

BIRTH CENTENARY EDITION

LIVING THE LIFE

by

B. P. WADIA

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FOREWORD

The important articles by the late B. P. Wadia gathered together in this book have all appeared at different times in the magazine *The Theosophical Movement*. His contributions on Theosophical themes to this and other periodicals would fill volumes, and the few contained in this book are but representative of his style and his way of Theosophical thinking—the way H. P. Blavatsky showed.

Though each of these articles is complete in itself, the careful reader will notice a thread running through them all. Those who aspire to change and to improve their mode of living, to follow the Divine Discipline advocated not only by Theosophy but by all the great Teachers who have appeared on the world-scene, and to walk the Way that leads to Those Great of Soul, will find in the pages of this book valuable help and instruction.

On the subject of the Higher Life much misunderstanding prevails, and it is the duty of every student of Theosophy, not only to himself but also to the great Theosophical Movement, to set an example in right living. But, as was always stressed by Shri Wadia, practice without study and understanding is impossible; and mere study and intellectual understanding without proper application are in the long run not only futile but also dangerous.

What the world has always needed is the living of the Life according to the precepts of the Great Teachers, the practice of the One Religion of Life, the One Science of the Soul and the One Art which can create harmony and beauty in the Kingdom of Man.

THE PUBLISHERS

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HOW TO REACH MASTERS

Strangle thy sins, and make them dumb for ever* before thou dost lift one foot to mount the ladder.

Silence thy thoughts and fix thy whole attention on thy Master, whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest.

THE LIVING POWER OF THEOSOPHY

One of the difficulties under which students of Theosophy labour is the practical and therefore one-sided or distorted view they take of the Wisdom-Religion. For some, Theosophy takes the place of an outworn creed; for others it provides a better field for philosophic speculation; for a third class it is the interesting study of a new science which instructs where modern knowledge breaks down; for still others it affords, through the many and varied associations which exist in its name and for its sake, avenues of some altruistic expression. Only a few seem to recognize the synthetic character of Theosophy, *viz.*, that it is the religion of the Spirit, free and immortal; that it is the philosophy of the Heart, to be practiced universally by us all the time; that it is the Science of Life which instructs us in the self devised methods of never-dying energies moving in the direction of Universal Self-Consciousness; that it is the teacher of the Higher Altruism which calls for self correction and growth from within, on the part of every being, resulting in the growth of all.

It is curious that the science of the Self is made applicable by many to every other thing but the Self and the operation of its laws is seen in all other beings but our own being. Everyone lives by some power within himself, whose influence is so eclipsed and even obliterated that it remains non-recognizable. This takes place because in the sphere of deeds other people's will guides our organs of action ; similarly on the plane of feelings our heart is energized by other people's emotions; our thinking too is done by proxy while our heads often are replete only with the thoughts of other men.

The student should recognize to the full two fundamental principles: that Theosophy is a great synthesis of religion, philosophy and science; and that it, as a synthesis, primarily concerns itself, touches and affects the causal forces of the Self producing as effects myriad forms ; then his task will become less difficult.

Such a recognition will inevitably lead him to study every Theosophical truth from three points of view— spirit, mind, matter ; also to apply every truth in three distinct spheres of heart, head, hands. Such study and practice will convince him very soon that the synthesis is rooted in and proceeds from within his own spiritual Being, but affects through his actions the deeds of others; through his likes and dislikes, the pleasures and pains of others; through his thoughts, the minds of others ; and that in turn he is so affected by others. If Theosophy in study reveals itself as a synthesis of religion, philosophy and science, in applying its tenets and doctrines we soon begin to sense that an additional or fourth factor exists—a kind of over-soul, which is the Higher Altruism.

Altruism is the Absolute whose three aspects are the religion to be lived, in terms of the philosophy to be learnt, and of the science to be practiced. To practice, to Learn, to live, for and as the ALL—is to manifest the Living Power of Theosophy.

This living power of Theosophy lies latent, buried deep down, in the heart of every man. Therefore everyone who is not a Theosophist is a Theosophist in embryo. It ought to be clear to an intelligent student that his task, however difficult, is not complex. Theosophy advocates the simple life by insistently pointing out in a hundred ways that the power by which we live is of a simple character, *both* in its origin and in its operations. Men have strayed away from this simplicity and have assumed a million complexes by looking for knowledge outside of the Self, for divinity *m* other than the Self. Thus started on the inclined plane of retrogression we see division where solidarity exists—division between science and religion, between inanimate and animate, between secular and sacred. In place of “the immanence of God and solidarity of man” is Proclaimed— God in the heaven and men the children of dust and worms on earth. This blunder and its correction which Theosophy puts

forward has to be understood and applied by each student to himself in his own life- Unless this is done Theosophy will remain a religion, a philosophy, a science, a mode of charity, a method of philanthropy in contradistinction to other religions, philosophies, sciences, modes and methods of altruistic efforts.

H. P. Blavatsky has recorded her complaint in more than one place that solidarity in the ranks of Theosophists did not exist in spite of the fact that they were able to preach religious truths, and to put before the scientific world wonderful information in an instructive way. The religion of Universal Spirit fails to inspire most of us when our feelings are hurt by a fellow Theosophist, or to give us courage to stand by him when he is unjustly attacked. Our philosophy of the One and Impetrate Self evaporates into impracticality when we have to say that the moral leper, the intellectual prostitute, the psychically drunk, are our brothers This will continue as long as the Synthesis of Theosophy is not applied by us to purify our lower nature and to create a higher perception of altruism.

The Living Power of Theosophy must become the power by which we live. As we have a material instrument and an energizing mind, and as we are in being spiritual, we must live as spiritual beings our Religion of Joyous Immortality which ensouls and illumines the mind. Aided by the philosophy of Theosophy we must let that mind energize our house of flesh, so that the latter is no more a palace of pleasure, but a Temple of the Living God, the Ruler who rules from within.

DEFENCE OF THEOSOPHY

One of the causes which led to the disruption of the forces drawn together by H.P.B. in her body politic of Theosophy was the failure of those who surrounded her to support the movement against the criticism of an opposing world. Another aspect of the same feature was responsible for the disintegration which followed the death of Mr. W. Q. Judge.

The power of the faith which is in us can be truly gauged by the strength with which we defend it against attack. What our faith really means to us is shown by our power of sacrifice on its behalf. To walk by our Goddess of Faith when she is popular, to follow her as she trails in glory an acclaimed heroine, to take pride in her name and fame, is no proof that we are her true votaries. When she is defamed and despised, when all that men throw at her are scorn and contempt, when dressed in rags she walks unnoticed or abused—in that hour the heart meets its true test. To defend what we hold to be true at any cost, and defend it with justice to our own convictions as well as sympathy for the sincere beliefs of other men, is an experience which every human soul has to pass through.

The faculty of being true to ourselves is the resultant of a process by which we show our fidelity to what we deem to be true, either by the power of thought and reason or by the force of instinct and feeling. Even through the vice of fanaticism the immortal soul of man acquires the virtue of faithfulness to truth. The process is slow and painful, as are all processes of Nature. To be aggressively faithful to what appears to us to be correct is the beginning of a slow and exhaustive ascent to the serene, indomitable and conquering altitude, where one stands unshaken in defense of Truth perceived, devoid of aggressiveness, enmity or hatred; actuated by the spirit of helpfulness towards those against whose adverse criticism such defense is offered ; permeated by devotion and energized by knowledge.

H. P. B. was an exemplary defender of *the* Faith. It was her invariable habit to defend Theosophy against all odds even at the cost of dear friendships. She sacrificed everything when her Goddess of Faith was attacked and never for an instant did she hesitate. Not satisfied with the splendid example set, she taught the necessity of such action as a spiritual exercise; and when her students and pupils proved weak in this defense, her fire and zeal, in themselves a salutary lesson, urged them *to* perform their duty.

Like other characteristics pertaining to H.P.B/s being and teaching, this attitude is met with in the lives and labors of all true teachers of the Wisdom. It is to be found in the teachings and activities of Mr. Judge. Damodar K. Mavalankar earned his grace, among other things, by a similar offering. The lessons which emerge from the observation and study of this characteristic are valuable for the aspirant of today.

The new enthusiast in Theosophy goes through the octave of fanaticism, from aggressive abuse to the passive superciliousness of a " superior " person. Just as the embryo passes through all the phases of its long past evolution of millions of years in the short period of antenatal life, the Theosophical embryo runs the gamut of his own psychological experiences, when in this incarnation he takes up the thread of his own inner growth and the outer service of other souls. One of these experiences is related to the defense of his own faith which may be mere belief or the direct perception of acquired knowledge, which carries its own natural conviction. Few of us can help being Theosophical fanatics for the simple reason that we have been un-theosophical and then non-theosophical fanatics in the past. The duration of such fanaticism depends on the unspent force of that ante-natal fanaticism, and on our own efforts, now and here, to embody in ourselves the living power of Theosophy. In this second feature the important practice of self-correction is involved.

What is the best way to ward off attacks on Theosophy, its Teachers and students, its

movement and activity ? Attacks are the result of ignorance; when not directly rooted in abject prejudice, they are the outcome of the fear and hatred of people whose vested interests Theosophy threatens or exposes. As all vested interests thrive on the ignorance of well-meaning men and women, we are in truth face to face with one mighty enemy—Ignorance, a foe against which we have to have a weapon of defense.

There are two main methods which can be employed; H.P.B., Mr. Judge and other true followers of the Wisdom used both of them. The first consists in a counterattack on the offensive and offending attackers—to pick holes in their methods and movements and to show their admirers how faulty and false these are; at the same time and in this very process to show what therein is true and genuine, which holds fast admirers to them, and how that which is true is taken amiss and that which is genuine is mishandled. This procedure, however, requires a deep knowledge of those methods and movements and also the capacity to deftly use the weapons of attack. An offensive demands greater preparation, for it includes schemes of self-defense in case of defeat, and also the plans to bestow order and good government in the enemy's land when victory is won. The second method is this: Do not expose the vagaries, inconsistencies, fictitiousness, and falsehoods of the offender against Theosophy, but unveil the utility, the consistency, the beauty and the truth of our own philosophy and position. Such a picture will radiate its own benign influence and work its own magic on the multitudes who are victims of ignorance and vested interests.

The Masters of Wisdom fight ignorance century by century, by the unique process in which these two modes resolve themselves in full harmony.

