effort to abandon the unwholesome and develop the wholesome, to increase mindfulness and clear comprehension of the mind-body process, and to develop mental calm and stability. The wisdom (*panna*) level entails the abandonment of thoughts of sensuality, ill will, and cruelty; ultimately it penetrates the true nature of phenomena to see impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and impersonality. When all 8 factors of the Path come together in harmony to the point of maturity, suffering is transcended. In summary, the Four Noble Truths can be thought of as that which is to be (1) comprehended, (2) abandoned, (3) realized, and (4) developed.

## **The Seven Principles of Man**

An Ancient Basis for a New Psychology

Leoline L. Wright, *Theosophical Manuals Series*, 1998

### Chapter 1 – Introductory

Seven is one of the most important numbers in the teachings of theosophy, the wisdom-religion. It is a key by which are revealed and explained many of the mysteries of nature, for in theosophy it is taught that number and numbers underlie all the processes of creation. This numerical key of seven lies at the root of all evolution, whether physical or spiritual. It is therefore important both in its meanings and application.

There is nothing arbitrary about the use of seven as applied to the study of our composite constitution, as this number is found to be universal throughout the universe. We discover it everywhere. Some common facts are good instances of this, such as the seven layers of the human skin, the musical scale with its seven notes, and the seven colors which make up a ray of sunlight. Then there is the moon, which theosophy and science both show to have close relation to the generation of physical life on our planet. The moon is governed in its activities by the number seven. Note the recurrence of seven in the gestation period, the phases of the moon, with the week of seven days, etc. The inquirer has only to look observantly into the matter to find many other examples of the septenary in the world about him.

In Christianity we find the human nature divided by the apostle Paul into three elements: body, soul, and spirit. This division includes, however, the other four principles. Christian theology, while accepting this threefold division, tells us little about what soul really is, or what is the difference between soul and spirit. Nor can present-day psychology help us. The best known modern psychologists take into account only the lower ranges of soul activity. They study almost exclusively our physiological mentality, such emotions as fear, passionate desires, and the like. However, this is not surprising. For over a century science has regarded the human being as merely a developed ape whose inner life consists of highly specialized reactions to his environment, though a change in this point of view is now seen to be on the way. A number of psychologists are discovering that to regard the human soul as a complex of merely semi-physiological reactions does not begin to cover the ground. They acknowledge that such a point of view is destructive to all moral and spiritual aspiration. It does not take into account the nature of our spiritual-mental activities. And they are beginning to admit that it is this higher side which is the more important.

Present-day psychology is the newest and most incomplete branch of modern science. How different it was in the great ancient civilizations! They were built around the Mystery-schools as a nucleus. And those great esoteric colleges taught a complete science of the soul, a subject which we moderns name psychology. These schools or colleges were the guardians of a sacred science which included everything about life, death, man, and the universe. It included the truths of religion, science, and philosophy in all their immense ranges.

Our present religions, philosophies, and sciences are but pale reflections of that ancient knowledge; or else they are new and incomplete growths arising from its remnants. This ancient system, which is referred to in theosophical works as the wisdom-religion, the secret doctrine, the esoteric philosophy or tradition, the archaic wisdom, etc., was known all over the ancient world. Clear evidence of this fact can be found by a study and comparison of the basic doctrines and symbologies of all the old world-religions, including even the Bible. The same is true of the ancient great philosophies. Pythagoras, with his esoteric school at Crotona; Plato in his Academy at Athens; and the Stoics, of whom Marcus Aurelius is a celebrated example, all show, in spite of differences in the form of their systems, that they were teachers of the wisdom-religion. Evidence can also be found in archaeological remains the world over and in many other fields of research, should the reader be interested in this fascinating subject. (See also *The Esoteric Tradition* by G. de Purucker; and *The Mystery-Schools* by Grace F. Knoche.)

One of the most important of the teachings of these Mystery-schools was the sevenfold nature of the manifested universe, and of its offspring, man.

### Chapter 2 – The Monad

An explanation of our composite nature with its seven principles must include a brief outline of what theosophy tells us about evolution. Evolution, as taught by the wisdom-religion, means an unwrapping, a rolling out; in other words,

it is the growth into manifestation or activity of qualities which are latent and invisible in the inner nature of any being. The qualities of a living seed when first dropped into the soil are invisible and latent. But when the time and the conditions are ripe for growth these latent qualities begin to develop, to unwrap or roll out into visibility. An acorn, for example produces first a tiny shoot and then at last the magnificent and sturdy oak.

All organisms, that is, all living beings – plants, animals, men – grow from seeds. In the case of humans and most animals these seeds are so minute as to be invisible to any eye but that of the microscope. And yet one of these infinitesimal vital cells may grow into a six-foot man with all his complex faculties, or into the enormous elephant with its highly specialized organs.

What is it that causes this truly magical growth of an invisible seed into a wondrous individual, such as a great musician or inventor? Why is it that the law of development from within outwards, from invisibility into visibility, is at the root of evolution? It is because at the heart of every seed there is a living spirit-soul, atma-buddhi. This spirit-soul is a spark of the universal life-spirit. It is the urge to self-expression of this invisible spirit-soul at the core of every organism which causes it to expand, to unfold its own powers through the outward development of faculty and function. Of course it is fed and helped forwards by the stimulation of its environment. But unless there were this living spiritual urge present at its core, the seed would not expand and fructify. A dead seed will not grow, no matter how favorable its environment.

Again, modern science in its theories of evolution has confined its studies to the visible side of nature – the physical; although there are scientists whose researches are bringing them to a more comprehensive view. Not only the bodies, however, but the minds and souls of creatures, are subject to evolution. For if evolution is a law of nature then nothing can be excluded from the action of that law. In every particle of matter there is imprisoned a spark of the universal, indestructible LIFE. This spark is named in theosophy the monad, a word which means a “unit,” an “individual.” This monad is a point, a center of complete, individualized, indestructible consciousness, originating, as said, in the central universal life. Such a monad lives at the core of every organism, from an atom to a star.

But these monads are in vastly differing degrees of evolution. The monad at the heart of, say, an atom in the mineral kingdom is much less evolved or unfolded than one which has reached, on its upward evolutionary journey of self-unfoldment, the vegetable or the animal kingdom. The monad at the core of a human being is immeasurably more advanced than either. The reason is that, during the ages of its progressive self-development through the stages of matter in all the lower kingdoms, it has now reached the point where it has so highly evolved its own latent intellectual and spiritual powers that it can at last manifest as a human being. The difference between this process, which is a spiritual one, and some of the erroneous ideas of Darwinian evolution is fully explained in *Man in Evolution* by G. de Purucker.

There is a monad at the core of every physical atom. The physical atom is the outmost body or vehicle through which the monad works and expresses itself. When it ensouls a chemical atom, the monad is starting near the bottom of the evolutionary ladder. And slowly through countless ages that monad passes from kingdom to kingdom of nature, advancing ever upward.

We can understand something of this process if we remember how a plant grows. Back of every plant is what may be called a plant-monad, in other words a spiritual monad passing through the vegetable phase of its evolutionary journey. A seed is dropped in the soil and immediately that conditions are right, the sleeping or latent energy locked within it begins the process of building up from the soil a plant-vehicle for itself. Similarly does the monad make for itself higher and higher vehicles as it passes upwards through the elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms – someday to blossom forth in the vesture of humanhood.

The reader will now begin to see that it is these monads whose activities not only produce, but are the very stuff of evolution. The monadic hosts, high, intermediate, and low in their scale of development, ensoul and build all manifestations of life visible and invisible to us – spiritual, intellectual, psychic, and physical. And they do this because of the spiritual urge at the heart of each monad, this urge being generated in its origin in the central universal fount of life.

It is these monads, with their inner life of urges, activities, and slowly unfolding characteristics, which make up the invisible parts of nature – that invisible world of inconceivably greater scope and range than our visible. Here in these inner realms work the vast hosts of invisible monads which are thus the cause of visible evolution.

Before passing on to consider ourselves as seven-principled beings, we shall answer a question that may have arisen in the mind of the student. He may ask: What is the purpose of all this monadic evolution from kingdom to kingdom and from range to range or plane to plane of evolving being? This purpose can be stated as follows: Each great solar period of evolution is called in theosophy a manvantara. In this solar period or manvantara the monad starts out at the very beginning as an unself-conscious god-spark. And the object of its passage through all the forms of life in that particular solar manvantara is that it may emerge from them as a fully self-conscious god. When the end of that solar period comes, a monad which has successfully completed its evolution will have first-hand knowledge of – will in fact have been – all the life-forms in that manvantara. It will have absorbed to itself at last the power self-consciously to understand and assimilate and use all those experiences. So it becomes a self-conscious god, a master of wisdom and life in that manvantara which it has just rounded out. In a later solar manvantara, the monad will go on to experience still higher levels of evolution and knowledge.

The monad at the center of each one of us is far on its way to becoming such a self-conscious god. And this of course means that you and I, who are in reality our own monads if we could only realize it, are destined to emerge at the close of this solar manvantara through which we are now passing as fully-fledged, all-understanding gods.

One of the most beautiful aspects of this teaching is that in thus mounting the evolutionary ladder of being we awaken and stimulate the evolutionary potencies of all the atoms and creatures which we contact on all the planes of experience. It is a law of the universe – in other words it is in the very nature of things – that we cannot ourselves rise without lifting everything else to some degree. The ethical implications in responsibility and karmic consequences are easily apparent. But let us now go back to our subject of the seven human principles.

### Chapter 3 – The Higher Triad

We ourselves, however, are not just a monad working through a physical body. We are the product of several different lines of evolution combined into that composite nature with which we are all so familiar. It would not be possible for a monad to work directly through a human body. The monad is pure spirit-consciousness, but the body is made of matter which is too dense and sluggish for the monad to work upon it directly. It would burn the body up, just as electricity would consume the physical flesh. So intermediate elements between the monad and body are needed. These must be of a more ethereal and spiritually sensitive nature than physical matter because they have to act as transformers. They must step down or conduct the spiritual energies of the monad into the physical organism. Then the directing power of the monad can inspire and shape our evolution through the experiences of human life. It must be remembered too that the monad which works through a human being is immensely more evolved and powerful than the comparatively unevolved monad acting, for example, through the form of a vegetable atom.

One of the more ethereal forms of energy-substance used by the monad as a vehicle to step down or transfer its energies to this earth plane is mind. Mind is a very definite line of human evolution. Our minds are developing all the time on their own lines while our bodies are growing and developing along theirs. And we also carry on mental evolution side by side with the spiritual evolution of the monad above, as well as the evolution of the body and its vital energies below. Mind is the link between the body and the monad.

And now we understand something more of Paul's meaning when he divided human nature into body, soul, and spirit. Soul is the intermediate portion of human nature, and the higher part of that soul is mind or intellect.

Before going farther and showing how these three elements resolve themselves naturally into seven, a question which has probably already occurred to the reader should be answered. Where do these human principles come from? The monad, as we have already seen, takes its rise, and is an emanation from, the universal cosmic life or spirit. It is in one sense the person himself, his immortal root-principle. But what is the origin of the mind?

Mind as a principle is latent in the monad. For the monad, springing as it does from the central fire of cosmic spirit, contains within itself the seeds or possibilities of everything, even as everything is contained within its cosmic origin. The part contains everything that the whole contains. One spark is of the same nature throughout as the flame

which throws it off. One drop of the ocean is in miniature all that the whole ocean is. So each monad holds within itself, as being a part of the cosmic whole, all the elements and potencies and possibilities that evolution can unfold in the life span of this our universe. But in the beginning of this universal life span these potencies are latent, asleep, undeveloped. Then, as the ages pass, and the monad journeys on its evolutionary pilgrimage from the invisible spiritual and causal worlds “outward” into the visible world of forms and effects, latent potencies – mineral, vegetable, animal – are gradually unwrapped, unfolded, evolved. Finally the time comes when the monad is ready to take upon itself humanhood. It has advanced to the point where it has completely developed all its lower faculties and is now ready for evolution along mental and intellectual lines.