In our early struggles on the plane of Theosophy we often suffer from an unbalanced enthusiasm and are apt to launch ourselves on the stormy tide of the first method. In copying her noble example in attacking science or theology, spiritualism or neo-theosophy, we forget that we do not possess H.P.B.'s knowledge, not only the positive knowledge of the facts, but also the insight into what is false or fictitious, and why. It is the way of wisdom, therefore, to learn to utilize first the second of the two courses above mentioned. Nothing can defend Theosophy as well as Theosophy itself. Let her speak for herself—through us. Let us spread the good tidings of Theosophy and present to all those we contact the strength, the beauty, the encompassing truth of Theosophy. Under this method some are bound to shed their scales of ignorance and prejudice. When through repeated efforts our own knowledge has grown and our insight has unfolded, we will be ready to wield the weapons of the first method.

It is a practical craft—spread the teachings of Theosophy far and wide so that the power of Wisdom will act as its own defender.

First, comprehend that the defense of Theosophy and the active effort to spread broadcast its message go hand in hand. Assimilating the teachings we should make ourselves radiators of the power of Theosophy. This achieved, remains the undertaking to help others readjust their mental contents. It is wrong to suppose that it is absence of knowledge which produces anti-theosophical attitudes or expressions; often it is the existence of wrong ideas, of false thoughts, of incorrect reasoning. Our task would be comparatively easy if we had only ignorant babes to deal with; we have to work with human beings whose minds are already energized by non-theosophic notions. It is much more difficult for such minds to make readjustments.

Let us remember that the vigorous demonstration of anti-theosophic feeling follows an accumulation, in silence and passivity, of non-theosophic views. To counteract this silent accretion we must needs work in silence for the accumulation of Theosophic feeling. Belief in false creeds should not be met with make-believe in theosophical principles—thus err

many of our young enthusiasts. Knowledge must disband belief and enlightened conviction disrupt unintelligent faith. To obtain knowledge and possess such conviction, study and reflection and hearing the doctrine retold are necessary, not only for our own personal advancement, but as an institution which helps in readjusting the minds of others less “advanced” than we are. The acquiring of knowledge by persevering study should not be undertaken in self-interest, but as a duty to the evolution of the race itself.

Next to study of the doctrines is the task of bringing others to that study. Discrimination is to be used in the circulation of right books. Excellent books are available for enquirers, for beginners, as well as advanced students. Let us not err by a rigidity of rule in recommending these books. It is the part of wisdom to determine which particular book will help a particular person. If we can ascertain the impulse which has brought him to approach Theosophy, if we can gauge his bent of mind, his capacity to think and reflect and his temperament, we can find out the book which will most appeal to him. There is a line of least resistance for him, as well as an avenue of response.

By our own study, individually or in classes, and by living our own lives according to the teachings, we are accomplishing the positive work of collecting the sinews of war. By the second step of spreading correctly the true teachings of Theosophy we have already carried war into the enemy camp of ignorance; every mind readjusted by the books means a loss for that enemy. Vigorous assault is bound to come upon us and then our success will depend on our genuineness as students. Make-believers, or those who learned by rote, or those who failed to assimilate, or those who played a memorized role, and their like, will desert. Those who learned for the sake of teaching, who obtained and amassed to offer it in loving and intelligent service—they will stand to the greater glory of Man.

THE VOW OF SILENCE

One, if not the greatest, of evils by which modern society is corrupted, is that of gossip. Injurious speech, or small talk ensouled by the spirit of competition, not only ruins other people's character, but corrupts our own. This is not recognized. Small talk has become and is studied as an art, and the infamy of gossip has emerged as an institution of social amusement. Its infamous nature is forgotten, its dire effects fail to impart their lesson and it has assumed for modern men and women the place of a necessity of life. Social avocations in cultured drawing-rooms as also in abusive slums pursue the path of small talk and mean gossip.

The first requirement of the spiritual life is to learn the value of silence. The conservation of spiritual energy demands that the frittering away of soul-forces be stopped. There are very few avenues through which man's divinity goes to waste as through sound and speech. The dirt and dregs of our kamic nature often find their outlet in useless or injurious speech. There is a close connection and more than mere metaphorical analogy in the statement which refers to what is put in the mouth as food and what comes out of it as words. Through the process of eating, assimilation of food and elimination of waste product take place; the health of the body improves or suffers with every morsel we take in. One of the main ways of determining the condition of the body is to examine the disposition of the process and product of elimination. Our psychic nature has its own ways of assimilation and elimination, of sustaining itself in good or ill health. One of the modes of elimination is related to the power of speech.

In spiritual growth, learning and listening go together; they precede teaching and speaking. In ancient India the moment the seeker of the peace of wisdom resolved to follow in the footsteps of the guru, the pupil gained the name of *Shravaka*, a listener. In ancient Greece he was named *Akoustikos*. He was not even permitted to ask questions; *bija-sutras*, seed-thoughts, were given him to ponder over and understand to the best of his ability. These thoughts were intended as pacificator food which, if adequately assimilated, would cleanse his kamic nature; riot only remove the accumulated poisons of the past but reveal to the pupil the correct alchemical process of transforming within his own constitution passion into compassion, lust into love, antipathy into sympathy. Once started on this highway, he was ready to become an exerciser, a positive doer, *Skramana*, the *Asketos* of the Greeks.

Our modern Theosophical student has not fully recognized the occult significance of silence. A vow of silence does not mean to become mute and not to speak at all. It consists in: (1) self-imposition of periodic silence; (2) not indulging at any time in injurious and untruthful speech; (3) not giving way to useless speech; (4) not asking questions on philosophy or practice till what has already been taught or is before us is fully scanned and thoroughly looked into from the point of view of our particular questions; (5) not indulging in *ahankaric* speech, *i.e.*, not making statements about the Divine Self or Ego in terms of our kamic or lower nature; (6) not indulging in injurious speech regarding our lower nature, our own faults and weaknesses, lest by speaking of them we lend them the strength which ensues from the power of speech; (7) not to speak even that which is true unless at proper times, to proper people, under proper circumstances.

While this sevenfold exercise is practiced secrecy has to be observed about it. To refer to or speak about the exercise we have undertaken and are practicing, is to vitiate it altogether and make it worse than useless. Such an indulgence gives birth to conceit and enhances it where it already exists. Secrecy and silence are needed and contemplation on their kinship should precede the sevenfold exercise.

There is a general desire “to sit for meditation and to practice yoga,” but this very first rule, this primary regulation, is found irksome and its desirability questioned. No doubt it is difficult, Well-nigh impossible, for the moderns to attain this control over speech; but if not fully and wholly at least partly and partially it can be and should be practiced.

Deliberate speech will be the first result. It will not be rooted in kama-passion, but in buddhi-compassion. There are two types of criticism: one is fault-finding; the other is perception of virtue in meritorious expressions as also the perception of virtue behind vice, demerit and weakness. The deceit of the dice is Sri Krishna, and the power to perceive that comes from the second type of criticism. The first is criticism by words of kama, the second is by words of understanding; the first is on the plane of words, the second on the plane of ideas ; the first is of head-learning, the second of soul- wisdom; the first praises or condemns the lower nature, the second imports into it the strength of the higher, causing readjustment; the first has behind it the superior spirit of teaching, the second the sublime spirit of learning and propagating that which is learnt.

How different would be the world if even in some measure the power of this practice went into the doings of our civilization! Reviewers and critics would then not look for points to condemn, but for beauty and goodness and worth in the books they review. In all affairs of thought, feeling and action our tendency is to look for *our* thoughts repeated, *our* feelings reproduced, *our* actions imitated. We regard ourselves as the model for all examination; we the pattern whereby right and wrong is to be determined. Such an attitude is not blatantly expressed, but veils itself in a subtle form of humility, which is mock modesty.

There are a hundred who plunge into the waters of the ocean for pleasure or profit to only one who dives for the pearl of great price. The latter proceeds to his work in the secrecy of silence and his art in the ocean is of a very different kind from that of the ordinary swimmer. Those who are in search of the pearl of wisdom must acquire the strength of muscle, the control of breath and the finesse of stroke necessary against the stormy billows of this ocean of *samsara*. These lie securely hidden in the Power of Silence. That power must be invoked, not by a pledge to some other being, but by a vow silently sung and silently registered in the sanctuary of the Heart. Thus the path begins in silence and secrecy and ends in the hearing and the chanting of the Soundless Sound.

THE GREATEST OF ALL WARS

All family feuds, all class struggles, all national wars, all religious crusades are but reflected ramifications of the eternal strife between the higher and the lower selves of man. For the student of Occultism, one of the earliest lessons to be acquired is a realization of the fact that battles in the outside world are but shadowy replicas of those which are fought within ourselves. The meaning and import of wars, small and great, will ever be missed as long as this great truth is not perceived. International wars would not precipitate themselves if class struggles, creed hatreds, caste prejudices, did not exist in nations; competition between youth and age, man and woman, would not take place in a society if family relations of the right order and kind subsisted ; and thus, we reach the individual who is at war with his neighbors and next of kin because his hands war against his head, or his mind against his heart, or his pride against his principles.

A struggle between our material and spiritual selves is constantly going on. Students of Theosophy learn of the nature of this struggle, and the thoughtful among them acquire the knowledge of the relative strength of the combatants and their respective sources of recruitment and recuperation while the battle lasts. We all know that the triumph of Spirit over Matter, of Wisdom over Nescience, of Love over Hate must ultimately be; but this theoretical understanding is of little avail while hatred is consuming love, is fanning the fire of lust in our own nature.

Not only is there a constant struggle going on within us, but we are recommended to maintain it—till victory is won, till Wisdom-Light streams forth from our hearts, dispelling the darkness of ignorance, till Love radiates its justice and bliss from our minds, revealing the order in the midst of chaos. An enlightened heart, a compassionate head are the marks of the Spirit-Man, higher, greater and nobler than the good man of intelligent mind and sympathetic heart. It is necessary to make this distinction between the good man and the spiritual man. As earnest appliers of Theosophic teachings we have left the life of actual vice behind us and we distinguish between it and the higher life. We are, however, apt to mistake the life of negative goodness for the life of the spirit. " It is not enough that you should set the example of a pure, virtuous life and a tolerant spirit; this is but negative goodness—and for chelaship will never do," wrote a Master once. Other and higher than negative goodness is positive spirituality.

Our virtues and vices make us by turn good and bad. The equipoise whereby these are controlled and resolved into faculties of growth and service has to be attained if positive spirituality is to be manifested. Just as human love is higher than and superior to lust, and his by constant feeding on itself cannot become' love, so also Divine Spirituality is of a quality more profound and rare than is human goodness, which also, merely augmented, does not give birth to Spirit-Wisdom. The difference between good and bad is one of kind; the gulf between goodness and spirituality is not one of mere degree.

A clear intellectual perception of this fact is helpful. A soldier receives an added impetus for fighting if he theoretically understands the inherently vicious nature of his enemy; he fights with more heart if he assimilates that understanding. This assimilation is a wonderful asset, without which it is almost impossible to win the victory over our lower nature. The constancy and steadfastness so necessary to maintain the struggle come to birth in our hearts. Understanding our philosophy by mind does not bring us the vitality that understanding by heart bestows. Assimilation of teachings is a phrase very commonly used; its psychological significance is not so generally sensed. Let us grasp by the power of the heart the vital difference between the good man and the spiritual one.