It was at this point then, ages ago in our evolution, that occurred what H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* calls “the incarnation of the manasaputras.” As already explained, the monad is far above this human plane – too far for it to be able to awaken even the intellectual principle in the human constitution. For this reason at first the manasic or mind element was then still “asleep.” This state of things has been explained as follows:

The course of evolution developed the lower principles and produced at last the form of man with a brain of better and deeper capacity than that of any other animal. But this man in form was not man in mind, and needed the fifth principle, the thinking, perceiving one, to differentiate him from the animal kingdom and to confer the power of becoming self-conscious. – W. Q. Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 53

Thus the intellect of the now almost human being overshadowed by its monad needed a spark, an impulse to awaken it into consciousness of itself.

This spark or awakening touch was given to those evolved human vehicles of the monad by the sons of universal mind. They are called in esoteric tradition the manasaputras, or “sons of mind.” These beings called manasaputras are a hierarchy, or range or class, of spiritual entities. They perfected their intellectual evolution in a long, long past cycle of what was equivalent to human experience in a now vanished system of worlds. For this reason the highest of these manasaputras are by this time advanced in their evolution to the status of cosmic gods. They are great consciousnesses who make up, who are, the hierarchy of intellectual self-consciousness in our universe. As a great hierarchy or group they are what Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* referred to as mahat, or the universal mind.

It was these manasaputras or sons of cosmic mind who gave the spark, the creative impulse, which awakened mind in the human vehicle already evolved for that purpose by the monad.

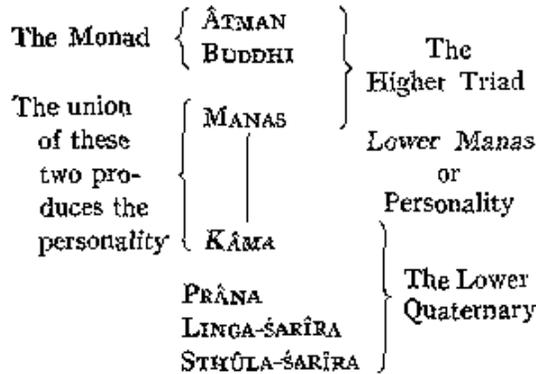
This process was something like the lighting of a candle. You cannot have a flame unless you have the fuel prepared in some definite form ready for lighting. Even a bonfire must be started from carefully laid fuel. In the case of the lighting of mind in the evolved human vehicle, man might thus be compared to a candle. He was a psychological vehicle or instrument evolved by the overshadowing monad through long ages of evolution. The forces of nature also contributed, so that when the time came that the creative flash could be given by the manasaputras, a flame would spring up, never again to be extinguished. Thus what then was human only in form became in actuality manas, a thinker. And this thinking principle linked the monad more or less directly to the animal nature, and human evolution was thus immensely quickened.

It was then, as said, that man first became truly man. For what differentiates a human being from an animal? Is it not mind, the power to think, to reason, to plan? Man is not guided by instinct alone as the beasts are. He is self-conscious. Sharply developed in him is the ego, the part which realizes, “I am I, and not anyone else. I am myself, not my environment. I am separate from all other things. I can influence or control these other things and bend them to my own uses, and so control my environment. Thus I can shape my destiny to suit myself.”

Man alone has this power of self-conscious free will. He has the power of self-directed choice. And this he derives from manas the ego, the self-conscious thinker, awakened in him by the manasaputras. But, if this is the case, why is it, at present at least, that we do not show more power of free will over ourselves and our destiny? For the answer to this important question the reader is referred to Mahatmas and Chelas and *The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 180-6. It is this manas, this thinker, which in its higher aspects forms the third element of what we call the higher human triad. But before studying the other two principles which make up this higher triad, let us take a quick glance over the whole of composite human nature.

In the following diagram it is interesting to note that Sanskrit words are used to describe the different aspects of our septenary constitution. This is made necessary by the limitations of European languages. Western science, religion, and philosophy have so long forgotten the knowledge of the metaphysical and spiritual facts of being that no words have been developed to indicate or describe these higher and lower states of consciousness. But in the Orient the ancient sacred science – theosophy or the esoteric tradition – has been kept alive. Thus we find in the Sanskrit language, all ready for use, the words needed to make these seven principles easily understandable to those unfamiliar with them. And another reason for the use of Sanskrit is that these terms will then be the same in all languages, thus avoiding the translation of lengthy descriptions.

In the following diagram, the brackets indicate the relationships and some of the interactions of the seven principles.



It will be noticed first of all that what we have called the monad appears to be dual – composed of two principles, atman and buddhi. And yet we have been speaking all along of the monad as a unit of consciousness. But when these two principles are understood, their inseparable existence in human evolution will be understood.

The Sanskrit word atman means “self.” Every being anywhere, no matter how small, no matter how great, is a self. All these multimyriad selves are derived from the cosmic self, the universal atman or cosmic life, as sparks are derived from their originating flame. There is the self or atman of our universe from which is derived the atman, the informing consciousness, of the solar system; and so on down the mighty scale of evolving beings until we reach mankind. And below mankind every being in all the kingdoms including atoms and electrons and elementals is a monadic self derived from the universal atman or self of the universe.

At the root of our being dwells our atman, the I AM, our self – our sense of existence, of being alive. This sense of I AM is universal. It is the same in all creatures. And it is universal and the same in all because the inmost spiritual consciousness of every organism is an integral part of the universal self or atman, as a drop is an integral part of the encompassing ocean. And each single drop is like in composition and nature to every other drop and to the whole ocean itself.

This consciousness of I AM is sometimes difficult to understand, if we have never thought about it before. We are all so familiar with the ego – it is about all that we know of ourselves. We are steeped in the consciousness of our differentness from everyone else. However, we can get some idea of what is meant by watching the young babe. Or we can find it in ourselves when we first awake in the morning – aware of being alive and comfortable but not yet aroused to the sharp edges of our daily lives.

Atman, the I AM sense in each one of us, is universal and therefore unlike the ego or manas from which we derive our sense of “I am I.” For this ego-sense is different in every person while, as said, the sense of pure selfhood, of being alive and active, is the same in all creatures, whether human or otherwise. The understanding of this basic selfhood of universal origin in each of us leads to the realization of true spiritual brotherhood and develops all our highest, because spiritual, powers.

It has already been noted that atman, the heart of the monad, is in its nature too far above this human plane to work directly here. So the first vehicle or garment with which it clothes itself is buddhi. This word buddhi embodies the

idea, “to awaken.” Thus the buddhic faculty in human beings leads to understanding, seeing into things, because it makes us awake or aware. How many there are who are still asleep – unawakened! They are not interested in the common life of humanity – in other people, in the horror of world conditions. Enough if they and theirs have a job and a car and a chance to enjoy life! But the person who has begun to think, to question, to seek, is waking up, particularly if his interest spreads out irresistibly from his own problems to an interest in the problems of others.

Buddhi as a principle is spiritual consciousness of the highest kind existing in that grade of evolution to which mankind belongs. When viewed from the universal standpoint of atman, buddhi is a garment or veil or vehicle of primary substance. But this “substance” is so close to the plane of the divine that viewed from below, from the standpoint of our comparatively gross mentality, it is pure consciousness. And so we can describe buddhi as spiritual consciousness. Dr. de Purucker in his *Occult Glossary* thus explains this principle:

Buddhi is the principle or organ in man which gives to him spiritual consciousness, and is the vehicle of the most high part of man – the atman. Buddhi is the faculty in man which manifests as understanding, judgment, discrimination, etc., and it is an inseparable veil or garment of the atman.

The use of this word “inseparable” explains why we can speak of the monad when viewed from our point of view as a unit.

Buddhi steps down the energies of atman to manas, the ego. From the standpoint of the ego, buddhi is practically a universal principle. It is therefore the seat or organ of impersonal love, that “love of all creatures” which is divine. And in the same sense buddhi is the origin of human conscience, our sense of rectitude and duty. Conscience is rooted in our feeling of duty towards others. It is also a sense of what is right. The right thing is the universal thing – that which everyone ought to do when acting in harmony with spiritual law and order. The ego is willful – seeks itself and its own way. Buddhi moves us to the sacrifice of egotistical feelings and actions to the principle of universal good.

A study of the higher triad with its different aspects and their practical relation to our daily problems would be one of the greatest contributions to psychology ever made. For the ancient wisdom teaches us to seek and to realize and make use of the almost unlimited spiritual powers which are stored there. It shows how to use them for the mastery of the lower animal and selfish nature by the higher triad. It is of incomparably greater utility and inspiration than digging into the libido and other underground byways of poor human nature. And as the student goes deeper into this study, he learns the sharp and important difference between the spiritual and the personal will – a knowledge which will be of simply inestimable value to him. These points will become clear after reading Chapter 5 of this Manual.

#### Chapter 4 – The Lower Quaternary

We have outlined thus far a necessarily brief description of the atman and the buddhic principles in our constitution, as well as of manas, the ego. We now come to a consideration of those sides of human nature with which we average men and women are more familiar – the principles which comprise our lower quaternary.

The lower quaternary, as the name implies, consists of four principles: kama, prana, linga-sarira, and sthula-sarira. These four working together form the vehicle in which the ego, overshadowed and guided by atma-buddhi, re embodies itself on this earth – in a word, reincarnates.

#### KAMA

The Sanskrit word kama means desire. At first thought we may get the idea of kama as something low in the scale of human qualities, but such is not necessarily the case.

Kama is the driving or impelling force in the human constitution; per se it is colorless, neither good nor bad, and is only such as the mind and soul direct its use. It is the seat of the living electric impulses, desires, aspirations, considered in their energetic aspect. Usually however, although there is a divine kama as well as an infernal one, this word is restricted, and wrongly so, to evil desire almost exclusively. – G. de Purucker, *Occult Glossary*

Also, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, we find Krishna, who is the personified self of the cosmos, telling his disciple Arjuna:

In all creatures I am desire regulated by moral fitness. – 7:54

Of course in the average man or woman desire is limited as a rule to narrow personal interests and certainly therefore it is not high in quality. We can better understand the range of this principle if we compare the desires of a Christ or a Buddha, in their compassionate self-dedication to the needs of the world, with the desires which motivate a gangster – these being examples of extreme aspects of the human kamic principle.

In the average person desire is neither very high nor very low. It is the work of evolution to train us through experience in many lives to raise the quality of our desires, for these desires obviously form a powerful element in the development of character and therefore of evolution. Unfortunately, due to ignorance and selfishness, people too often use the vital powers of desire and will to secure success for themselves regardless of the rights and welfare of others. So we create disharmony and suffer sooner or later the consequences. This being an ethical universe we have thus had to learn mostly through suffering.

## PRANA

Prana signifies “life principle” – vitality. It forms the psycho-electrical field, bounded by the organism, like the air in the lungs. Prana keeps the astral-physical organisms of all creatures alive and growing. It permeates the *linga-sarira* and the physical body from birth to death with ever-renewing currents of vital-magnetic energies. Prana also accounts for the falling to pieces of an organism. The death of an organism is caused in the first place by the prolonged wearing-down of that organism by streams of pranic energy which at last bring it to the point of dissolution. Both death and – as even science is beginning to suspect – sleep come not from the failure of life but from its excess.

## LINGA-SARIRA

This is the “model-body” upon which the physical body is formed. It is like a matrix or mold of ethereal matter into which the atoms of the physical body are built. It is often called the astral body. William Q. Judge wrote of it:

The astral body is made of matter of very fine texture as compared with the visible body, and has a great tensile strength, so that it changes but little during a lifetime, while the physical alters every moment . . . . The matter of which it is composed is electrical and magnetic in its essence, . . . The astral body is the guiding model for the physical one, and all the other kingdoms have the same astral model. – *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 39

It is this astral model, flushed with prana, that preserves our physical identity. We have been told by scientists that within a period of seven years, more or less, the matter of the physical body is completely renewed. Each day we lose atoms which are replaced by others. We are therefore different physical beings today from what we were, say, ten years ago. What is it then that keeps our bodies in shape, so that in spite of this continual flux of entering and departing atoms, which is going on continuously all our lives, each body yet retains its own characteristics of structure? This marvel is due to the model-body which, existing within the physical, molecule for molecule and cell for cell, holds its form so that even scars, deformities, or mere wrinkles are perpetuated.

There is another point which should also be emphasized:

The astral body has in it the real organs of the outer sense organs. In it are the sight, hearing, [taste], power to smell, and the sense of touch. – *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 42

In the case of marking by being born legless, the idea and strong imagination of the mother act so as to cut off or shrivel up the astral leg, and the result is that the molecules, having no model of leg to work on, make no physical leg whatever – and similarly in all such cases. But where we find a man who still feels the leg which the surgeon has cut off, or perceives the fingers that were amputated, then the astral member has not been interfered with, and hence the man feels as if it were still on his person. For knife or acid will not

injure the astral model, but in the first stages of its growth ideas and imagination have the power of acid and sharpened steel. – Ibid., p. 41

The astral body or *linga-sarira* is made of astral matter or substance. Speaking generally, it might be said, of course, that it is made of what science used to call ether. Theosophy, however, can explain much more about the ether than science. The aether or astral light or, to give it its technical name in theosophy, the *akasa* is, like everything else, sevenfold. Its highest or innermost levels or reaches are the home of our higher principles. Its lower and grosser levels surround our earth and we call them the astral light. All people cannot see the astral light in the way that they can see the surrounding air because they have not developed the astral faculties to enable them to see it.

Psychics and clairvoyants see its faintly luminous coils. It is this star-like luminosity that originated the name “astral.” These sensitives have developed in themselves the astral senses which correspond in their range of activity to the astral plane. But these so-called visions of clairvoyants are seldom anything but glimpses into the lower levels of the astral light. These levels are the ones closest to and surrounding the earth. They are a welter of images and influences produced upon and within astral matter by mankind’s unregulated and often evil emotions, thoughts, and desires. Hence these visions are not only misleading but frequently dangerous.

At the moment of death, when the spirit-soul lets go of all the lower principles, they fall apart. The astral body then separates out from the physical but does not leave it, as they belong together. And as the physical body disintegrates, the astral likewise slowly passes away.

#### STHULA-SARIRA

There are certain interesting facts connected with the physical body, or *sthula-sarira*, which theosophy has always taught but which physical science has only recently discovered. One of these facts is that physical matter is mostly holes. We are now told by scientists that if all the material spread out in this seemingly solid body of ours were collected into a compact mass, it would actually occupy a space about the size of a pin head!

The body, therefore, though appropriately called the *sthula-sarira* or “gross body,” is really foam-like, full of vacant spaces, something like a sponge. This is one of the many paradoxes or seeming contradictions which abound throughout nature and which make the study of her processes so fascinating. The grosser a substance appears the more foamy it actually is, and therefore the more illusory. Our bodies appear solid because they are formed of particles of matter in such inconceivably rapid motion that to our senses they seem as if solid. Just as when we whirl a lighted stick fast enough we see what appears to be a complete circle of fire. This indicates one great lesson that we may learn from a consideration of physical matter – that the real things, the permanent things, are invisible to our physical senses. We do not even see physical matter, but only the forms which it takes in the incomprehensible rapidity of its vibrations.

The *sthula-sarira* illustrates for us another basic spiritual fact of the cosmos. For it is a convenient example of the law of analogy, “As above so below; as it is below, so is it above.” In other words, the physical body being, in its substances, structures, and functions, an offspring of the universal cosmic life, it is itself a cosmos in miniature. This being the case, a knowledge of what takes place in physical bodies will, in the light of the archaic teachings of theosophy, reveal to us and illustrate faithfully the processes of the invisible spiritual worlds. As Blavatsky tells us:

Analogy is the guiding law in Nature, the only true Ariadne’s thread that can lead us, through the inextricable paths of her domain, toward her primal and final mysteries. – *The Secret Doctrine* 2:153

The use of this law of analogy therefore – in the action of the nervous system and the circulation of the blood, the nuclear structure of the cells, and many other facts – will provide a wonderful key to the understanding and application of the deeper teachings in regard to the structure and operations of the invisible and causal worlds. To the ignorant the body is a gross drag upon spiritual experience. But when kept in its proper place, controlled and intelligently used, the body has its own basic part to play in our evolution. For without it, how could we function in human life, where we are daily gaining such rich lessons in experience and development?

The relation of the *sthula-sarira* to our evolution may be viewed in two ways:

(1) It is our vehicle of contact with physical nature, and also with human life where we gain necessary lessons in experience and consequent development. Besides, without a complete knowledge of all the aspects of nature, divine, spiritual, mental, emotional, vital, astral, and physical, we would never reach the complete evolution of all our faculties.

(2) The sthula-sarira enables our higher principles to act not only upon our own physical atoms but also upon the atoms throughout the whole range of our physical and mental contacts. And this dynamic influence helps unconsciously in the evolution of all those atoms, particularly those used in our own body. We must remember that at the heart of every atom is a spirit-soul or monad pouring through it the urge to unfoldment and growth. And the effect of human will and evolutionary desires upon these developing monad-atoms is continuous and immense. So that the physical body has its definite and vital use in our development.

## Chapter 5 – Kama-Manas – The Personality

The everyday self which we live with and imagine that we know thoroughly is called the personality. But it is precisely this personality of whose elements we are so ignorant. And this is true not only of the man in the street but even of the professor of the modern so-called science of psychology. For some of the most popular explanations of the human psychological nature are delvings into what we have already spoken of as the cellar regions, the lower physiological side, of the human psyche or soul.

The whole drama of human life, made up of the struggle within us between the forces of good and evil, centers around the personality. Why is this? If you look at the diagram you will see. It is because the personality is dual, twofold. It is a compound, a resultant of the mingling of the nature of manas, the thinking ego, with kama. It may do no harm to repeat that the kind of kama exhibited by the ordinary person is selfish passionate desire. It is only the rarest human beings who know much about the higher aspects of kama, such as divine desire, although there are many men and women whose compassionate humanitarian interests and activities are lifting them slowly to those highest planes of desire. Therefore the technical name in theosophy for the personality is kama-manas. And as humanity is at present constituted, this name is more expressive than manas-kama, there being as said but very few in whom the thinker takes precedence over selfish emotions, or reason over impulse.

Kama-manas or the personality is the instrument, the vehicle, by which the monad with its spiritual urges and energies is brought into remote control of this mental-material world. All evolution is produced by original monadic urges and energies poured down or outward through our less spiritual principles. If the monad were to withdraw its presence, as it does at death, the principles would fall apart and the man would disappear from this physical world.

This personality of ours has been built up in its kamic parts by the monad in its passage or pilgrimages through the lower stages or kingdoms of nature, as already explained. During that time it fashioned what is sometimes called the animal soul, another name for our kamic nature. And then when this kamic soul was ready, it was touched into self-consciousness, awakened to humanhood, by the infusion of the divine intellectual fire of the manasaputras. Thus kama-manas came into action. It is the combination of the animal soul and the thinking, self-conscious nature in the human constitution.

This personality then began to reincarnate as the vehicle for its higher manas. It took human form again and again, life after life on this earth. But all this time while man has been developing his faculties of will power, imagination, reason, creative intellect, and the like, the instincts and desires of the animal or kamic self have been strengthening and developing too, by the very reason of their dynamic alliance with manas. They have become strong, self-centered, and self-demanding. Thus the two forces in human nature, the spiritual and the animal, have been at war all down the ages. The lower kama-manasic self always urges to passion, strife, and selfishness; the higher manasic ego, inspired by atma-buddhi, slowly through innumerable incarnations has been striving for spiritual mastery.

In this way the lower and material principles are inspired or urged forward in self-unfoldment and are thus slowly transformed and developed from material into spiritual energies. For this is the purpose of life and the object of evolution – to raise the mortal into immortality.

So that today we see our nature hovering upon the point of balance between self-indulgence and self-mastery, the animal and godlike in human nature. And this condition in the individual is naturally reflected in the mass. The

present condition of our world well illustrates the situation. Nations, on the one hand, are urged by ideals of peace, international fraternity, and cooperation. On the other hand, they are goaded by greed, ignorance, and the clamor of selfish national interests. It was this very condition which was foreseen by the great teachers, the mahatmas who through the work of H. P. Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society. At the same time they restored to us the knowledge which will enable the spirit-soul working through our higher nature, both in the individual and in the mass, to win the final victory over selfishness and hatred.

Katherine Tingley once wrote, "Impersonal love is the secret of life." It is the cure for all present evils, both individual and collective. By "impersonal" is meant self-forgetful love. Even more, it means love for all beings, no matter whether base or noble, no matter how different or hostile to us or dear and close to our hearts. By silencing the kama-manas, the selfish demanding personality, we begin to understand, to love, and to know in a wonderful new way, bringing us happiness and peace. Becoming quick to love, and so to understand and forgive, irritation and criticism and resentment fall away from us. No matter what happens we shall then never hinder or be unkind but always try to help. Ultimately we shall go farther still and come to understand and forgive our enemies – the happiest state of all. Broadening then gradually our sympathies, we extend our love to include all nations as well as our own beloved land. And thus we eventually become a power for universal good.

There are truly magical powers wrapped up in our higher nature – creative powers which are even now feebly illustrated by intuitive imagination and disciplined will; with the unselfish impulses of our deepest hearts which lead to grand humanitarian activities; and all our dreams and visions and urges towards that spiritual genius which is beginning to unfold in humanity even today. But these seeds of magical powers will not sprout – they cannot – while our whole attention and desires are concentrated merely upon business interests, selfish self-evasive pleasures, and the race to keep up with or get ahead of everyone else. We are not expected of course to neglect or abandon necessary material pursuits; but in changing our inner objective we seize our present opportunity to develop the aspect of kama already referred to as divine desire.

The impulse to bless with unselfish service our family or friends, to take an honorable part in civic or national betterment, to give help and consolation to those in sorrow or need – these impulses spring from our spiritual monad, atma-buddhi. Under this magic sunshine the dark side of the kamic principle will wither away; divine kama will come into action and coalesce with lower manas. Duality will disappear and the two will become welded into a perfect vehicle, a luminous personality, through which the spiritual monad, our inner god, may pour its divine energies into our human hearts. Such men were Jesus the Christ and Gautama the Buddha.

## Chapter 6 – We Are Rooted in a Sevenfold Universe

The sevenfold nature of the universe has already been referred to. One of the most important teachings of theosophy tells us that all we see of the real universe is but its outermost or physical parts. The other six parts are invisible to us. They are built of more ethereal matters than physical and move to higher and finer rates of vibration. We cannot sense them because we have not yet developed the etheric sense organs or the finer perceptions which could reveal them to us. So that six-sevenths of the great organism of Mother Nature is hidden from us at present, just as in the structure of light there are ranges of vibration beginning with the ultraviolet at one end and the infrared at the other. These are either too rapid or too slow to be perceived by our organ of vision, but they nevertheless have a very marked effect upon our health and in other departments of the world of physical causes.

The fact that all things are moved and motivated by inner invisible energies and their living urges, we see around us even in our physical world. A flower or a tree – is not its life of distributing sap, of color transmutation and growth, unseen by us in all but its effects? And a rock is held together by the attractions and repulsions of the atoms and electrons which form the imperceptible side of its structure. This fact of the physical and exterior being "worked from within" is what we call a law, being universal throughout nature.

Thus these inner and invisible realms are the causal or creative worlds. They produce the physical universe. Nature as we see it around us is but the multifold physical organism through which these inner realms of creative evolution work. But nature is much more than this. It should properly be called universal nature, "nature spiritual and material with all the countless hierarchical ranges between." (*The Esoteric Tradition*, 3rd & rev. ed., p. 2)

The foregoing will be easier to grasp if we think of it as exemplified in our own human experience. Take our nearest and dearest. All that we can see of them is their physical appearance and activities. But that is the very least of their meaning to us. It is their inner complex invisible selves that we love – their sympathy, intellectual or temperamental fascination, or their moral beauty. These are the person. Someone who at first acquaintance may have seemed physically ugly to us becomes at last beautiful because of a noble or loving character. Or another who at first sight charmed because of physical beauty may end in being actually ugly to us when the real nature is discovered to be selfish or cruel. So with the world around us. It is made up of inner forces and invisible creative energies which are the reality of which physical nature is but the face and form.

There is a direct relationship between the invisible six-sevenths of human beings and the invisible six-sevenths of nature. In either case the physical aspect is the lowest or seventh principle, the body or sthula-sarira. And as we derive our bodies from the earth and our vitality indirectly from the physical sun, so we derive our invisible six principles from the six invisible principles of universal nature.