The struggle between the good and the spiritual in the outer world is represented in us by the conflict of duties. There are those who do Duty's "work and know it not/* for in them the conflict of duties has not ever arisen. The good people of the world though devoid of ideas about soul growth and spiritual progress glimpse the verities of life better than the one in whose own universe a conflict of duties takes place. Only then arise the perplexing questions—"What am I ? " "What are my relations to others ? " A good mother will continue to be only good till circumstances compel her to consider the wisdom or unwisdom of her attitude to her own child, or the justice or injustice of her attitude to others* children. Conflict of duties opens a vista of the world of Spirit.

A proper balance struck and sustained between different and conflicting duties transforms our goodness into spirituality. The higher life consists in right adjustment of our different duties into a harmonized *Dharma*, whereby the property of our Ego becomes manifest. Everything and all beings have their respective properties, some aspects of which have become patent, other aspects of which are still in a condition of latency. As latent aspects of our property manifest they often clash with those which have already found objective expression. Thus arises conflict of duties. Our *dharma*—a great word on which meditation is necessary—is the means of our becoming. We are what we are because of our *dharma*; by the fulfillment of *dharma* we grow, we become different from what we are. Herein lies the basis of inner growth—the conflict between opposing and enduring forces.

Spirit forces endure. These are superior to forces of evil as well as goodness. The struggle against our lower nature is often construed as a struggle against vicious tendencies. It is not always recognized that we suffer from the defects of our qualities—a very hard type of obstacle to overcome, because as a rule we find and make excuses for it. Downright wrong-doing we condemn even in ourselves. If by Karmic propensity or for other reasons pertaining to the domain of the occult, evil precipitations take place in our everyday life we are able to recognize them as such. We have enough decency left in us to perceive that evil is evil, and wrong-doing is wrong. But there are precipitations of exaggerated virtues and malformed habits, and it is very difficult to see these exaggerations and malformations. Conflict of Theosophic duties arises in reference to these, and the only power that can save us from erring is heart-understanding of our philosophy.

In our eagerness to learn the various phases of the philosophy we sometimes forget that there is a practical method of undertaking study itself. Of course we must possess adequate knowledge of our general principles and propositions; but that ought not to preclude our undertaking a close study of those specific Theosophical teachings which form answers to our intimate and personal problems. We have a personality which is learning the ways of the Impersonal; it has tendencies which we desire to demolish; it has modes of expression which we desire to change. An earnest man who wants to live the life should learn to choose from the vast body of our teachings those specific ones which will help and enable him in his struggles against his lower self. All our problems, be they of the Ego or of the personality, of the Self of Spirit or of the self of matter, have their solutions in our philosophy; the infinite complexities of mind and morals are treated therein, and discriminatingly we ought to search for those which are medicine for our particular ailments.

The maintenance of a constant struggle against our lower nature ought to be a scientific process; with many of us it is a matter of sentiment. A mere desire to keep the body in health does not make it healthy, but a scientific understanding and application of bodily laws prove effective and so it is with psychic and spiritual health. Special study from this personal standpoint clears the obstacles which conflicting duties create. Our lower nature is composed

of lives of a lower grade of evolution. Our higher nature organisms are built of intelligences of a more elevated type. Each is trying to manifest its respective property-dharma, and hence the eternal conflict.

Our bodily and sensuous nature cries for its own life; our feelings crave their own self's expression; our minds suffer the very torments of Tantalus when we curb and control their natural thirsts. These constituents of our lower self have their own properties, and among them a war is raging as may be seen in the dissatisfaction in full-blown personalities devoid of spirit-energization. When the Fire of the Highest Self with its Compassionate Reason, its Illuminating Intuition, its Creative Will-Power touches the lower, grave discontent is felt. When the study and practice of Theosophy make the fight more fierce, let us not surrender in confused depression; let us not forget the propositions involved in the ethical problem of the Conflict of Duties.

ON GETTING READY

In worker play, in business as in sport, men prepare themselves by constant practice. The student-server of Theosophy also realizes that he has to prepare for growth, and perceives the fact that growth is through service. In gaining this perception and in practicing he makes mistakes. The ways of the higher life are so different, the mode of inner unfoldment at such variance with the methods of what is called modern progress, that invariably there ensues waste of time—the most costly of all commodities in any market.

It is necessary to seize certain ideas which facilitate our endeavors at preparation. The very first of these is like a mirror in which we can measure the stature of our growing inner nature. The spiritual life is not one of subtle rest but of increasing creative activity which begets real joy. Do we feel the zest of life, and contentment in work? In all things and at all times do we feel uplifted naturally, that is, without any effort? This is the test. We are apt to judge ourselves from the praise or blame which others bestow; we often value our work entirely in the light of the reputation which it evokes; this is not the test. Spirit-unfoldment registers its strength in light to the mind, repose to the ever active consciousness. If our thoughts and deeds enlighten our own minds, bring peace and joy to our own hearts, they are the natural expressions of the inner light. Discontent proceeds from absence of bliss, *Ananda*, which is the very nature of Buddhi.

The affinity subsisting between our inner and outer matures provides the second of the rules for our consideration. Reliance on Atma grows with the denial of *ahankara*. In that word "denial" lies one of the main practices of the life of the warrior-soul. The life of the senses gives birth to Egotism. The powers and forces of mind are prostituted for the gratification of desire in all relations of life. The marital tie, sacred and beneficent, subsists between mind-powers and the human Spirit, divine in nature. What happens in modern society is symptomatic of what takes place in the life of many a student of Wisdom. The debasing of the marriage life so rampant in our civilization flows from the same archetype whence emerge the divisions in individual life whereby we live in turns the lower animal and the higher divine lives. Between the two, however hidden or obscure, there exists a sure relationship which is expressed in the second rule we are examining.

In preparing ourselves for the Path of Holiness we have to practice denial of *ahankara-egotism* by a constant appeal to Atma, the God within. Thus Self-reliance grows. Atma is altruistic, in the small man as in the large universe. It is everywhere because of its altruistic nature. To rely on It is to see in true proportion the multitudinous effusions of *ahankara-soul* the lower self. The light of Atma enables us to determine the real values of the different component parts of the lower self.

Hence contemplation on Atma becomes necessary; the pure Heart pervades not only heaven but hell. The descent of Jesus into the nether regions is a dramatized version of the psychological experiences every neophyte goes through. In the conquest of flesh, in the holy crusade, the *Jehad* of the Muslim, pure Atmic altruism pervading the field of battle subdues both good and evil, heaven and hell, and rises superior to both. One of the pairs of opposites, pleasure is often mistaken for Bliss for the same reason that the lower self and *ahankara* are mistaken for the higher self and Atma. In getting ready, the light of Atma which is Bliss, the love of Atma which is Wisdom, the Labour of Atma which is Sacrifice, have to be seen as superior to the pleasure, the knowledge, and the activity of the lower self. With this perception comes the strength to "slay," that is, regenerate the animal-man.

The alchemical power to transform the baser metal of the lower self into the gold of the higher abides in the Heart of man. This mighty Shakti-Power lies dormant and asleep—a coiled Dragon of Wisdom. Elsewhere in the human constitution is the venomous snake of self, that eternal foe of every aspirant to Wisdom and Altruism. But snake and Dragon are of the same species and so the injunction — "be merciful to the foe; against its treacheries be on guard/' To subdue the lower but avoid irritation to it is skilful action. The two characteristics necessary for this enterprise are a sense of humour for the foibles of the lower self, and a never-failing watchfulness over its insidious ways.

In this holy war of regeneration the purifying power of knowledge has to be used. This is where Theosophy, as a body of knowledge, sure and infallible, founded and reared on the accumulated experience of the sages, proves useful. Every decent-minded individual wants to better his life; many an enthusiast is willing to practice rules of conduct which will bring success to him. **But** very few indeed study the science of the soul, even theoretically, for the law of reliance on Atma by the denial of *ahankara* frightens or discourages them. Those who mentally understand the teaching often lapse into old ways and modes of denial of Atma and reliance on *ahankara*. Time is not allowed, such is the rushing nature of our race, for the assimilation of what is studied. The spontaneous generation of the Dragon of Wisdom in the cave of the Heart can take place only in the passage of time. If in that period we are disturbed by events or are wearied to disgust with things, we identify ourselves with those events and things. " *Kala* (time) alone survives *Yama* (death) — *Atma* (Self) is made of *Kala* (time)."

To be the better able to help and teach others we should use time to study, and let time use us for the process of assimilation. Thus yoga with Time is achieved.

Knowledge in the passage of time will purify the lower self of its dross and give birth to compassion by the aid of which others can be truly helped. Compassion replaces Knowledge with Wisdom, makes all actions sacrificial, all existence blissful. Thus yoga with Space is attained.

By study of Theosophy we acquire Wisdom; by the practice of Theosophy we acquire Compassion; these two lead to the attainment and realization of the Bliss of the inner Life. To be blissful, to be compassionate, to be discerning—these constitute the eternal triad of preparation for the life of Spiritual service. In this attempt, speaks the Teaching, " Beware of settled security ; it leads to sloth, or to presumption."

HELP THE WORK

There are various motives which prompt students to serve the Cause of Theosophy. The nature and extent that service are according to the motive. The avenues of service are definite and limited just as the motives of service are. Some students are moved to service by the desire of self-growth; others are inspired to be altruistic by the compassionate longing to better the lot of their fellow men. Some serve to work out the surplus energy of their natures; others energize themselves so that service may result.

Whatever the starting point, a little study reveals a Supreme fact — service of Theosophy, irrespective of time, place, circumstance, as well as friends, relatives and strangers, is imperative, not only for growth but for very existence.

Students of Theosophy prepare themselves by study and otherwise to serve humanity; they seriously endeavor to fit themselves to be better able to help and teach others. Theosophists do not make propaganda for the purposes of gaining power, popularity and prosperity for Theosophy, but for bettering men and women, for enlightening human souls and leading them on peace and wisdom. Our philosophy discourages proselytism and advocates the inner conversion of each by himself.

When by dint of study an individual has remade himself he is, in a sense, as one who is newly born. *The great Initiations of the Ancient Mysteries have their sections in the hearts of mortals.* As we learn to be again and again we come nearer to the Great Birth of the *Dwija*, the Twice-Born, the Initiate. Just as daily bathing of the body is the reflection of the Baptism by Water, so is seasonal renovation of the mind and heart a symbol of the Baptism by Fire. For the health of the body elimination of waste matter is a necessity, and there is a corresponding elimination of the moral and mental dregs of our consciousness.