“But,” someone perhaps objects here, “it has already been said that we derive all of our principles from the monad. The monad, you have told us, emanates buddhi, its envelope or garment of spiritual intelligent substance. Then buddhi produces manas, manas unfolds kama, and so on down the sevenfold ladder of being. But now you say that man derives his principles from the seven principles of nature. There seems to be a contradiction here.”

No, because it is just as we see it in human experience. How often we hear the query as to character and environment. Which is the more powerful in shaping a person’s life – his inborn character or the environment into which he is born? In the last analysis we must agree that while environment is tremendously important, character must actually lead in formative power. Otherwise we should never see those cases of people born in poverty who have raised themselves to the pinnacles of achievement. The well-known phrase, a self-made man, has sprung from this fact – that the real directing power of a person’s life is within himself. When strong enough it cannot be nullified by his surroundings.

Our own characteristic principles spring from our spiritual individuality, the monad. But these principles of ours are also acted upon by the external principles of nature. An acorn will produce only an oak tree. But the acorn is fed by water from the air and chemicals in the soil. It later draws in solar vitality to build up its cells and produce color in its leaves and blossoms. Man likewise, the divine seed of the universe, draws sustenance from the surrounding seven principles of nature. The astral body cannot be fed from the earth, only by its own elements contained in the lower levels of the ether. And so on up the scale. Each principle draws its sustenance from higher and higher levels of the invisible six higher principles of nature.

All our principles are dual. Not dual in the sense of being in two parts like a box and its cover, but two in action in the same way that the electric magnet has a positive and a negative pole. Every principle has an energetic, that is a positive consciousness side, and a substance or negative side. And it is through this latter that the consciousness which derives from the monad is able to work on the lower planes of being. The consciousness side is spiritual electricity derived from the life-force of the monad. The material side is drawn by the magnetic attractions of this life force from the reservoirs of life-atoms of the corresponding principles in sevenfold nature.

We must also remember that the monad itself is an integral part of spiritual nature. It is an emanation of the root-consciousness of our universe, the cosmic self, and expresses its homogeneous energy through its immediate vehicle buddhi. So that we realize that just as we derive our physical energy indirectly from the sun, we derive our spiritual life indirectly through the monad from the spiritual energies of universal nature. It might be added here that the sun and all the planets are likewise sevenfold. And it is these inner principles of the solar system to which theosophy refers when it speaks of the inner worlds. It is in the relation of our seven principles to the seven principles of the sun and some of its planets that the explanation of this whole matter lies.

This subject is one of the most fascinating of all the theosophical teachings, involving the glorious destiny of mankind with its experiences and adventures in the inner worlds. But it is too wide-reaching and important to be dealt with adequately here.

Chapter 7 – An Ancient Basis for a New Psychology

The final test of any idea lies in its power of practical application to the difficulties of human life. Can it help us to develop and strengthen character? Will it lead us into more satisfactory human relationships, giving a greater understanding of our fellows with consequent capacity to help them? Will it give us a larger power to control environment and direct our own destiny? Theosophy answers that the knowledge it confers of the composite nature of man puts into our hands the practical means which enable us to do all these things. And thus it gives us the basis of a sound and workable psychology.

Psychology is one of the most popular subjects in our present-day world. Its uses and implications are evident even to the thoughtless. Such expressions as “the psychology of salesmanship,” “mass psychology,” etc., indicate how widely spread is the perception of the importance, for success in any field, of understanding the basic principles of human nature. And the use of every form of commercial or political slogan to create consumer or voter psychology illustrates this point.

If a person will study himself but for one day he will be amazed to see the wide range of moods, impulses, and character trends that his thoughts and actions will exhibit. And he will also be astonished to find how very little he knows about what goes on in his inner self. He will come to realize that he is almost completely at the mercy of these shifting currents of consciousness upon which he is more or less dangerously drifting – dangerous because of his ignorance of the source or the meaning of these contradictions within himself.

In fact, it is the almost universal discontinuity of human nature that shows how composite we are. And this rather highbrow statement means that the inability of the average person to hold one line of thought or feeling or willing for any considerable length of time indicates that there are different and opposing elements in his make-up. These prevent him from continuing in the same frame of mind or feeling for very long at one time. Obviously, then, until we master these opposing elements – bring them into harmony and learn to direct them – they will continue to run amuck in our lives. But to be able to master them, must we not begin by knowing what and where they are?

Then we go a step farther and examine the dual personality – how it works, how to understand it and direct its energies. For here in this dual personality is where the battle is waged in the evolution of the human being into something higher. It is in the struggle between the personal and the divine.

This struggle, as already pointed out in Chapter 5, centers in the dual personality. And this personality is dragged down now by its alliance with kama, and now uplifted and purified by its union with higher manas. H. P. Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy* gives us a very clear and complete analysis of this dual psychology in human nature. At one point she tells us of the

essential, inherent, characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind (higher Manas) and . . . the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalised owing to the superiority of the human brain, the Kama-tending or lower Manas. – p. 184

We must get a practical conception of these two elements in ourselves. We must learn how to recognize each element in its workings in our daily lives; how to cultivate the higher manas and how to transform its lower kama-manasic side into an instrument or vehicle for the use of the higher manas. Until we have this knowledge and can put it into self-conscious operation, we will be at the mercy, not only of our moods and weaknesses, but will also react injuriously to the moods and weaknesses of others.

Self-consciousness means self-recognition. It is the power of manas as the thinker to realize itself as a separate individual being, different in character and capacities from all other beings. From this follows a recognition of our relationship with others and to our environment – what these mean to us and how to react to them.

It is in this field of self-consciousness that free will in man first arises. Through his recognition of himself in relation to others and to his environment there comes home to him a realization of his power to develop himself and use his circumstances and relationships to further his own desires and aims. But it is here in this field of self-consciousness that the struggle of duality in his nature takes place. Recognizing these facts, man can apply them to the selfish personal ends of the animal nature below, or he can subject his personal will to the silent but ever present demands of the higher manas. Here at this point, as said, the struggle of human evolution concentrates.

As man progresses he learns to control and to dedicate the lower kamic nature to the service of the higher manas. If he fails to do this, he deteriorates. If he uses his self-conscious free will to injure others – or even only for his own personal ends – he makes the kind of karma that produces sufferings and failure. Yet, even so, through these sufferings and failures he slowly learns and develops. And at last through many lives the personality is brought to realize that only the alliance with higher manas can bring peace and happiness.

When we reach this point we first know true freedom. Knowledge of the spiritual psychology taught by theosophy convinces us that only when the will voluntarily subjects itself to the good of others does it become really free. A person acting entirely from selfish animal instinct is merely willful. And he suffers as a slave to fear and envy and every form of personal frustration. He only imagines himself to be free.

We may use an extreme case to illustrate this important point. Compare the man of civic virtue, who willingly lives in entire conformity with the equitable laws of his community, with the hunted existence of the habitual law-breaker. Most criminals pass the greater part of their lives in prison, while the more notorious ones who may escape imprisonment live under the heel of some petty criminal dictator who, like themselves, is generally short lived. But the man who obeys the ethical dictates of brotherhood and gladly adjusts his life to the laws of his country enjoys freedom of body, mind, and spirit.

Moreover, in exact proportion as we consciously discipline our free will by conforming to the good of others do we expand in consciousness. For this attitude means that we are turning the personality to the light and power of higher manas, and are thus opening our whole lower nature to the divine.

The reason why in following this course we are expanding our daily consciousness and opening our lower selves to the divine, lies in the nature of buddhi and atman. Atman, as already explained, is the ray of the cosmic universal self which dwells at the innermost center of each of us. It is identical in us all, being therefore the root of universal brotherhood. Atman is pure divine consciousness at one with the universal source from which it springs.

Buddhi is the divine vehicle of universal consciousness. It is emanated from atman. Buddhi therefore partakes of the universal nature of atman. Within buddhi lie all the universal potencies of atman – impersonal love of all creatures, genius in its highest and divine expression, intelligence in its most glorious and abstract power.

Thinking this over we see that when any personality strongly turns to higher manas and obeys its mandates of love and compassion and self-dedication to the universal and the real, it brings itself under the quickening power of the buddhic radiance. For this buddhic radiance broods like a divine presence over the nature and activities of higher manas. This radiance is always there. But most personalities are so saturated and obscured in a fog of selfishness and petty personal interests that the pure rays of the buddhic splendor cannot penetrate to their brain-minds.

But when, through deliberate self-discipline, these fogs are cleared away, then manas is free to ally itself with buddhi without hindrance. It is no longer preoccupied with the effort to control the distracting struggles of the kama-manas. When this happy time arrives, then the buddhic power of impersonal love, the stimulation of divine and creative intellect, will quicken all the lower man. Unsuspected faculties and powers will begin to unfold in the hitherto limited personality. It will grow almost daily in peace and happiness and the ability to help and bless those with whom it lives.

This is why virtue and unselfishness are truly and literally their own reward. And this too is why the practice of brotherhood and the spiritual discipline of the human will can lead to a magnificent expansion of consciousness. Such people, living under the glory of the buddhic splendor, are on the way to becoming gods in human form.

If the student will compare this system of truly spiritual psychology with the other systems in vogue today, he will see how much farther it goes in explaining himself to himself and in throwing light upon the complex world of people about him.

The following passage from G. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* will be illuminating in this connection. He tells us that the word psychology

is ordinarily used to signify in our days and in the seats of learning in the Occident a study more or less cloudy, mostly beclouded with doubts and hypotheses, actual guesswork, meaning little more than a kind of mental physiology, practically nothing more than the working of the brain-mind in the lowest astral-psychical apparatus of the human mind. But in our philosophy the word psychology is used to mean something very different, and of a nobler character: we might call it pneumatology, or the science or the study of spirit, because all the inner faculties and powers of man ultimately spring from his spirit. But as this word pneumatology is an unusual one and might cause confusion, let us retain the word psychology. We mean by it the study of the inner economy of man, the interconnection of his principles, so to speak, or centers of energy or force – what the man really is inwardly. – Chapter 12

Theosophy, then, confidently offers this system of psychology, knowing that the person who will apply it to himself and the problems of his daily life will find it supremely practical. It is not new. For it was founded ages ago on the always-existing and unchangeable laws of that universe of which human beings – their nature, problems, and evolution – are an inseparable part.

It is not experimental. For it was developed and tested, and made as nearly infallible as anything in this world can be, by “the seers and sages of the ages,” who, as G. de Purucker tells us, have

penetrated behind and beyond the veil of appearances; have gone behind that veil to the roots of things; have sent their souls deep into the womb of being and have brought back knowledge therefrom. Wonderful indeed are the systems of thought that these great seers and sages of the ages have formulated in human language, touching every phase of the human being; systems which are so symmetrical, so profound in philosophical and scientific reach, that every fact that exists in human psychology finds its proper niche, its proper pigeon-hole so to say, its exact lodgment, where it belongs. – *The Masters and the Path of Occultism*

The only thing new today in this ancient system is its “formulation in human language” with a few necessary adjustments to the modern point of view. It stands as it has always stood, upon its demonstration of cosmic law, revealing man as a sevenfold being like the universe around him; and pointing out as it has always done the only road to happiness – harmony in thought and word and deed with the universal heart of impersonal love in which spiritually we all live and move and have our being.

## Quotes from the Masters of Wisdom

The recognition of the higher phases of man's being on this planet is not to be attained by mere acquirement of knowledge. Volumes of the most perfectly constructed information cannot reveal to man life in the higher regions. One has to get a knowledge of spiritual facts by personal experience and from actual observation . . . We tell you what we know, for we are made to learn it through personal experience . . . There comes a moment in the life of an adept, when the hardships he has passed through are a thousandfold rewarded. In order to acquire further knowledge, he has no more to go through a minute and slow process of investigation and comparison of various objects, but is accorded an instantaneous, implicit insight into every first truth . . . The adept sees and feels and lives in the very source of all fundamental truths – the Universal Spiritual Essence of Nature . . . – Master K.H., *The Mahatma Letters*, 2nd edition, pp. 64, 131, 241

. . . For the clearer comprehension of the extremely abstruse and at first incomprehensible theories of our occult doctrine, never allow the serenity of your mind to be disturbed during your hours of literary labour, nor before you set to work. It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world. Otherwise you would vainly seek those visions, those flashes of sudden light . . . which alone can bring the truth before the eye of the soul. – Master K.H., *The Mahatma Letters*, 2nd edition, p. 64

. . . It was never the intention of the Occultists really to conceal what they had been writing from the earnest determined students, but rather to lock up their information for safety-sake, in a secure safe-box, the key to which is – intuition. The degree of diligence and zeal with which the hidden meaning is sought by the student, is generally the test – how far he is entitled to the possession of the so buried treasure. – Master K.H., *The Mahatma Letters*, 2nd. edition, p. 279

These subjects (metaphysical) are only partly for understanding. A higher faculty belonging to the higher life must see, and it is truly impossible to force it upon one's understanding – merely in words. One must see with his spiritual eye, hear with his Dharmakayic ear, feel with the sensation of his Ashta-vijnana (spiritual "I") before he can comprehend this doctrine fully . . . . – Master K.H., *The Mahatma Letters*, 2nd edition, p. 200

## Quotes from H. P. Blavatsky

The work now submitted to public judgment is the fruit of a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern adepts and study of their science . . . .When, years ago, we first traveled over the East . . . .we came into contact with certain men, endowed with such mysterious powers and such profound knowledge that we may truly designate them as the sages of the Orient. To their instructions we lent a ready ear. – H.P.B., *Isis Unveiled*, I, p. vi

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system . . . .The facts . . .have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain . . . .The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there . . . .The [esoteric] system . . .is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals . . . .It is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify . . .the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity . . . .For long ages, the ‘Wise Men’ of the Fifth Race . . .had passed their lives in learning . . .by checking, testing, and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions of great adepts, *i.e.*, men who have developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organisations to the utmost degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions – so obtained as to stand as independent evidence – of other adepts, and by centuries of experience. – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 272-273

. . .a good book which gives people food for thought, which strengthens and clears their minds, and enables them to grasp truths which they have dimly felt but could not formulate – we hold that such a book does a real, substantial good. – H.P.B., *The Key to Theosophy*, 1889, p. 249

The esoteric doctrine . . .teaches, like Buddhism and Brahmanism, and even the persecuted *Kabala*, that the one infinite and unknown Essence exists from all eternity, and in regular and harmonious successions is either passive or active. In the poetical phraseology of Manu, these conditions are called the ‘day’ and the ‘night’ of Brahma. The latter is either ‘awake’ or ‘asleep.’ . . . . Upon inaugurating an active period . . .an expansion of this Divine essence, from within outwardly, occurs in obedience to eternal and immutable law, and the phenomenal or visible universe is the ultimate result of the long chain of cosmical forces thus progressively set in motion. In like manner, when the passive condition is resumed, a contraction of the Divine essence takes place, and the previous work of creation is gradually and progressively undone. The visible universe becomes disintegrated, its material dispersed; and ‘darkness’, solitary and alone, broods once more over the face of the ‘deep.’ To use a metaphor which will convey the idea still more clearly, an outbreathing of the ‘unknown essence’ produces the world; and an inhalation causes it to disappear. This process has been going on from all eternity, and our present universe is but one of an infinite series which had no beginning and will have no end. – H.P.B., *Isis Unveiled*, I, pp. 264-265

The aim of this work may be thus stated: to show that Nature is not ‘a fortuitous concurrence of atoms,’ and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring; finally, to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization.” – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. vii-viii

It is perhaps desirable to state unequivocally that the teachings, however fragmentary and incomplete, contained in these volumes [of *The Secret Doctrine*], belong neither to the Hindu, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldaean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these. Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original element, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed, and become materialized. – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. viii

The Secret Doctrine establishes three fundamental propositions: –

(a) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude . . . .It is beyond the range and reach of thought . . . .There is one absolute Reality which antecedes all manifested, conditioned, being. This Infinite and Eternal Cause . . .is the rootless root of ‘all that was, is, or ever shall be.’ . . .

Further, the Secret Doctrine affirms: –

(b) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically ‘the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing’ . . . This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe. Moreover, the Secret Doctrine teaches: –

(c) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul – a spark of the former – through the Cycle of Incarnation (or ‘Necessity’) in accordance with Cyclic and karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle, – or the OVER-SOUL – has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas [Mind], from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations . . . – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 14-17

Yes, ‘our destiny is written in our stars!’ Only, the closer the union between the mortal reflection MAN and his celestial PROTOTYPE, the less dangerous the external conditions and subsequent reincarnations – which neither Buddhas nor Christs can escape. This is not superstition, least of all is it Fatalism . . .

Those who believe in Karma have to believe in destiny, which, from birth to death, every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his cobweb; and this destiny is guided either by the heavenly voice of the invisible prototype outside of us, or by our more intimate astral, or inner man, who is but too often the evil genius of the embodied entity called man. Both of these lead on the outward man, but one of them must prevail; and from the very beginning of the invisible affray the stern and implacable law of compensation steps in and takes its course, faithfully following the fluctuations. When the last strand is woven, and man is seemingly enwrapped in the network of his own doing, then he finds himself completely under the empire of this self-made destiny. It then either fixes him like the inert shell against the immovable rock, or carries him away like a feather in a whirlwind raised by his own actions, and this is – KARMA . . .”

Intimately, or rather indissolubly, connected with Karma . . . is the law of re-birth, or of the reincarnation of the same spiritual individuality in a long, almost interminable, series of personalities. The latter are like the various costumes and characters played by the same actor, with each of which that actor identifies himself and is identified by the public, for the space of a few hours. The inner, or real man, who personates those characters, knows the whole time that he is Hamlet for the brief space of a few acts, which represent, however, on the plane of human illusion the whole life of Hamlet. And he knows that he was, the night before, King Lear, the transformation in his turn of Othello of a still earlier preceding night; but the outer, visible character is supposed to be ignorant of the fact. In actual life that ignorance is, unfortunately, but too real. Nevertheless, the permanent individuality is fully aware of the fact, though, through the atrophy of the ‘spiritual’ eye in the physical body, that knowledge is unable to impress itself on the consciousness of the false personality . . . – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 639 & II, p. 306

Just as milliards of bright sparks dance on the waters of an ocean above which one and the same moon is shining, so our evanescent personalities – the illusive envelopes of the immortal MONAD-EGO – twinkle and dance on the waves of Maya. They last and appear, as the thousands of sparks produced by the moonbeams, only so long as the Queen of the Night radiates her luster on the running waters of life: the period of a Manvantara; and then they disappear, the beams – symbols of our eternal Spiritual Egos – alone surviving, re-merged in, and being, as they were before, one with the Mother-Source. – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 237

For our *Ego* lives its own separate life within its prison of clay whenever it becomes free from the trammels of matter, i.e., during the sleep of the physical man. This Ego it is which is the actor, the real man, the true human self.

But the physical man cannot feel or be conscious during dreams; for the personality, the outer man with its brain and thinking apparatus, are paralyzed more or less completely. – H.P.B., “Dreams,” 1888, *Collected Writings*, Vol. X, p. 247

Our examination of the multitudinous religious faiths that mankind, early and late, have professed, most assuredly indicates that they have all been derived from one primitive source. It would seem as if they were all but different modes of expressing the yearning of the imprisoned soul for intercourse with supernal spheres. As the white ray of light is decomposed by the prism into the various colors of the solar spectrum, so the beam of divine truth, in passing through the three-sided prism of man’s nature, has been broken up into vari-colored fragments called RELIGIONS . . . Combined, their aggregate represents one eternal truth; separate, they are but shades of human error and the signs of imperfection . . . – H.P.B., *Isis Unveiled*, II, p. 639

‘. . .the coming of Christ,’ means the presence of Christos in a regenerated world, and not at all the actual coming in body of ‘Christ’ Jesus; . . .this Christ is to be sought neither in the wilderness nor ‘in the inner chambers,’ nor in the sanctuary of any temple or church built by man; for Christ – the true esoteric SAVIOUR – is no man, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions, and buried deep in the ‘sepulchre’ of his sinful flesh; he who has the strength to roll back the stone of matter from the door of his own *inner* sanctuary, he *has the risen Christ in him*. The ‘Son of Man’ is no child of the bond-woman – flesh, but verily of the free-woman – Spirit, the child of man’s own deeds, and the fruit of his own spiritual labour. – H.P.B., “The Esoteric Character of the Gospels,” 1887, *Collected Writings*, Vol. VIII, p. 173

Nature gives up her innermost secrets and imparts *true wisdom* only to him who seeks truth for its own sake, and who craves for knowledge in order to confer benefits on others, not on his own unimportant personality. – H.P.B., 1890, *Collected Writings*, Vol. XII, p. 315. 90

There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind – but yet a road; and it leads to the Heart of the Universe. I can tell you how to find Those who will show you the secret gateway that leads inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte for evermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer. There is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through. There is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards, there is reward past all telling: the power to bless and save humanity. For those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come. – H.P.B., 1891, *Collected Writings*, Vol. XIII, p. 219

The work now submitted to public judgment is the fruit of a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern adepts and study of their science . . . When, years ago, we first traveled over the East . . . we came into contact with certain men, endowed with such mysterious powers and such profound knowledge that we may truly designate them as the sages of the Orient. To their instructions we lent a ready ear. – H.P.B., *Isis Unveiled*, I, p. vi

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system . . . The facts . . . have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain . . . The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there . . . The [esoteric] system . . . is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals . . . It is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify . . . the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity . . . For long ages, the ‘Wise Men’ of the Fifth Race . . . had passed their lives in learning . . . by checking, testing, and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions of great adepts, i.e., men who have developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organisations to the utmost degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions – so obtained as to stand as independent evidence – of other adepts, and by centuries of experience. – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 272-273

. . . a good book which gives people food for thought, which strengthens and clears their minds, and enables them to grasp truths which they have dimly felt but could not formulate – we hold that such a book does a real, substantial good. – H.P.B., *The Key to Theosophy*, 1889, p. 249

The esoteric doctrine . . . teaches, like Buddhism and Brahmanism, and even the persecuted Kabala , that the one infinite and unknown Essence exists from all eternity, and in regular and harmonious successions is either passive or active. In the poetical phraseology of Manu, these conditions are called the ‘day’ and the ‘night’ of Brahma. The latter is either ‘awake’ or ‘asleep.’ . . . Upon inaugurating an active period . . . an expansion of this Divine essence, from within outwardly, occurs in obedience to eternal and immutable law, and the phenomenal or visible universe is the ultimate result of the long chain of cosmical forces thus progressively set in motion. In like manner, when the passive condition is resumed, a contraction of the Divine essence takes place, and the previous work of creation is gradually and progressively undone. The visible universe becomes disintegrated, its material dispersed; and ‘darkness’, solitary and alone, broods once more over the face of the ‘deep.’ To use a metaphor which will convey the idea still more clearly, an outbreathing of the ‘unknown essence’ produces the world; and an inhalation causes it to disappear. This process has been going on from all eternity, and our present universe is but one of an infinite series which had no beginning and will have no end. – H.P.B., *Isis Unveiled*, I, pp. 264-265

The aim of this work may be thus stated: to show that Nature is not ‘a fortuitous concurrence of atoms,’ and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring; finally, to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization. – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. vii-viii

It is perhaps desirable to state unequivocally that the teachings, however fragmentary and incomplete, contained in these volumes [of *The Secret Doctrine*], belong neither to the Hindu, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldaean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these. Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original element, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed, and become materialized. – H.P.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. viii

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There was a time, aeons before the Brahmans became a caste, or even the Upanishads were written, when there was on earth but one “lip”, one religion and one science, namely, the speech of the gods, the Wisdom-Religion and Truth. This was before the fair fields of the latter, overrun by nations of many languages, became overgrown with the weeds of intentional deception, and national creeds invented by ambition, cruelty and selfishness, broke the one sacred Truth into thousands of fragments. – H.P.B., *Theosophical Glossary*, p. 354

No one styling himself a “scholar,” in whatever department of exact science, 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.B., *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 23

The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real.  
Let the Disciple slay the Slayer. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 1

When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the ONE — the inner sound which kills the outer. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 2

Before the soul can see, the Harmony within must be attained, and fleshy eyes be rendered blind to all illusion.