Service of Theosophy is the avenue whereby students of Theosophy are reborn. It is the great clearing house of energies and ideas — eliminator of false notions and retainer of the true. Thus students of Theosophy do not confer any benefit on the philosophy or on the Movement by their service; they oblige and benefit themselves. Columbus did not confer any benefit on America by his discovery; he and his fellows have been bettered thereby. America, undiscovered, would have continued to live on, till human necessity compelled some Columbus to discover it. So with Theosophy. Let us rid ourselves of the idea that by our helping the Cause we are obliging Theosophy. We are helping ourselves. Further, that helping is a necessity of existence, of our own existence.

All of us have three great possessions — Energy to create, Wealth to sustain, and Time to renew ourselves. These are our three jewels. We make ourselves by work, we preserve ourselves with wealth and we better ourselves in time. Works, Wealth, Time are interdependent. In time work begets wealth; wealth in due season energizes us to labour; time compels us to work so that we may enrich ourselves; work whiles away time and time checks the destructive and wearing power of toil. One without the other two, nay, even two without the third would end in man's ruin and annihilation.

In the service of Theosophy, Time, Wealth and Work— all three are necessary. We must create ourselves by study; we must grow through regeneration, in the passage of time. Under the Law of Periodicity, as cycles run their rounds, Wisdom and Wise Men work to preserve themselves in Their Ever-Green Nature, by perpetual renovation. Nature labours and is born; her bounties sing of her existence; her ever continuing changes are an indication of her subservience to the God of Time — *Kala*.

The Theosophical Movement, in all eras and climes, is created by the work of the Masters, is sustained by the Wealth of Their Wisdom, and is regenerated from corruption, century by century and cycle by cycle. The Movement never dies because this threefold process is kept up by the Great Ones and Their faithful servants. The visible and organic incarnation of the Immemorial Movement decays and perishes because its work, wealth and time through friction come to a close. When those who belong to that visible expression of the Movement cease to work, poverty overtakes them; famished, they cease to exist. When they labour and toil but fail to share their earnings with the body through which they enriched themselves, they perish and the body with them. When they create by work and nourish by wealth, they sometimes fail to renew friendship with the Ever-Green Source and suit themselves to the Motion of the Stars and then they live on, corpses or shells, while the Life creates elsewhere the body of Truth.

Minor cycles are but replicas of major ones. The Law of Correspondence and Analogy works perfectly everywhere and all the time. What is true of previous ages and other bodies is true of this and the Lodge to which we belong. As a voluntary association of students we exist not for the glorification of that body, nor of ourselves who belong to it. We exist to serve the Cause and are responsible for keeping it going as the visible incarnation of the Invisible Movement. This can be done by Work, Wealth and Time and in no other way.

Work which creates for the self is selfish; that which creates for self is Sacrifice.

Wealth which preserves the self causes poverty; that which preserves the Self leads to Wisdom.

Time which renews the self begets pain; that which renews the Self is Bliss.

Therefore we must obtain the wherewithal for creative work, for preserving wealth, for regenerating time. These consist of the Faculty of Sacrifice, the Possession of Wisdom and the Energy of Bliss.

We must gain the faculty of sacrifice on the plane of action, of labour, of work. This means that we should toil for the Great Sacrifice, exert ourselves by the power of the Great Actor. We must come to possess the wealth of Wisdom on the plane of mind, of study, of contemplation. This means that we must teach and instruct and inspire by the power of the Great Teacher, offer the boon and the blessing of the Great Contemplation. We must obtain the energy of Bliss on the plane of life, of heart, of being. This means that we should grow by giving, giving by the power of the Great Renovator, thus bestowing the Joy of the Great Birth. Thus Sacrifice builds, Wisdom sustains and Bliss renovates life for ever and ever. The sacrifice of all we have, the wisdom of all we are, the bliss which is our Self—this is the triple offering which every student of Theosophy should make on the altar of the Sacred Movement.

We create ourselves theosophical by work which is Sacrifice. *Egotism is the one source from which spring \$e many excuses which keep us front being theosophical born.* Often the desire to work is wrongly identified with the capacity to serve. The latter really belongs to the second aspect: wealth. Most students fail to work not because of the lack of capacity but the absence of desire to serve and help. *The one sure sign of Theosophical birth is the Will to Work*, which seeks out “him who knows still less than thou’ *Ahankara-Egotism* manifests sometimes as conceit, at others as mock modesty. This false humility is more subtle and therefore more insidious. It was not through lack of capacity that Arjuna cried, OI shall not fight, O Govinda but because of the lack of Will to serve both the Pandus and the Kurus. He who in the daily affairs of life loves and sacrifices gains the great opportunity to .enter the

Patty of Compassion, the Way of Altruism. To be born is to manifest the power of the Inner Ruler — however restricted in scope and small in quantity. *4i* Doing the King's work all the dim day long ” is dependent on the previous recognition of the King in the Chamber of the Heart.

It is only when we desire to serve and begins to work that lack of knowledge is truly perceived. When people complain of their lack of knowledge or their poor capabilities and refuse to work on that score, they are not really aware of either. *Only when we begin to teach do we truly find out what we have to learn* ; only when we lift a weight do we know what burdens we cannot bear; it is only by expressing what we do know that we become aware of what we do not. It is work, the first aspect that brings to us our wealth of wisdom, by revealing to us how very poor we are. When the spirit of service encounters the fact that we are poverty- stricken it sets about accumulating wealth.

Everyone possesses, however poor he be, the threefold wealth of Heart, Head and Hands, the last of which has a double aspect of bodily health and money. If each of us made the right and adequate use of what we have of (i) money, (2) health, (3) knowledge and (4) devotion, we would get more of these and the Cause of Theosophy would flourish. Spiritual poverty is the cause of all poverty. Poverty and impurity go hand in hand and work side by side, and there is a very close connection and interdependence between (1) bodily ill-health, (2) vital impurity, (3) emotional deformity and (4) mental weakness. Once again we actually know how poor we are only when we have found out how rich we are.

Lack of time is a very general complaint and as an excuse is very commonly offered. But there is a universal saying to the effect that he who is the busiest has time always at hand. *Time and laziness are enemies and he who uses time is ever the friend of Time.* It is when our time is not used to the best of our strength that stagnation sets in and death results. Time, the third aspect, is the initiating power which brings to birth new and newer aspects of the God within, the Inner Ruler immortal. “Every man is impossibility, until he is born.” By the offering of Time on the altar of Theosophical Service we manifest the radiance of Joy, we live and multiply ourselves till we find ourselves a loved and loving member of the human family.

Thus work which is sacrifice creates the wealth which is the capacity to serve wisely, and thus serving all the time we radiate joy for all, and help in establishing the Kingdom of God, of Righteousness, of Theosophy.

ESOTERIC AND EXOTERIC

Soul builds body. The nature of the one is occult, as that of the other is phenomenal. Of unchanging reality is life, while form is but the evanescent *maya* that is non-existent in fact. From 1851 to 1871 Wisdom was energizing in the inner planes of being propelling towards the outer world. Then H.P.B. emerged from the Great Lodge for the service of our world and ever since, and especially after 1877 when her *Isis Unveiled* was published, certain hitherto unfamiliar words came into prominence. Among these were esoteric and esotericism, exoteric and exotericism.

She was the first since the days of the Alexandrian Neo-Platonists who unhesitatingly and emphatically, declared that a secret body of Teaching and Teachers existed. From the very start she claimed a somewhat intimate acquaintance with both. She labored in the Cause for which those Teachings and Teachers stood, for 20 years—from 1871 to 1891. Among the important missions entrusted to her was the drawing of the attention of the world to the existence of the Teaching and the Teachers; only a part of the former, under instructions from the latter, was put forward in discreet installments. This process was affected by the growth or the hindrance, especially among the aspirants to Chelaship, in recognizing the truth of the esoteric nature of both the knowledge imparted and its Wise Custodians. It is apparent to the insight of the student of H.P.B.'s teachings that she tried to prepare a body of students wise enough to value silence and learn the art of assimilation of the philosophy and through it of its Master-Proficient. H.P.B.'s mission was not only dissemination of knowledge to the world at large and the service of the century which opened with 1875. She also had to prepare a band of student-servers of the Sacred and Secret Wisdom, who were capable of transmitting the same Charge to succeeding generations, and thus purify by life and labour the mind of the race till her successors in 1975 arrived before the public to complete that which she began.

Men's minds had to be prepared for the reception of the Teaching. Grades of students is what she aimed at; those knowing less, learning from the group who knew a little more, till there would be two or three who in direct contact with the perfected Adepts remained also in touch with the world through their co-workers and helpers. A veritable Antahkarana-Bridge was planned to be erected between the World of Masters and the world of mortals. For this purpose and towards this aim she advised that the esoteric nature of matter and man be truly recognized by her students and especially by her intimate pupils. The public which perused her writings was callous to her hints and suggestions in proportion as her intimate associates and students were heedless of her direct and unequivocal injunctions. Indiscretions about the esoteric nature of the Lodge of Masters and Its Wisdom among other things, led to the collapse of the almost complete Bridge. A very small end of it which extended from the side of the Masters' World remained and will ever remain intact. As modern students purify themselves by the energy of study and ensoul themselves by the power of service, more of the Bridge will be restored. Devotion and intelligence which create are the necessary requisites and the few builders look, watch and exclaim—"Who is on our side? Who will help us? It is essential that students should intelligently recognize that Esotericism is a fact in Theosophy. Pythagoras termed it the gnosis of things that are and spoke of it in secrecy to his inner circle while Confucius refused to explain publicly his "Great Extreme." The Rishis of India, the Magians of Persia and Babylon, the Hierophants of Egypt and Arabia, the Prophets of Israel taught as Jesus did in these strange words to his elect:—

Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and

their Bins should be forgiven them.

Ammonius Saccas obligated his disciples by oath not to divulge his higher doctrines, except to those who had been “exercised.” Our own H.P.B., following in the footsteps of her Predecessors, warned: “Woe be to him who divulges unlawfully the words whispered into the ear of Manushi by the First Initiator/” She affirmed, through hints, obscure yet broad, the intimate nature of Esoteric Wisdom to be practised, while she loudly proclaimed that Primeval Knowledge and the Heirs to the Ancient of Days lived and laboured for mankind. She gathered in her writings the radiant jewels of the many mines—the diamond of India, the sapphire of Buddhaland, the ruby of Persia, the opal of Chaldea, the emerald of Egypt, the amethyst of Greece, the moonstone of Judea and set them all in the exquisite platinum of our own era which she secured from her Masters. She made this necklace for the daughter of time named the 19th-20th century.

H.P.B. pointed out that the secret teachings of the Sanctuaries have not remained without witness. They have burst upon the world in hundreds of volumes full of the quaint phraseology of the Alchemists ; they have flown like irrepressible cataracts of Occult-mystic lore from the pens of poets and bards. Whence did Ariosto, in his *Orlando Furioso*, obtain his conception of that valley in the moon, where after death we can find the ideas and images of all that exists on earth ? How came Dante to imagine the many descriptions given in his *Inferno* of his visit and communion with the souls of the seven spheres ? The dark secrets of the Wisdom were allowed to see the light of day as people learnt to use them with genuine discrimination, with selfless dispassion. It is personal selfishness that develops and urges man on to abuse his knowledge and power. Thus during the last few centuries, as human selfishness grew, the Light of Wisdom diminished and those few Elect whose inner natures had remained unaffected by the march of the world became the sole guardians of the Esoteric Knowledge, passing it only to those fit to receive it, and keeping it inaccessible to others.

H.P.B. burst upon the world with her direct message. It was not poetical imagery, nor symbolic tales nor dramatized versions of Esoteric Truths. She wrote in the language of precision, simple and clear cut, as one having authority. She appealed to those around her to preserve inviolable secrecy in regard to certain information and teaching and await her cue from time to time to declare exoteric that which hitherto was given to the few to learn and assimilate. Her wise injunctions were disregarded; followed desecration of the sacred; that which was holy was given unto the dogs of the press and the pearls were cast before the swine of an egotistic, selfish public; press and public trampled them under their feet, turned on ILP.B. and rent her.

With the return of the Cycle the responsibility of her true students and followers assumes a grave proportion.

In this world of *maya* Spirit and Matter are looked upon as two different things and so are Esoteric Wisdom and Exoteric Knowledge. Nature is one and so is Theosophy. The secret of Nature is in particles of dust and in constellations of stars and both are visible and yet—invisible. The writings of H.P.B. are at once exoteric and esoteric. Their occultism is perceived only by those whose inner natures have unfolded.

One of the qualifications unfolding that inner faculty which reveals the hidden side of the known phenomenal world is the power to keep inviolate the secrets entrusted to us by Nature or otherwise. Often in the enthusiasm to help and serve our fellows we scatter on the highway the seeds gathered from our study of Theosophy and our meditations on the facts of the philosophy. This is due to egotism, often of a very subtle type. To train them in the art of

keeping secrets, many a wise teacher has devised ways and means whereby innocuous facts and fictions were given to students for the practice of keeping them private and learning how to avoid revealing them directly and indirectly in answering questions and in conversations.

It is a wise practice to impose on oneself the obligation of secrecy in reference to certain metaphysical and psychical teachings or spiritual and mystical practices. In doing so care must be taken that the student does not fall prey to the assuming of a mysterious attitude, which is still another form of egotism. “What thou hast to do, do it in quietude though a multitude surrounded thee; what thy right hand received or what thy left hand giveth let only thy Hidden Heart know”—such is the aphorism of old and the rules of the spiritual Path are the same today as of yore.

Corpses exist, but a living body has always a soul. Corpses of knowledge exist, but the Science of Life has the Master-Soul behind. The mystery of the living body, the mysteries of the Science of Life, are esoteric; these mysteries show themselves mystically in the visible body, in the recorded Teachings of the Master-Souls. The esotericism of the Gita is within the eighteen discourses and there is no need to look for a nineteenth discourse. In the recorded message of H.P.B. all her Esoteric Wisdom lies buried. Her students and pupils will discover in her teachings that which is esoteric; silence and secrecy preserved will lead to further and nobler knowledge of the Inner Temple. To gain entrance every student has to become the Path which is Life Eternal. He has not only to find the Path but to make the Path. Between the student and the Golden Wisdom of the Masters which he is seeking there exists a gulf—the abyss of separation. He has to find that Antahkarna-Bridge on which silently, secretly, faithfully, some may be building, building, building—who knows ?

HOW TO REACH MASTERS

The existence of Soul, which is, in fact, the Real Man, leads us to accept the fact of its unfoldment. The growth of the Soul naturally leads us to the fact of the existence of the Masters-Mahatmas, Great Souls, who unveil the Glory of Greater Souls in ever-ascending scale—the ladder above, as also the ladder of souls descending which has its base in the lower kingdoms of nature. Then comes the realization of Brotherhood of all Souls.

In the work-a-day world of commerce, business, profit, pain, many forget the Soul vision; a few earnestly materialize that vision, and often they enquire about the Great Souls so that they may feel their nearness. Masters are essential facts in our soul-evolution, and unless the conviction is born in us that without their aid and intermediation we as human souls cannot realize our identity with the Universal Soul, we do not make practical effort at hastening our evolution.

Many are the questions asked about the Masters. It is often forgotten that we cannot find Them by merely asking about Them, nor by geographically traveling to where They live in Their physical bodies. They must be found by an altogether different process. Nor are They to be found by the comparative study of philosophy, religion, and science, which takes us into the intellectual world, for Their habitat is not the intellectual world, either. But we can purify our intellectual nature and control our desires, and if we consecrate this body of ours so that it becomes a Temple of the Living God we are, then we shall be able to know the Masters.

Complete self-abnegation is necessary—the giving of ourselves to the Masters who exist and who live in a world of their own—the world of Spirit. The method is that of Self-realization. Therefore, all our studies, all that we do, all our life must be put in its entirety at the feet of the Masters that they may make use of it, as they alone know how to do. Do not think that because we have weaknesses and demerits we cannot be made use of. Masters are great alchemists. They know how to transform seeming evils into powers for good. So, we must offer them not what we have but—all we are. People are willing to give part or the whole of what they have, but there are very few who are courageous enough to give themselves to the Masters. Fearlessness is required. That fearlessness comes when we believe ourselves to be immortal, and not mortal, not as people coming and going, living and dying, but as gods in the making—gods who are unfolding their powers slowly and steadily, but—surely.

When we have gained an unshakable belief in our own powers, then we shall have that first necessary virtue—fearlessness. At the present moment, mentally, morally, and physically, we are all afraid of what may come to us from without. That is so because the warrior within has not been recognized. When we see ourselves as gods, willing to fight all evil, then we will not be afraid of what comes from without, but remain steady in the midst of great storms. Therefore, we must believe in *ourselves*, not in someone else; we must know ourselves, and remember that knowledge comes from within, that peace and power abide within. It is the Inner Power that we need—the Power that “fears no more the heat of the sun, nor the furious winter's rages.”

Those who have lived according to the teachings of Theosophy have realized some of the glories of the divine life of the Masters; and they living by the power of the Masters are able to bring others the sunshine of peace and strength and wisdom so that minds become illuminated, hearts purified, and we know—if only for a moment—that we are immortals of the world of souls.

We are to study the teachings of Theosophy while trying to live the *life*, thus making

continuous, not spasmodic, effort at every hour of the day to keep the Masters and Their Messengers alive in our minds till we ourselves become disciples possessed of the ardour of the Messenger. Such is the high destiny that awaits every son of man. But it means acting like a man, by the control of our lower nature and the showing forth of the glory of the higher. That serious attempt makes it possible for the Masters to show themselves to us; but they will come into our life on the one condition— that we fit ourselves to be able to reveal this Life to others. For unless we have made ourselves channels for Their Life in order to help others we cannot touch that Life for ourselves. One quality of the Masters' Life is its power of motion, its capacity to move on and on. If we do not become channels through which the Life can pass on to others, then that Life cannot flow into us; if it did, it would break us. The Masters are the Masters of Compassion, and they give the gift of Their Life to enrich and not to disturb our existence. And they speak to us through all men; they also speak to others through us. As we walk the streets, as we greet our friends, as we do our common task and go our daily round, as we read, as we write, as we speak, they act through us, if we will only let them.

The Masters Themselves are channels of Divine Power inherent in that Source less Source named in Ancient India *Maha Vishnu*. Our own spiritual strength and bliss flow therefrom. They are Great Souls as we are lesser souls—but both are souls. To live as souls, to help as souls, to toil as souls to serve as souls other souls, is to recognize the Soul of Souls in all places and at all times. Thus rivers and streams and oceans reveal the splendor of the Soul; flowering shrub speaks its own message as the giant mountain its; small and great lose themselves in the identity of the One Spirit. The peace and power of realization arise in the knowledge that Masters live and work and help by the Way of that Love which is Compassion.

THE PATH OF THE MASTERS

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.

THE PATH OF WOE

Students of Theosophy, having grasped the tenets of Reincarnation, Karma, and the Path to the Masters; naturally Endeavour to make practical application in their own lives and circumstances. They want to live. Earnestly they attempt to manifest in their daily actions the results of their mental acquisitions of the great teachings. Seeing the sweet reasonableness and merciful justice of the laws of manifested Nature, they desire to co-operate with the Divine Will in evolution. Let us apply Theosophy, they say, and forthwith they begin.

A dozen things instantly overpower their budding enthusiasm. A hundred small things of life conspire to defeat their earnest purpose. Girding their loins and more determined than ever they stand up, Arjuna-like resolute to fight. Between petty triumphs and many failures, blaming their own Karma and doing what they can, most of them spend their days hugging small satisfactions and hoping that something sure will happen some day—and they add, if not in this life, then in the next.

Long experience and continued observation of such Theosophic efforts of earnest and devoted individuals enable us to answer, albeit partially, the question that is sometimes asked: “What is wrong with us ?”

Let us try to find an adequate reply.

That the Spiritual Path is uphill and steep, that it is the Path of Woe, that the gateway to it is strait and narrow, that it is sharp as the razor's edge and can shave human natures all too fine, is not fully comprehended by the enthusiastic neophyte. All have read these statements but each one of us thinks that by some special decree of Providence “it will be different with me.” We profess belief in brotherhood, but with most it is profession and not life; for in this, too, as in all else, we are brothers and the Path of Woe is for *all*; the razor will shave *all*. When the Buddha instituted shaving the head for his mendicants, he did not make himself an exception, nor say to his favorite disciple, “Ananda, thou mayst retain thy lovely locks/* The Law of Brotherhood manifests everywhere at all times, but more than at any other place does it work its miracle in the heart of the would-be aspirant to Perfection and Wisdom and Sacrifice and Service. That great Law is at once the expression and the gauge of spiritual unfoldment. It sings its perfect song in the Hearts of Compassion of the Great; Ones. Next, naturally, it envelops men and women who desire to be their disciples and servants. We who are resolved to tread that Path must expect not to be exceptions; if our path is all smooth for us then it is *not* the Path of Woe. Each one on the Path gets his share of woe, and it is an equal share ; for all those who are aspirants to Wisdom, who have resolved to tread the Path, have to learn the initial lesson that there is but one melting-pot of Karma in which all the Karma, good, bad and indifferent, of every true aspirant is thrown. To “stand alone and isolated” but at the same time to “kill out all sense of separateness” is a truth to be *practised*, and this is not grasped.