Before the Soul can hear, the image (man) has to become as deaf to roarings as to whispers, to cries of bellowing elephants as to the silvery buzzing of the golden fire-fly. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 2

This earth, O ignorant Disciple, is but the dismal entrance leading to the twilight that precedes the valley of true light — that light which no wind can extinguish, that light which burns without a wick or fuel. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 4

The WISE ONES tarry not in pleasure-grounds of senses.  
The WISE ONES heed not the sweet-tongued voices of illusion. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 7

Before thou set'st thy foot upon the ladder's upper rung, the ladder of the mystic sounds, thou hast to hear the voice of thy *inner* GOD in seven manners. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 9

Heaven's dew-drop glittering in the morn's first sun-beam within the bosom of the lotus, when dropped on earth becomes a piece of clay; behold, the pearl is now a speck of mire. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 11

The Self of matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet. One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 12

Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 12

Let not the fierce Sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer's eye.

But let each burning human tear drop on thy heart and there remain, nor ever brush it off, until the pain that caused it is removed. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 13

Desire nothing. Chafe not at Karma, nor at Nature's changeless laws. But struggle only with the personal, the transitory, the evanescent and the perishable.

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 14

There is but one road to the Path; at its very end alone the "Voice of the Silence" can be heard. The ladder by which the candidate ascends is formed of rungs of suffering and pain; these can be silenced only by the voice of virtue. Woe, then, to thee, Disciple, if there is one single vice thou hast not left behind. For then the ladder will give way and overthrow thee; its foot rests in the deep mire of thy sins and failings, and ere thou canst attempt to cross this wide abyss of matter thou hast to lave thy feet in Waters of Renunciation. Beware lest thou should'st set a foot still soiled upon the ladder's lowest rung. Woe unto him who dares pollute one rung with miry feet. The foul and viscous mud will dry, become tenacious, then glue his feet unto the spot, and like a bird caught in the wily fowler's lime, he will be stayed from further progress. His vices will take shape and drag him down. His sins will raise their voices like as the jackal's laugh and sob after the sun goes down; his thoughts become an army, and bear him off a captive slave.

Kill thy desires, Lanoo, make thy vices impotent, ere the first step is taken on the solemn journey. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 15-16

One single thought about the past that thou hast left behind, will drag thee down and thou wilt have to start the climb anew. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 16-17

The light from the ONE Master, the one unfading golden light of Spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the disciple from the very first. Its rays thread through the thick dark clouds of matter. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 17-18

Where is thy individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean, the ever-present Ray become the all and the eternal radiance. H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 20

Behold! thou hast become the light, thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art THYSELF the object of thy search: the VOICE unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one, the

#### VOICE OF THE SILENCE

H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 21-22

And now, O Teacher of Compassion, point thou the way to other men. Behold, all those who knocking for admission, await in ignorance and darkness, to see the gate of the Sweet Law flung open! – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 23

The Paths are two; the great Perfections three; six are the Virtues that transform the body into the Tree of Knowledge. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 23

O Teacher, what shall I do to reach to Wisdom?

O Wise one, what, to gain perfection?

Search for the Paths. But, O Lanoo, be of clean heart before thou startest on thy journey. Before thou takest thy first step learn to discern the real from the false, the ever-fleeting from the everlasting. Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-Wisdom, the "Eye" from the "Heart" doctrine. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 25

The seeds of Wisdom cannot sprout and grow in airless space. To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in *Maya*'s realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the changeless SAT, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions.

For mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul.

Shun ignorance, and likewise shun illusion. Avert thy face from world deceptions: mistrust thy senses; they are false. But within thy body – the shrine of thy sensations – seek in the Impersonal for the “eternal man”; and having sought him out, look inward: thou art Buddha. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 25-6

False learning is rejected by the Wise, and scattered to the Winds by the good Law. Its wheel revolves for all, the humble and the proud. The “Doctrine of the Eye” is for the crowd, the “Doctrine of the Heart,” for the elect. The first repeat in pride: “Behold, I know,” the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low confess, “thus have I heard”. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 27

If thou art told that to gain liberation thou hast to hate thy mother and disregard thy son; to disavow thy father and call him “householder”; for man and beast all pity to renounce — tell them their tongue is false. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 28

The Lamp burns bright when wick and oil are clean. To make them clean a cleaner is required. The flame feels not the process of the cleaning. “The branches of a tree are shaken by the wind; the trunk remains unmoved.” – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 29

Sow kindly acts and thou shalt reap their fruition. Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 31

To reach Nirvâna one must reach Self-Knowledge, and Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child.

Have patience, Candidate, as one who fears no failure, courts no success. Fix thy Soul's gaze upon the star whose ray thou art, the flaming star that shines within the lightless depths of ever-being, the boundless fields of the Unknown.

Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure. Thy shadows live and vanish; that which in thee shall live for ever, that which in thee knows, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeing life: it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 31

To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 33

A harsh word uttered in past lives, is not destroyed but ever comes again. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 34

Be like the Ocean which receives all streams and rivers. The Ocean's mighty calm remains unmoved; it feels them not.

Restrain by thy Divine thy lower Self.

Restrain by the Eternal the Divine.

Aye, great is he, who is the slayer of desire.

Still greater he, in whom the Self Divine has slain the very knowledge of desire.

Guard thou the Lower lest it soil the Higher.

The way to final freedom is within thy self. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, pp. 38-39

Prepare thyself, for thou wilt have to travel on alone. The Teacher can but point the way. The Path is one for all, the means to reach the goal must vary with the Pilgrims. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 45

Be of good cheer, Disciple; bear in mind the golden rule. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 46

Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal. For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in SELF. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 49

Thou shalt not separate thy being from BEING, and the rest, but merge the Ocean in the drop, the drop within the Ocean.

So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 49

“Hast thou attuned thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind?” – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 50

Armed with the key of Charity, of love and tender mercy, thou art secure before the gate of Dāna, the gate that standeth at the entrance of the path. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 52

Fear, O disciple, kills the will and stays all action. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 53

The more thou dost advance, the more thy feet pitfalls will meet. The path that leadeth on, is lighted by one fire — the light of daring, burning in the heart. The more one dares, the more he shall obtain. The more he fears, the more that light shall pale — and that alone can guide. For as the lingering sunbeam, that on the top of some tall mountain shines, is followed by black night when out it fades, so is heart-light. When out it goes, a dark and threatening shade will fall from thine own heart upon the path, and root thy feet in terror to the spot.

Beware, disciple, of that lethal shade. No light that shines from Spirit can dispel the darkness of the nether Soul, unless all selfish thought has fled therefrom, and that the pilgrim saith: “I have renounced this passing frame; I have destroyed the cause: the shadows cast can, as effects, no longer be.” – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 54

All is impermanent in man except the pure bright essence of Alaya. Man is its crystal ray; a beam of light immaculate within, a form of clay material upon the lower surface. That beam is thy life-guide and thy true Self, the Watcher and the silent Thinker, the victim of thy lower Self. Thy Soul cannot be hurt but through thy erring body; control and master both, and thou art safe when crossing to the nearing “Gate of Balance.” – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 57

Thy Soul-gaze centre on the One Pure Light, the Light that is free from affection, and use thy golden Key. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 58

If thou would’st have that stream of hard-earn’d knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters, thou should’st not leave it to become a stagnant pond. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 66

Alas! when once thou hast become like the fix’d star in highest heaven, that bright celestial orb must shine from out the spatial depths for all — save for itself; give light to all, but take from none. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 67

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. – H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 70

Hark! . . . from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, ALL NATURE’S wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim: . . .

A new Arhan is born . . . .

H.P.B., *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 72

Peace to all beings.

## Quotes from William Q. Judge

The Past! What is it? Nothing. Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as now you exist, lies all the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: "Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge." Regret is productive only of error. I care not what I was, or what any one was. I only look for what I am each moment. For as each moment is and at once is not, it must follow that if we think of the past we forget the present, and while we forget, the moments fly by us, making more past. Then regret nothing, not even the greatest follies of your life, for they are gone, and you are to work in the present which is both past and future at once. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 25

"In him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind with the Supreme Being, what room can there be for delusion and what room for sorrow when he reflects upon the unity of spirit?" – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 25

Thought has a self-reproductive power, and when the mind is held steadily to one idea it becomes colored by it, and, as we may say, all the correlates of that thought arise within the mind. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 41

The darkness and the desolation are sure to be ours, but it is only illusionary. Is not the Self pure, bright, bodiless, and free – and art thou not that? The daily waking life is but penance and the trial of the body, so that it too may thereby acquire the right condition. In dreams we see the truth and taste the joys of heaven. In waking life it is ours to gradually distill that dew into our normal consciousness. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 50

Masters could give now all the light and knowledge needed, but there is too much darkness that would swallow up all the light, except for a few bright souls, and then a greater darkness would come on. Many of us could not grasp nor understand all that might be given, and to us would result a danger and new difficulty for other lives, to be worked out in pain and sorrow. It is from kindness and love that Masters do not bind us with the electric flash of truth complete. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, pp. 8-9

It is highly important that no replies should be made to attacks. Get the people to devote themselves to work and to ignoring attacks. The opposing forces strain every nerve to irritate some or all of us so that we may reply in irritation and precipitate more follies. Consider solely how to improve old work, get up new work and infuse energy into work. Otherwise the beneficent influences intended for all F.T.S. will be nullified. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 31

"Having received, freely give; having once devoted your life in thought, to the great stream of energy in which elementals and souls alike are carried – and which causes the pulse beat of our hearts – you can never claim it back again." – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 34

As there is no hurry, it is easy to divest the mind of anxiety and the irritation arising from hurry.  
William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 43.

You are right in thinking that the essential principles of Theosophy are often stated without the use of that name, for it is the only universal fundamental system which underlies the religions of every age. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 43

Too much, too much, trying to force harmony. Harmony comes from a balancing of diversities, and discord from any effort to make harmony by force . . . – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 79

It is a contest of smiles if we really know our business . . . Never be afraid, never be sorry, and cut all doubts with the sword of knowledge. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 82

The way gets clearer as we go on, but as we get clearer we get less anxious as to the way ahead. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 83

Remember that your truest advisor is to be found, and constantly sought, within yourself. Only by experience can you learn to know its voice from that of natural instinct or mere logic, and strengthen this power. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 76

The future then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment so we shift the future up or down for good or ill; for the future being only a word for the present – not yet come – we have to see to the present more than all. If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future; if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, pp. 6-7

We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and the good from other spheres from beyond the earth. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 9

Knowledge must be carefully obtained with a pure Motive. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 18

The great struggle must be to open up my outer self, that my higher being may shine through, for I know that in my heart the God sits patient, and that his pure rays are merely veiled from me by the many strivings and illusions that I bring on outwardly. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 24

. . . cast no one out of your heart. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 28

Do not point to particular instances of [another's] own failure but detail your own inner experience. It will do [you] good. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 31

The very fact that you suffer so much is objective evidence of progress . . . – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 45

. . . love and trust are the only weapons that can overcome the real enemies against which the true theosophist must fight. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 48

The very first step in true mysticism and true occultism is to try and apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, without which the very highest progress in the practice of magic turns to ashes in the mouth. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, pp. 50-51

We all differ and must agree to disagree, for it is only by balancing contrary things that equilibrium (harmony) is obtained. Harmony does not come through likeness. If people will only let each other alone and go about their own business quietly all will be well . . . It is one's duty to try and find one's own duty and not to get into the duty of another. And in this it is of the highest importance that we should detach our minds (as well as our tongues) from the duties and acts of others whenever those are outside of our own. If you can find this fine line of action and inaction you will have made great progress. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 71

There is never any need to worry. The good law looks out for all things, and all we have to do is our duty as it comes along from day to day. Nothing is gained by worrying about matters and about the way people do not respond. In the first place you do not alter people, and in the second, by being anxious as to things, you put an occult obstacle in the way of what you want done. It is better to acquire a lot of what is called carelessness by the world, but is in reality a calm reliance on the law, and a doing of one's own duty, satisfied that the results must be right, no matter what they may be. Think that over, and try to make it a part of your inner mind that it is no use to worry; that things will be all right, no matter what comes, and that you are resolved to do what you see before you, and trust to Karma for all the rest. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, pp. 77-78

The confusion in the different directions given by different writers arises from the fact that in all these matters one must experiment and see what is best for oneself, consequently each has given his own result. There is no fixed and

general rule that each must follow. And so my opinion would only give you my individual experience. – William Q. Judge, *Practical Occultism*, p. 73

We should be wise as serpents. Wisdom does not consist in throwing the object of our heart's gratitude in the faces of those who have no similar feeling, for when we do that it may easily result that personal considerations will nullify our efforts for the good of those we address. – William Q. Judge, *Lucifer*, Vol. XIII, December 1893, p. 303

Thought has a self-reproductive power, and when the mind is held steadily to one idea it becomes colored by it, and, as we may say, all the correlates of that thought arise within the mind. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 41

The future then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment so we shift the future up or down for good or ill; for the future being only a word for the present – not yet come – we have to see to the present more than all. If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future, if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 7

. . .if the Theosophical Society survives and lives true to its mission, to its original impulses, through the next hundred years – tell me, I say, if I go too far in asserting that this earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now!