If at the very beginning the above is understood, many unnecessary heart-burnings will be avoided. The way *is* difficult—the Path is the Path of Woe. We need not take it if we do not desire. “None else compels.” Each one in his freedom of choice elects to tread it, and it would be the part of wisdom to recognize that henceforth woes are our lot, that when we have conquered our own woes, we have got to help others to conquer theirs, and that under the Law of Brotherhood the individual weal is dependent on the common weal and in proportion as we overcome our woes others are helped to overcome theirs.

Thus we learn so to behave that the quantity and quality of Karma in the great melting-pot of aspirant ship may react to the benefit and advantage of all, including

ourselves. In this connection let *as* remember the admonition in the Gospel of St. Matthew (xviii: 7): “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! “We often approach the problem of Karma from an individualistic point of view and find it an appalling prospect. We gain a new confidence when we see that there is a common woe and a common weal, that we affect and are affected by comrades as weak as ourselves and as virtuous, too. We are united by the bonds of brotherhood and the woes are our common property.

Thus spiritual life begins at once to unfold its basic Law—Brotherhood. As we practice yoga, union, with the energy and activity of that Law we succeed. The moment we give up the practice we are thrown out of the Occult world into the visible world. “Come out of your world into ours!” said a Master once. Here is the first step—Recognition of the Law of Brotherhood as it touches the woes of devotees, sacrificers, warriors for the Kingdom of the Spirit.

TRUE SELF-EXPRESSION

In our last article we spoke of the Path of Woe which all must tread without exception, and indicated that it is a common and a universal experience. But why, oh why, a Path of Woe?—ask a hundred good friends. Why not share our joys and our lights and call it a Path of Weal?

It is the Path of Woe because what we have gathered in the past are seeds of anguish from which pleasure and peace do not sprout forth. The Path of Woe is the other half of the Path of Pursuit; to give up what we gathered with pain, labour and mighty effort is a Karmic retribution and in proportion as we pained others in gaining our ends, in securing our possessions, and using what was gained and secured, pain now comes back to us.

There is, however, another factor; our sincere desire for spiritual living, being an energy of the Occult World, where Life is eternal and immortal, forces into smaller fields of space and shorter spans of time the process of quick payment of debts incurred during generations of lives, all over the world. Spiritual birth is attended with its pangs, and inner growth has its pains of teething, walking and all the rest. For the earnest and enthusiastic aspirant these uncomfortable experiences are crowded together, and thus the sum total of previous Karma shows the balance in the currency of woe on our debit side.

The method of the payment of past debts is mercifully devised by Wisdom; it enables us to transform woes into joys in the very process of payment. That method, to be pursued as we tread the Path of Woe, is living the life of self-expression. In fact, the debt in question cannot be met otherwise. Deliberate practice at living differently than we have hitherto done has to be undertaken. Leaving alone the life of the senses and the mind, refusing to be energized by feelings and emotions, ever watchful, continuously heedful, to live in terms of the soul is the high enterprise in which we are engaged. To pursue that task by the old method of haphazard and ever-moving, ever-changing existence is an error many of us commit. Self-collectedness is the watchword of the new method. To move in a deliberate manner from within, which is the region of the Soul, to the without, which is the sphere of sensuous existence, is the first necessary qualification. To collect together the scattered forces, and to reflect on them by the aid of the Light of the Higher Self, so that they are animated and enlivened by it, is our *Dharma*. All of us understand this in some measure, but what most of us do not seem to grasp is the fact that this process has to be regular, persistent and continuous. They are not religious ceremonies to be performed periodically nor are they like sacred festivals which fall on a few occasions in the year. They are not even like unto heroic acts which men perform to their glory and renown once, perhaps twice, in their lives. This watchfulness and this self-collectedness have to be observed and applied every hour of the day, fifty-two weeks in the year; they must manifest their power in all our labours undertaken for profit or pleasure, in work or recreation, in small activities or in important ones. All the while to energize our environment by the Power of Wisdom within us is the first step which aspirants have to take. This no doubt is irksome, exhausting to the feelings and fatiguing to the mind. To persist successfully is to pass the first great test that the Wardens of the Portals of the Occult World present to us ; they do so because of *our* resolve, *our* enthusiasm, *our* earnestness, *our* sincerity—because we ourselves put ourselves on the Path, and are attempting to “ force ” the Masters to accept us as their pupils and servants.

We should so live and act, so love and labour that every experience is perceived by our Inner Ruler and is forthwith assimilated by him. All our experiences ought to be flowers from which the bee sucks the honey of knowledge and stores it away for feeding in sweetness and in strength the hungry and the weak. Here is another factor to be noted.

Aspirants miss assimilating their experiences. How many of us truly assimilate what we contact in the world ? To assimilate in as full a measure as possible what we contact, is a necessity of the spiritual life; thus the life of self-expression begins.

Then, welcome each rebuff
 That turns earth's smoothness rough,
 Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go !
 Be our joys three-parts pain !
 Strive, and hold cheap the strain ;
 Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!
 For thence—a paradox Which comforts while it mocks—
 Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
 What I aspired to be,
 And was not, comforts me :
 A brute I might have been, but would not sink i the scale.
 What is he but a brute
 Whose flesh hath soul to suit.
 Whose –spirit works teat arms and legs want play ?
 To man, propose this test—
 Thy body at its best,
 How far can that project thy soul on its lone way ?
 Yet gifts should prove their use :
 I own the Past profuse
 Of power each side, perfection every turn :
 Eyes, ears, took in their dole;
 Brain treasured up the whole ;
 Should not the heart beat once “How good to live and learn “ ?

In these lines from Robert Browning's “ Rabbi Ben Ezra” we come across the gospel of self-expression which is a requisite of the spiritual life. Pondering over them we see how mistaken are the notions in people's minds who glibly talk of self-expression. It is not a matter of one of the fine arts—it is a matter of daily life, which people name drudgery, and desire to run away from. The life of self-expression is Drudgery made Divine.

THE TESTS

Our fitness or otherwise to enter the Occult World and maintain our position therein is tested definitely at an early stage of our Inner Life. The test comes from the Great Law, Sifter of man's Dharma, on the Path of Woe. The significance of this process can be understood by a correct reading of a few verses in the Gospel of St. Luke (Chapter 9). To different types of aspirants Jesus gives different answers. He rejects one eager to "follow thee whithersoever thou goest" by a diplomatic answer that "the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." He second he advises, "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God," To the third he says, "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* Here are three definite situations and all of us should enquire if we belong to any of them. Are we only lip-professors, and is our earnestness rooted in selfishness or egotism, and our devotion energized by personal ends and personal motives? For us, then, there is no place in the Occult World. Or are we half-hearted, yet desirous of trafficking in the shades of the shadow world of the dead? Have we very definitely come out from among them? Or do we belong to the third type—having abandoned earthly possessions we regret our step and yet are attracted by the Ideal, possess a desire to be like them, so that we might help them?

This test has to be passed.

Occultism speaks of the neophyte passing the tests of the elementals of earth, water, air, fire, when he enters the world of the Spirit. The correct understanding of this mystery emblem is naturally beyond most of us. But let us try to understand as best we can what it implies.

In the composition of our being are the four elemental forces which, on their material side, are spoken of by the Ancients as Elements of Earth, Water, Air, Fire. The four temperaments, phlegmatic, sanguine, choleric and melancholic; the four types of Nature-spirits, gnomes, undines, sylphs and salamanders; and several other quartets are related to and correspond with each other. For the purposes of our study, it will suffice for us to honestly ask and find answers in full and stern justice to these questions:—Are we of the earth earthy, so full of worldly belongings that we are thrown out by ourselves from the Occult World? Are we like unto that young man who went away sorrowful " (note, he was not sent away) "for he had great possessions"? Or are we water? people, sentimental, goody-goody, wishy-washy, desirous of observing customs and manners of the world of the dead? Or are we self-opinionated folk who must *air* our views in season and out of season and tell the world what we are doing or going to do, what we think and feel and who, like unto the third aspirant of Jesus, "first go to bid them farewell, which are at home, at my house,1' and incidentally tell them what we are going to do, righteously and virtuously follow the Lord, and air our views on the subject, and other matters besides? Or are we the fiery type—who can burn up earth and dry up water, and whose only enemy is the gale of fury which sometimes overpowers the weak flame and the young fire?

There are fires which cannot be extinguished and there is the Spiritual Fire, which so subdues the breeze and gale of *Ahamkara*, that it burns steady and bright. This Fire is the controller; it too is the manifested and expresser of its nature.

Young aspirants sometimes forget that self-control and self-expression are not two processes but two phases of but one process. The co-ordination of these two has to be achieved. To eliminate the earthy-rigidity of the senses, the watery-mobility of the emotions, the airy-velocity of the thoughts by proper, adequate and all-round control, and to use them as channels of the Fiery Soul which is our real Self, so that it can express itself in its true

grandeur and glory, is the double work of every aspirant. To make our body of senses and limbs the stately mansion which puts forth the majesty and tenderness of Mother Earth; to make our emotions start from the spring of Love, glide forth in the river of gentleness and empty themselves in the Ocean of Compassion; to make our thoughts harbingers of goodwill and like birds rise in the Ether of Space, singing their songs—joyous and clear and fresh; to transform ourselves into the steady-burning Flame of Nachiketas's Fire—symbol of the Disciple; that is the task that lies before us.

Self-made is the Path, Self-determined is the effort to tread it. Treading the Path we realize the Self. In Self-realization we become the Path. Thus the Truth, the Way, and the Life are one.

FIGHT OUT THE FIELD, O NEOPHYTE!

Prepare, and be forewarned in time. If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless fighter, yet lose not courage: fight on, and to the charge return again and yet again.

The fearless warrior, his precious life-blood oozing from his wide and gaping wounds, will still attack the foe, drive him from out his stronghold, vanquish him, ere he himself expires. Act then, all ye who fail and suffer, act like him; and from the stronghold of your Soul chase all your foes away— ambition, anger, hatred, e'en to the shadow of desire—when even you have failed.

THE DESERTION OF DISCIPLINE

.. .The fortunate

Is he whose-earnest purpose never swerves,

Whose slightest action or inaction serves?

The one great aim.

A verse in the *Dhammapada* says that no outer device can purify a person “who has not solved his doubts/1 It is no exaggeration, then, for the poet to say that “doubts are traitors/”

People live so grossly centered in the without that they have no time to attend to the within. Sometimes the without is full of sensuality of the animal kind; sometimes, of adventure devoid of wickedness; for many the without is full of the humdrum passing of days and weeks into months and years; for a few that without is absorption in outer ceremonialism of penance and prayer and even asceticism, with many fasts and no festivals. But always it is preoccupation with matters of the mundane spheres.