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

William Q. Judge, *The Path*, June 1891

In my experience with the Theosophical Society I have noticed a disposition on the part of some members to often object to the methods of others or to their plans on the ground that they are unwise, or not suitable, or what not. These objections are not put in a spirit of discord, but more often arise merely from a want of knowledge of the working of the laws which govern our efforts.

H.P.B. always said – following the rules laid down by high teachers – that no proposal for theosophical work should be rejected or opposed provided the proposer has the sincere motive of doing good to the movement and to his fellows. Of course that does not mean that distinctly bad or pernicious purposes are to be forwarded . . . If we attend strictly to our own duty all will act in harmony, for the duty of another is dangerous for us. Therefore if any member proposes to spread the doctrines of theosophy in a way that seems wise to him, wish him success even if his method be one that would not commend itself to you for your own guidance. – William Q. Judge, *The Path*, August 1891

In the Key to Theosophy, in the "Conclusion," H.P.B. again refers to . . . [dogmatism in Theosophy] and expresses the hope that the Society might not, after her death, become dogmatic or crystallize on some phase of thought or philosophy, but that it might remain free and open, with its members wise and unselfish. And in all her writings and remarks, privately or publicly, she constantly reiterated this idea . . . If our effort is to succeed, we must avoid dogmatism in theosophy as much as anything else, for the moment we dogmatise and insist on our construction of theosophy, that moment we lose sight of Universal Brotherhood and sow the seeds of future trouble. – William Q. Judge, *The Path*, January 1892

Theosophists! let us consult together. Let us survey the army, the field of battle, and the fighters. Let us examine our ways and our speech, so that we may know what we are doing in this great affray which may last for ages and in which every act has a future. What do we see? A Theosophical Society struggling as a whole against the world . . . It has its karma like any other body, for it is a living thing and not a mere paper organization; and with that karma is also woven the karma of the units composing it.

How does it live and grow? Not alone by study and work, but by propriety of method of work; by due attention paid by the members to thought and speech in their theosophic promulgations. Wise workers like wise generals, survey the field now and then to see if their methods are good or bad, even though fully convinced of the nobility and righteousness of their cause; they trust not only to the virtue of their aim and work, but attend to any defects now

and then indicated by the assaults of the enemy; they listen to warnings of those who see or think they see errors of omission and commission. Let us all do this. – William Q. Judge, *Lucifer*, Vol. XIII, December 1893, pp. 303-308

Be charitable enough to remember that the theosophist is human, and perhaps has to struggle all the harder with our common failings just because he has entered on the battle with the lower nature. – William Q. Judge, *The Path*, July 1893

Let not sentimentality make you fear to bring forward what you believe to be theosophy, even though some persons threaten to leave the ranks because their own fad seems endangered by the strength of your theory; but beware you do not mistake self-assertion in yourself for the strength of your theories. – William Q. Judge, *The Path*, July 1893

There is a very great difference between the Theosophical Movement and any Theosophical Society. The Movement is moral, ethical, spiritual, universal, invisible save in effect, and continuous. A Society formed for Theosophical work is a visible organization, an effect, a machine for conserving energy and putting it to use; it is not nor can it be universal, nor is it continuous. Organized Theosophical bodies are made by men for their better cooperation, but, being mere outer shells, they must change from time to time as human defects come out, as the times change, and as the great underlying spiritual movement compels such alterations.

The Theosophical Movement being continuous, it is to be found in all times and in all nations. Wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas, as opposed to forms and dogmatism, have been promulgated, there the great movement is to be discerned . . . One can therefore see that to worship an organization, even though it be the beloved Theosophical one, is to fall down before Form, and to become the slave once more of that dogmatism which our portion of the Theosophical Movement, the T.S., was meant to overthrow. – William Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. X, August 1895, pp.137-138

The main underlying effort of the work of the members of the Society should be to furnish a real and philosophical basis for ethics, seeing that the ancient ethics re-promulgated by Jesus are not practised by the nations who profess them. In this respect the work of the Society in Christian lands is ever tending to bring forth a real Christianity, and not to oppose it. Opposition to mere dogma is not opposition to truth, and hence the Society is a builder up and not a mere destroyer of old beliefs. – William Q. Judge, *The T.S. and Its Basis*

The possibility of failure of the Theosophical Society lies in the following:

Dogmatism. That is, the definite statement by the Society as a body that this or that is an absolute teaching or doctrine of the Society. This has been the ruin of every organization of the kind so far formed, and this time it must be carefully guarded against . . .

Materialism. By this is meant a forgetfulness, on the part of the members, of their Spiritual Selves.  
– William Q. Judge, *Suggestions to Branches*

THEOSOPHY is that ocean of knowledge which spreads from shore to shore of the evolution of sentient beings; unfathomable in its deepest parts, it gives the greatest minds their fullest scope, yet, shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child. It is wisdom about God for those who believe that he is all things and in all, and wisdom about nature for the man who accepts the statement found in the Christian Bible that God cannot be measured or discovered, and that darkness is around his pavilion. Although it contains by derivation the name God and thus may seem at first sight to embrace religion alone, it does not neglect science, for it is the science of sciences and therefore has been called the wisdom religion. For no science is complete which leaves out any department of nature, whether visible or invisible, and that religion which, depending solely on an assumed revelation, turns away from things and the laws which govern them is nothing but a delusion, a foe to progress, an obstacle in the way of man's advancement toward happiness. Embracing both the scientific and the religious, Theosophy is a scientific religion and a religious science.

It is not belief or dogma formulated or invented by man, but is a knowledge of the laws which govern the evolution of the physical, astral, psychical, and intellectual constituents of nature and of man. The religion of the day is but a series of dogmas man-made and with no scientific foundation for promulgated ethics; while our science as yet ignores the unseen, and failing to admit the existence of a complete set of inner faculties of perception in man, it is cut off from the immense and real field of experience which lies within the visible and tangible worlds. But Theosophy knows that the whole is constituted of the visible and the invisible, and perceiving outer things and

objects to be but transitory it grasps the facts of nature, both without and within. It is therefore complete in itself and sees no unsolvable mystery anywhere; it throws the word coincidence out of its vocabulary and hails the reign of law in everything and every circumstance. – William Q. Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, pp. 1-2

The confusion in the different directions given by different writers arises from the fact that in all these matters one must experiment and see what is best for oneself, consequently each has given his own result. There is no fixed and general rule that each must follow. And so my opinion would only give you my individual experience. – William Q. Judge, *Practical Occultism*, p. 73

“In him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind with the Supreme Being, what room can there be for delusion and what room for sorrow when he reflects upon the unity of spirit?” – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 25

Thought has a self-reproductive power, and when the mind is held steadily to one idea it becomes colored by it, and, as we may say, all the correlates of that thought arise within the mind. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 41

The darkness and the desolation are sure to be ours, but it is only illusionary. Is not the Self pure, bright, bodiless, and free – and art thou not that? The daily waking life is but penance and the trial of the body, so that it too may thereby acquire the right condition. In dreams we see the truth and taste the joys of heaven. In waking life it is ours to gradually distill that dew into our normal consciousness. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, I, p. 50

Masters could give now all the light and knowledge needed, but there is too much darkness that would swallow up all the light, except for a few bright souls, and then a greater darkness would come on. Many of us could not grasp or understand all that might be given, and to us would result a danger and new difficulty for other lives, to be worked out in pain and sorrow. It is from kindness and love that Masters do not bind us with the electric flash of truth complete. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 9

We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and the good from other spheres from beyond the earth. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 9

The great struggle must be to open up my outer self, that my higher being may shine through, for I know that in my heart the God sits patient, and that his pure rays are merely veiled from me by the many strivings and illusions that I bring on outwardly.  
William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 24

. . . cast no one out of your heart. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 28

It is highly important that no replies should be made to attacks. Get the people to devote themselves to work and to ignoring attacks. The opposing forces strain every nerve to irritate some or all of us so that we may reply in irritation and precipitate more follies. Consider solely how to improve old work, get up new work and infuse energy into work. Otherwise the beneficent influences intended for all F.T.S. will be nullified. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 31

Do not point to particular instances of [another's] own failure but detail your own inner experience. It will do [another] good. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 31

Having received, freely give; having once devoted your life in thought, to the great stream of energy in which elementals and souls alike are carried – and which causes the pulse beat of our hearts – you can never claim it back again. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 34

As there is no hurry, it is easy to divest the mind of anxiety and the irritation arising from hurry. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 43

You are right in thinking that the essential principles of Theosophy are often stated without the use of that name, for it is the only universal fundamental system which underlies the religions of every age. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 43

The very fact that you suffer so much is objective evidence of progress . . . – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, p. 45

The very first step in true mysticism and true occultism is to try and apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, without which the very highest progress in the practice of magic turns to ashes in the mouth. – William Q. Judge, *Letters That Have Helped Me*, II, pp. 50-51

“We are all bound up together in one coil of Karma and should ever strive by good acts, good thoughts and high aspirations, to lift a little of the world’s heavy Karma, of which our own is a part. Indeed, no man has any Karma of his own unshared by others; we share each one in the common Karma, and the sooner we perceive this and act accordingly the better it will be for us and for the world.” – William Q. Judge, *Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. II, p. 245

## Quotes from G. de Purucker

The cycle of the year among the ancient peoples was always considered to be a symbol of the life of man or, indeed, of the life of the universe. Birth at the Winter Solstice, the beginning of the year; adolescence – at the Spring Equinox; adulthood, full-blown strength and power, at the Summer Solstice, representing a period of initiation when the Great Renunciation is made: and then closing with the Autumnal Equinox, the period of the Great Passing. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, p. 3

Initiation is death, death of the lower part of the man . . . – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, p. 6

Initiation is the becoming, by self-conscious experience, temporarily at one with other worlds and planes, and the various degrees of initiation mark the various stages of advancement or of ability to do this. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, p. 18

Open your heart more and more. Remember the divinity at your inmost, the inmost divinity of you, the heart of you, the core of you. Love others for these are yourself . . . Turn your backs on the Pit, and turn your faces to the Sun! - . de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, p. 19

The initiation periods do not take place by hap or by hazard, nor are they governed by the mere wish or will of human beings, however grand, however sublime, but take place strictly according to the working of the spiritual cosmic magnetisms of the universe. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, pp. 30-31

You will remember that the mystic year contains four seasonal points, and that these four seasons in their cycle are symbolic of the four chief events of progress of initiation: first, that of the Winter Solstice, which event is also called the Great Birth, when the aspirant brings to birth the god within him and for a time at least becomes temporarily at one therewith in consciousness and in feeling; a birth which indeed is the birth of the inner Buddha born of the spiritual solar splendor, or the birth of the mystic Christos.

Then, second, comes the period or event of esoteric adolescence at the Spring Equinox, when in the full flush of the victory gained at the Winter Solstice, and with the marvelous inner strength and power that come to one who has thus achieved, the aspirant enters upon the greatest temptation, except one, known to human beings, and prevails; and this event may be called the Great Temptation. With this initiation at the time of the Spring Equinox the Avatàras are particularly concerned, forming as they do one of the lines of activity – a god-line, in fact – of the Hierarchy of Compassion and Splendor, although the Avatàras are outside the circle of temptation except insofar as concerns the human portion of them.