The newcomer to Theosophy begins in enthusiasm and with intuitive faith; he becomes a student, then an aspirant, with devotion endeavoring to learn and to serve; he blossoms into a neophyte. In due course he is overtaken by weaknesses and the fear of difficulties. Above all he is lured by the gaiety, the pomp and the power of the world, and he feels that his life is gliding by, untouched by all that wonder. And then come failures and frustrations, followed by doubts regarding the present mode of Theosophical living, a desire for escape or for change of venue. Boredom leads to laziness as well as discontent and the mischief is done.

“My life is marred; discipline is not for me; I must change all this. To gain the soul is fine; but to lose the world for it ? No.”

We ought to clear our minds about the vital Esoteric teaching that the arising of doubts in the consciousness of a neophyte, if not conquered by quiet study and calm reflection, leads to desertion from the field of battle. Small slips or great sins may occur, but the temptation to commit them is overcome when the neophyte stands firm and gives battle. Even to speculate about desertion of Discipline is to strengthen our doubts about the Wisdom and the Wise Ones, about the Divinity within ourselves, about the true Altruism by which alone man feels the Peace of the Occult World, sees the Light of the Hidden Ones, hears the sound of the Spiritual Spheres. Therefore has doubt been mentioned in the same context as hypocrisy, which is called an unpardonable sin in Occultism. When one gives up the Fight he begins to forget the rules of the Discipline of the Righteous Soldier; and in a short while he becomes careless, scoffs at the Discipline, struggles anyhow and even fails to see himself as a deserter.

Neophytes talk of their weaknesses but they let go opportunities to learn and to overcome them. What they are called upon to do is not to fail, not to be broken, but to remain true to the Way of Discipline, to be faithful to the very end. The only sin that Occultism condemns is the sin of desertion. Doubts of the spiritual and higher life ever spring from the form of sin (*papa-purusha*) of the personal man. Carnal forces sow seeds of doubt in us, tempt us to commit follies, goad us on to desert the good, the true and the beautiful. The temptation to desert does not come to the worldly man, for he has nothing to be tempted away from. He is free to " enjoy his carnal appetites* But the neophyte is tempted to desert the Discipline. What is the form of this temptation ? Carnal forces speak to him and say: "Why be a slave to the discipline you have accepted? Be free; make your own discipline/* This is the blackest of delusions.

The duty of the neophyte is to possess a direct ray of thought and of purpose and to use the overcoming of his weaknesses, small or big, of body or of mind, for the fulfillment of that purpose and for intensifying the power of that ray. Says an aphorism :—

Selfishness will desert you, if you do not desert the Wisdom-Word,

How encouraging is the instruction:—

. , each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time. The holy germs that sprout and grow unseen in the disciple's soul, their stalks wax strong at each new trial, they bend like reeds but never break, nor can they e'er be lost. But when the hour has struck they blossom forth.

But where can reward come from if after any failure no sincere attempt is made ? When with some degree of failure the neophyte deserts and so is broken, is he not lost ? H.P.B. has explained in more than one place the declivity which failure follows, and what this "loss" means. Failure to try and to keep on trying is the one and only real failure. Can it be turned into a success? Not until the temptation which enslaved the deserter, by the false notions of personal freedom, is destroyed; not until the doubts which caused the desertion are removed. Only then restoration to the Path of Discipline is achieved.

THE WORLD OF SHELLS AND OF SOUL

Hear what the Voices of the Silence say—
AU joys are yours if you put forth your claim.
Once let the spiritual laws be understood,
Material things must answer and obey.

While the swinging between pleasures and pains is allowed to go on, experiences are gone through but the lessons are not learnt. The Esoteric Philosophy teaches that after pleasure comes pain and that then virtue should follow. This happens only when pain has led to honest inquiry as to its cause and to a sincere search for it. Ignorance and illusion, low-mindedness and delusion are creators of pain. Only when pain's educative value is sought do we hear the message of the God of Pain. This is the initial step on the Path of Practice.

The pain that the neophyte undergoes is an experience on a particular curve of the ascending spiral of soul evolution. It begins in the personal Karma of the psychic nature. The probationer-chela of today is tested on the psychological side of his nature. This test begins when personal Karma precipitates the forces of accumulated destiny. The would-be chela has to learn that no Karma of his, emerging from the near or the distant past and whether good, bad or indifferent, is useless to him. When he proclaims that all life is probationary, he soon comes, if he is earnest, to assume the position: "I am willing to be tested." Immediately this statement of *The Voice of the Silence* takes on a new meaning: "Great Sifter' is the name of the 'Heart Doctrine,' O Disciple." Who and what will help him?

If his earnestness deepens his sincerity he will find this answer: The Esoteric Philosophy and the true Instructors will help. The probationer has turned into a neophyte on the Path and recognizes the place and the power of the Hierophant. He need not depend on his own ingenuity to overcome his self-made destiny. In fact he should not. He has to acquire the art of seeking guidance at every turn from his Discipline, his Rules and Precepts. Nothing else will aid him to Victory.

At this stage his personal Karma takes a new shape: he sees it not only as revealing defects to be deplored but also as affording avenues to quicker progress. The powers of virtues and of knowledge come thick and fast and begin to function within him, producing changes on the psychological as well as the physiological side of his personal constitution. This necessitates the giving up of some of his past habits, mannerisms and customs and the adopting of some practices of real soul and mind asceticism. The Holy War is waged according to plan and deliberately. Most of the time, most of the neophytes under tests and trials do not see that the forces which bring varied afflictions on their whole personal being are good and beneficial powers. "Why does only the evil come?" each cries. If he were to inquire and to insist upon an answer he would learn that he is able to perceive afflictions and weaknesses because of his inner growth.

At this stage of soul evolution the Guru and the Hierophant teach the Antahkaranic being in him, not his Kama-Manasic being. The Manasic being or the Inner Ego brooding over that Antahkaranic being stirs up in him the muddy waters of Kama Loka. Unwisely he identifies himself with his egotism and pride, his selfish ambitions and, alas I he knows not that he is making the task of his Inner Ego doubly difficult. Unconsciously to himself he spurns the aid near at hand, looking in the opposite direction for succour and solace. This is the very first lesson that the neophyte who has *dedicated* himself to the treading of the Path must learn. (There are probationers who have not dedicated themselves ; such are cleaving to mundane existence in varying degrees and the trials of such were referred to in the preceding article of

this series.) But the Esoteric Philosophy teaches the dedicated ones to cease to worry and be anxious about their bad Karmic precipitations, and to identify themselves with that which is beneficently powerful on the causal plane within. That which comes down and out is of the past— so much faecal matter, useless for building health, useful only as an indicator of our present inner state of aspiration to build a centre of strength and calm and dispassion.

How can we know that such a centre is emerging in our Antahkaranic being? By observing what dirt and dust and filth is being thrown out, causing no doubt pain and shame to us. One of the temptations of this stage is, "Let me change my environment/' At this stage there is no question of deserting the Path of the Masters, of giving up the accepted Discipline, but the temptation is, " Let me change my environment! as if we were not going to carry along with us our Kama- Manasic forces and as if these were not going to continue to throw out our faecal matter!

The fight of the neophyte in this stage is not in the outer sphere of environment; it is between his Kama-Manas and his Antahkaranic being on which the radiation of his Inner God and his Guru is focused. He is that being, and not the Kamic tendencies, propensities and impulses. Whatever the nature of his moods and ebullitions, they are not caused by anyone or anything outside. Outer persons and events are not even the real agents of his probationary testing. These outer persons and things do not try him. The inner Kamic forces of the Elemental world are the primary and the real agents of his testing. This inner process is so complicated that it takes a long period to fathom the meaning of the process, to get over the ensuing evil. In this stage the neophyte is learning to discern, not yet even to endure. The test of endurance will follow only when he has learnt that his foes are within, are of his own household, and that it is of no use to blame secondary causes.

How unequivocal and emphatic is *The Voice of the Silence*:—

Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites thee to thy "Silent Self/' Think not that when the sins of thy gross form are conquered, O Victim of thy Shadows, thy duty is accomplished by nature and by man. (pp. 3*~33)

Pertinent is the distinction made between the inner and the outer. Sins of the body are effects of the sins of the Kama-Manasic being. The destruction of the outer sins is not to be achieved by seeking a new environment but by fighting the *Tanhaic* Elementals and the *Skandhaic* Lives which are within. These produce the sins of the gross body.

In this stage we must learn the art of being present at our own funeral—a very important stage in the developing life of the neophyte. When he dies the death as a Kama-Manasic being and witnesses *that* funeral he knows something profoundly fundamental. To be present and watchful at that funeral he must focus his sight on the corpse, and as a spectator he must witness the death of his *papa-purusha*, his form of former sins. It is the calm, courageous, persistent identification with the God within which enables him to discern that his enemy is not created by Mother Earth but by his own Kamic actions. Among the mourners he will not find his companions but a vast concourse of living Kamarupic beings. His companions will rejoice at his freedom from bondage to the lower, his attaining the light of the Higher. He surveys the Kingdom of the Dead from the altitude of the Kingdom of the Quickened, on his way upwards to the Kingdom of the Living.

A MAN IS BORN

Love thyself last. The Vastnesses above thee
Are filled with Spirit-Forces; strong and pure
And fervently these faithful friends shall love thee:
Keep thou thy watch o'er others and endure.

In the Righteous War which every chela has to wage and win, the probationer must not err by measuring only the strength of the enemy—his personal nature. We have seen in the preceding article how he should recognize the strength of his own godlike nature and the powerful allies of his own Divine Ego. Not only is his own Eternal Self by his side but, as a Divine Ego, he is helped by the hosts of Friends of the Eternal Self.

The first lesson in practical Occultism which the neophyte has to learn is that he is indissolubly linked with the whole of nature, that he is the Microcosmos— an exact replica of the Macrocosmos. His Eternal Self is the Supreme Spirit of the universe, and every power of that Supreme is possessed by him. His human Soul, the Higher Mind, is an aspect of the Divine Mind-Soul, Mahat or Maha Buddhi. Further, the constituents of his personality are derived from the Spiritual Forces acting in Matter. This lesson of the Occult Philosophy has to be learnt and assimilated by the neophyte. The first task is that of extricating his Manas from Kama and establishing the *Antahkaranic* Centre, looking upwards or inwards towards its parent and watcher, Manas, the Divine Ego.