Then, third, comes the event of the Summer Solstice, at which time the neophyte or aspirant must undergo, and successfully prevail over, the greatest temptation known to man just referred to; . . . he dedicates his life to the service of the world . . . For this reason the initiation at this season is called the Great Renunciation.

Then, finally, comes the fourth and last period of the cycling mystical year, the event of the Autumnal Equinox, which perhaps is the most sublime, . . . because in the initiation of the Autumnal Equinox the neophyte or aspirant passes beyond the portals of irrevocable death, and returns among men no more . . . The Autumnal Equinox. .has been called the Great Passing. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, pp. 42-45

In other words, initiation in every instance and throughout time is the bringing out or forth into manifested activity of what already exists within the individual. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, pp. 63-64

. . . the greatest and simplest preparation for all the various grades of initiation is our daily life. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, pp. 66-67

Thus verily are we born of the moon, children of the sun, offspring of the stars, and inheritors of the cosmic spaces; for space itself is we and we are it, for we and the Boundless are in essence not twain but one. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, p. 69

What takes place in the case even of the ordinary human being when he dies, and which to such ordinary individual is blank consciousness because he has not evolved far enough yet to understand what he is undergoing, must to the freed divine monad of the master-initiate be made fully conscious and clear. Every phase of the process of death that takes place in ordinary human beings is undergone by the initiate at this time: sheath after sheath of the soul is dropped and abandoned, cast aside and for the time being is forgotten, until the naked divinity stands alone, a living fire of energy in self-consciousness and self-cognizing memory.

Once that the shackles of the lower personal man, once that the enshrouding and crippling sheaths of the lower consciousness, have been cast off, then step by step, stair after stair, up the ladder of life, the monadic energy wings its lofty way. It must pass through every one of the twelve houses of the zodiac, the one after the other – or, if the words are better understood, undergo and experience the particular and peculiar influences flowing forth from each one of the twelve houses of the zodiac . . . [and then he descends back down the stairway until he returns.] He has passed beyond the portals of death, and has returned. He is fully reborn. – G. de Purucker, *The Four Sacred Seasons*, pp. 78-79, 80

#### Carving Your Destiny

You have infinity before you, eternity. Face it. Thus teaches the god-wisdom: a doctrine of hope, rich with the promise of the future. No man need ever say it is too late – those terrible words, too late. No man need ever say that. Every instant of time is a new choice. As in the past he has made himself what now he is, so in the future he can carve his destiny and make himself to be precisely in accordance with the vision that he has of himself to become in the future. What a grand doctrine! Man is but a reproduction, a cyclical evolutionary reproduction of himself out of the past, in the present, marching into the future. There is your destiny. – G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*

#### The Divine Proportion

What sympathy is to love, which is cosmic harmony, consciousness is to divine intelligence. In other words, love awakened or in action shows itself as what we humans call sympathy; intelligence awakened to action and self-cognizing being expresses itself as consciousness. This includes likewise self-consciousness which is but consciousness reflected back upon itself so that it “sees” or “feels” itself. Indeed everything in the universe, and consequently everything in man, who is but an offspring of the universe, is ultimately reducible in the last analysis to one: whether you call it the one cosmic ultimate or the cosmic principle, is a matter of words only; from this One – which is not monotheism in any sense – from this abstract unity there flow forth into activity what we call intelligence, consciousness, mind, sympathy, etc. Thus then what sympathy is to love, which is cosmic harmony ultimately, consciousness is to cosmic intelligence. – G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*

#### Strength through Exercise

Our destiny lies in our own hands, and we can make or mar ourselves. No god forbids, no god imposes; we are children of the divine, and therefore partakers of the divine freedom of will; and in our own feeble way as only partly evolved souls, we work out our destiny. As we shape our lives, so those lives shall become good, bad, shapely, distorted, beautiful, or ugly. We make them such. There is no fatalism in this. All nature surrounding us is not only aiding us but, at the same time strangely enough, to a certain degree restricting us so that it gives us an opportunity to exercise our strength against opposition, which is the only way to develop a good pair of biceps!

Exercise brings out strength. If nature gave us no chance to prove the god within us, we should never grow. Therefore nature is not only a beautiful, helpful mother, but also a stern nurse watching over us with an infinitely compassionate eye, and insisting by her operations and reactions to what we do or follow with our own will, that this will shall grow in strength through exercise; that our understanding shall become brighter and keener through use. – G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*

#### Making Mistakes

I do not believe it is ever wrong to make an honest mistake. Infinitely better for a man to have his motive right, to wish to do right, to render justice, to do grandly, and to make a mistake because he cannot see fully just the right way to take, than it is for a man who is all atremble lest he make a mistake; and because of his lack of inner strength, immediately proceeds blindly to make mistakes. That man will never easily rise. Better to make a mistake and learn by it and to bear the consequences manfully and be more of a man afterwards.

Improve your faculties by exercising them. Do not be afraid of making honest mistakes. Only let your motive be right, and then your mistakes won't injure others and you will soon correct them. You will be stronger, grow more keenly. Let your heart be filled with compassion for the mistakes of others, and the wish to do right, and you will never go far wrong. And each repetitive instance of exercising your inner power of judgment will be more sure, more certain, clearer. The light will be brighter. Then you are a man, a real man. – G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*

#### An Attitude of Balance and Vision

It is true that the world is in a saddened and anxious state. But I think it unwise and spiritually and psychologically unwholesome to emphasize this, for it raises none to higher things but depresses courage, the courage to meet life and carry on in a higher and nobler way. See the beauty in and behind things, see the beauty in your fellowmen; see likewise the ignominy and the ugliness in life, although do not let these latter depress you or discourage you. There is no reason to lose our calm, our inner peace, in order to become like unto them of the mobs, passion driven, governed by prejudice. Such an attitude will not help us or those who suffer. But we can send forth into the world thoughts of courage and hope and an optimistic looking into the future: that no matter what happens through man's folly or infamy or infidelity to his inner god, to his spiritual essence, there are always right and justice which will ultimately triumph over all. The only thing is to be sure we are on the side of right and justice – and we cannot always judge by appearances.

The English poet Robert Browning expresses this thought, albeit in the theological language of the time, when he said: "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world." Those who do not like this optimistic outlook and conviction and who are trying to get down into the arena of hysteria and discouragement, mock at it; yet every sane man who keeps his mind cool and clear and can think for himself realizes full well that the mightiest forces in this world are cosmic right and cosmic justice, and that they in the long run will always prevail. There is no need to be discouraged. Avoid hysterias; on the other hand, avoid running at one and the same time with the hares and chasing with the hounds, which is what we all do more or less. Have your own convictions, and sometimes hide them if it is not wise to shout them from the housetops; but keep your own heart upright, in love with love, hating hate, always standing up for justice and innate right. Only be sure that when you stand up you are not standing up for the propaganda atmosphere around you, but for something that you in your own heart know to be right and true.

It would be a sorry thing indeed if there were naught to our world but what we see around us today, or have seen at particular intervals during the past; but every time and always the conscience and the sense of justice of mankind have proved supreme over all and risen above human feelings and follies, and marched onwards and upwards to balance and harmony. Don't be downhearted or discouraged or think the world is going to the devil because you don't like what is going on. You have a right to like it or to dislike it. But be sure that you, as an individual, on your part do not add to the hatred in the world, to its discouragement and unhappiness. That is my point. – G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*

#### Fear, the Great Destroyer

The Great Destroyer is fear, horror, apprehension of what is going to happen to me. Fear is destructive because it is based on egoism. Think how true this is. If a man utterly forgets himself, fear vanishes because he no longer thinks of the effect that anything may have upon himself. Fear is a concentration of attention upon oneself in an expectancy of disaster happening to one. Lose track of yourself, forget yourself, and fear will vanish.

Fear is often said to be a protection, but a protection only to the weak whose second nature is to fear; it is never a protection to the strong. It is horribly destructive. Of what? Of self-composure, self-confidence. It undermines will. It often makes one cruel in one's treatment of others. Fear is crippling. It stops the life forces; it makes one shrink and tremble, for, harboring it, one no longer has the daring, the vigor, the strength, and the power to go forth. Yet the timid man is always in far greater danger than the man who has no fear. Fear actually attracts danger. Your chances of safety are infinitely greater if you have no fear. Think it over.

Who would like to live in fear of his life, fearing everything that is going to happen, always slinking around the corner and running into cellars, and trying to go up, and yet afraid to go up for fear he will fall? All his life would be a continuous horror. Whereas the man who has love in his heart, who reckons not of what is going to happen to himself, how happy and joyful he is; and he is strong and affects others with his self-confidence. If fear ever comes into his soul, it is because for the time being love is not there.

Forget yourself, and fear will vanish. Do you know the royal way to the forgetting of the self – utterly losing track of the thought of self in your life? It is to love all things both great and small; for perfect love casteth out all fear. Do you fear the things you love? Never. You want them, you long for them, you yearn for them. Learn therefore to love, and fear will go; and you become strong, for love is a mighty power enchaind in the human breast.

Why is love so great a protection, outside of the fact that it casts our fear? Because its vibrations are infinitely harmonious; and fear is always shaken, distorted vibrations. The divine is perfect harmony, and all beneath it can arise to that. But fear is inharmony; trembling, shattering, undermining vitality. Look at the picture of a thoroughly frightened beast or man. You say to yourself: Where is the love in that man's heart which would give him peace, strength, and utter composure? He has lost it, he has forgotten it; if it were there, there would be no fear. And what is this perfect love which casteth out all fear? Why, it is simply living in that part of our own self which is universal. It is becoming allied with the divine. Therein lies perfect peace, perfect harmony. – G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*

#### We Have No Dogmas

We have no dogmas or creeds in the Theosophical Society nor in its work; and thus it is that we have Hindu theosophists, Buddhist theosophists, Christian theosophists, Mohammedan theosophists, and Jewish theosophists, as well as other theosophists who belong to no religion – except to theosophy as the religion of religions. Hence it is our bounden duty to cultivate in our hearts the spirit of brotherly love towards all, however much they may differ from us in philosophical and religious or scientific opinions; but while we are thus absolutely free as members in our choice of religion and philosophy, we all hold to the primeval prerequisite of a theosophist, which is a belief in universal brotherhood and an adherence to the sublime ethics which theosophy teaches.

O, man, know thyself, for within thee lie all the secrets of the Universe and therefore of destiny, for thou thyself art that Universe, and its destiny is thine, and thine is its. – G. de Purucker, *Wind of the Spirit*

#### Quote from James A. Long

We all need to develop discrimination in recognizing the qualities that are being expressed through the consciousness of another. If we understand the basis of his belief, we can talk to him in his own language. That in itself immediately makes a bridge of understanding between his heart and ours. With understanding comes confidence, and once mutual confidence is established, there will be born a trust. And when trust comes, the solution of our most difficult problems is made easy.

## **The Six Mistakes of Man**

Cicero

The delusion that personal gain is made by crushing others.

The tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected.

Insisting that a thing is impossible because we cannot accomplish it.

Refusing to set aside trivial preferences.

Neglecting development and refinement of the mind, and not acquiring the habit of reading and studying.

Attempting to compel others to believe and live as we do.

## **Death**

Pythagoras

Death is our common lot. Material riches are won and lost. Let thy life be inspired by the purest justice! Be beyond reproach in relation to others and to thyself. Seize every opportunity to learn. In this way thou wilt lead a most pleasurable life.

Ponder these thoughts. When thou art filled by them thou wilt be enabled to conceive of the nature of God, of men, and of things, and to account for the unity of all creation. Thou wilt then know this universal law, that everywhere in the world matter and spirit are in principle identical.

Continue the work of liberating thy soul by making a judicious and well-considered choice in all things, to the end that thou mayest assure the triumph of what is best in thyself – the triumph of the spirit. Then, when thou leavest thy mortal shape, thou wilt rise into the ether and, ceasing to be mortal, wilt thyself assume the form of an immortal god.

## **Uphill**

Christina Rossetti

Does the road wind uphill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

Of labour you shall find the sum.

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

Yea, beds for all who come.