The second lesson is to perceive that the powers in great Nature are his helpers; Sages or *Rishis*, Gods or *Devas*, Nature Spirits or *Devatas* are ready to help. By knowledge and awakened will that *Antahkaranic* Being is able to command the Nature Spirits or Elementals. The Esoteric Philosophy teaches that there are four types of Elementals related to the four great elements—earth, water, air and fire; next, that the Gods or *Devas* presiding over these great elements are among the builders of man—the sevenfold being. By acquiring special knowledge of the science of Occultism under the guidance of its Professors and Doctors, the neophyte learns how to conjure them and to invoke their help for winning the war in which he is engaged. Then there are the Sages and the Seers, the Mahatmas and the Nirmanakayas, the Silent Directors of the probationer's Divine and Eternal Self. These Living Mahatmas are *Siddha-Purushas*, Perfected Beings who hold the powers of Life in Their own strong hands. Their Philosophy- Science contains all the necessary knowledge for living the life of the Warrior-soul, the fortune's favoured soldier. Even theoretical knowledge of the major principles of the Esoteric Philosophy purifies the lower man; as he ponders over the great teachings, assimilation takes place and this elevates him and thus enables him to see the light of his Divine Ego, to hear the voice of that Silent Speaker. However indirect and short-lived this experience of seeing and hearing, it confirms the neophyte in the firm position he has taken with the end in view, of being a helper of Nature on her path of Life and Light.

The neophyte must learn the truth that the army on his side is made up of pure Intelligences of Sages, Gods and Elementals; further, that in the army on the other side (his lower nature) there are also some pure forces, which are there captured by the lower and dark aspect of Nature—and that they help the neophyte in their own peculiar manner. Thus in the *Gita* allegory, Bhishma and Drona and Kama contributed each his own share to the great victory of Arjuna. This aspect of the war—the help to the true Warrior-Soul from both the light and the dark sides of Nature—is difficult to comprehend. But it is well for the neophyte to know of it, at least in theory, and to strengthen his soul with the truth that in a real sense

the *whole* of Nature is on his side, as he wages the war against human darkness and evil.

The Sun, the Moon, the Stars; air, fire, water, earth; gold and silver; flowers and fruits; birds and beasts; slum-dwellers and geniuses; saints and sages—all befriend the Warrior-Soul, all become his educators. As he transmutes his lower nature, he brightens up the sub-human universe, and becomes more and more a channel of the super-human Intelligences and of the Most High. In transmuting his personality he has become a Personage—a Man who has realized the truth that he is one with the indivisible Macrocosmos.

Unity is the Law; Rhythm, the Motion of Life. Man, in his ignorance, does not recognize this fact. Man is a Spirit-being, a Mind-being, a Body-being. He does not know this. But Theosophy gives him this knowledge. In his illusion and delusion man fights man. Theosophical wisdom alone gives a complete and satisfying exposition of the injunction of the Oracle at Delphi—"Man, know thyself."

Says Light on the Path (pp. 12-13):—

Having obtained the use of the inner senses, having conquered the desires of the outer senses, having conquered the desires of the individual soul, and having obtained knowledge, prepare now, O disciple, to enter upon the way in reality. The path is found: make yourself ready to tread it.

Inquire of the earth, the air, and the water, of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this.

Inquire of the holy ones of the earth of the secrets they hold for you. The conquering of the desires of the outer senses will give you the right to do this.

Inquire of the inmost, the one, of its final secret which it holds for you through the ages.

The great and difficult victory, the conquering of the desires of the individual soul, is a work of ages; therefore expect not to obtain its reward until ages of experience have been accumulated.

THE DIVINE DISCIPLINE

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.

That way begins and ends outside of Self.

DIVINE ETHICS

In its practical bearing, Theosophy is purely *divine ethics*.

(*The Theosophical Glossary t " Theosophia ")*

All that was great, generous, heroic, was, in days of old, not only talked about and preached from pulpits as in our own time, but *acted upon* sometimes by whole nations.

(*The Key to Theosophy*, 2nd Indian ed., p. 226)

In numerous places H.P.B. emphasizes the importance of the practice of Theosophical ethics by students. Theosophical ethics are not something unique and special — they are ancient, like the metaphysical and philosophical doctrines of Theosophy.

"These ethics are the soul of the Wisdom-Religion, and were once the common property of the initiates of all nations/" wrote H.P.B. Not only did Gautama and Jesus preach the ancient ethics, but with every attempt at Theosophizing any race or civilization—£.g., the movement founded by Ammonius Saccas—these old ethical principles were promulgated. The modern Movement founded by H.P.B. in 1875 follows the ancient pattern in this as in all things. In *The Key to Theosophy* she points out that " Theosophy has to inculcate ethics/" and in presenting moral teachings she uses the same principle as in offering philosophical teachings. Just as she synthesized the teachings of every ancient school of philosophy, so also in the sphere of ethics. The second of the Three Objects of her Society, she declared, was

the serious study of the ancient world-religions for purposes of comparison and the selection therefrom of universal ethics.

(Glossary, " Theosophical Society ")

The exercise of these ethics in daily living unfolds " the latent *divine* powers in man " referred to by H.P.B. in formulating the Third Object.

And in her *Key to Theosophy* she explains:—

They are the essence and cream of the world s ethics, gathered from the teachings of all the world's great reformers. Therefore, you will find represented therein Confucius and Zoroaster, Laotze and the Bhagavat-Gita, the precepts of Gautama Buddha and Jesus of Nazareth, of Hillel and his school, as of Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and their schools.

The Moral Philosophy of the Wisdom-Religion, like its living science and its universal metaphysics, is the time-honoured expression of the Great Kosmos. The Kosmos is not only visible and material but is also energetic and moral. If man's mind is derived from the Divine Mind, his soul is a ray of the Universal Soul and lives by Moral Laws which manifest as Virtues.

In her Five Messages to the American Theosophist H.P.B. states:—

.. the essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his god-like qualities and aspirations, and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him. (p. 6)

And in promulgating Theosophy it is necessary to bear this in mind:—

The function of Theosophists is to open men's hearts and understandings to charity, justice, and generosity, attributes which belong specifically to the human kingdom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being. (Ibid.-p. 9)

So we have the task of unfolding our humanity and helping our fellow men to do likewise. That this mission is not something chimerical is explained thus:—

The life of altruism is not so much a high ideal as a matter of practice. Naturally, then, Theosophy finds a home in many hearts and minds, and strikes a resounding harmony as soon as it reaches the ears of those who are ready to listen. There, then, is part of your work: to lift high the torch of Liberty of the Soul of Truth that all may see it and benefit by its light.

Therefore it is that the Ethics of Theosophy are even more necessary to mankind than the scientific aspects of the psychic facts of nature and man. (Ibid., p. 12)

But how is this task different from what every church pulpit and every social-service programme is trying to accomplish? First, ours is not a creedal or organizational appeal. Other institutions refer to Christian ethics and Hindu morality, and sometimes mix up religious ritualism and social customs with moral principles. How can churches preach Universal Ethics any more than can a political party? They are like business houses with their chants, exploiting the self-interest of their adherents for sectarian purposes. The practice of the Law of Universal Brotherhood is not encouraged.

Secondly, while it is true that good conduct is stressed and ethical values are discussed, the pure first principles of morality rooted in the soil of universal philosophy are unknown. *True* philosophy is absent where salaried priests are present. In the scientific researcher, too, altruism, pure and genuine, is absent. It has taken our civilization over half a century to recognize what Mahatma K.H. taught in 1880:—

Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy—therefore, can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. (U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 29, p. 6)

The use of the atom bomb to destroy two Japanese cities shocked the conscience of almost the entire world and demonstrated man's inhumanity to man, which the researches of modern science encourage. Even today the secrecy enveloping the progress of the manufacture of destructive bombs remains unbroken—this is not a manifestation of Universal Brotherhood on which Universal Ethics are founded. Where are the scientists and where is the nation which will break this black secrecy and compel the destruction of this dark, destructive use of weapons? Will our India do it— refusing to use the knowledge gained by its researchers in the newly established research institutes, for nefarious, destructive purposes? Will its scientists use their knowledge openly for the constructive development of a peace-loving civilization—not national but international?

Not knowledge but heart enlightenment of a large number of men and women will compel the national States to stop the destructive use of the discoveries of modern science, and a similar phenomenon must follow in the sphere of organized, creedal religions.

The emergence of the international State implies international citizenship. This must not be along politico-economic lines only, but fundamentally along moral and spiritual lines. Politics and economics will continue to be nationalistic unless the real significance of Universal Brotherhood is perceived. And for its full perception some practice of Divine Ethics is necessary. Human beings must aspire to feel the Divinity within and begin to act like shining gods, not as political animals.

THE FIRST STEP

In the ocean of worldly life man strives for happiness. His knowledge and experience of the past years of the present incarnation are consubstantial with the longings of his desires and ambitions, the urges of his senses and organs. Faith and religious feeling spring from and are subservient to the forces of his environment. Many men live in this state of waking life and their dream state is but an extension of their mundane strife and striving. Then death comes and the incarnation is over. Of such *The Voice of the Silence* says:—

Behold the Hosts of Souls. Watch how they hover o'er the stormy sea of human life, and how, exhausted, bleeding, broken-winged, they drop one after other on the swelling waves. Tossed by the fierce winds, chased by the gale, they drift into the eddies and disappear within the first great vortex.

The real nature of life on earth is not sought after by millions; they are either lulled into the belief that the mysteries of god and gods are not to be questioned or they accept blindly the dictum of the modern agnostics —“ Not known so far. ”

In every age Gnostics have existed and in their dictionary the terms “unknown” and “unknowable” have no place.

The *Gnosis* is Theosophy; the Esoteric Philosophy is recondite, profound, vast, but man's mind and heart are fully capable of understanding its elementary principles. Those human souls who, hovering *u* o'er the stormy sea of human life/* feel, as they grow “exhausted,” that there must be a meaning to life, a purpose in the universe, a way out of this Cimmerian darkness, begin a search. Soon or late they come upon the teaching epitomized in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 124), that

1, everything existing, exist from natural causes; 2, that virtue brings its own reward and vice and sin their own punishment; and 3, that the state of man in this world is probationary.

All life is probationary. The glimpsing of this truth is the beginning of wisdom. Study of and reflection on these three fundamental principles of human evolution test the enquirer's zeal, the seeker's persistency. If these three principles appeal to reason and the heart's instinct, what next ? The notions of creeds, of customs, of scientific agnosticism and of materialistic psychology have to be abandoned. The seeker has to admit that he himself and no one else is responsible for the conditions of life, physical, mental, moral, in and through which he must struggle to emerge on the surface, where the sunlight is met. In this effort he will soon come upon the important truth given in *The Voice of the Silence*:—

This earth, Disciple, is the Hall of Sorrow, wherein are set along the Path of dire probations, traps to ensnare thy Ego by the delusion called “ Great Heresy/”

Be it noted that the acceptance of the fact that all life, and therefore one's own, is probationary, and the resolve to learn more, bring one to that stage where one recognizes that he is a pupil, a learner, and that the Master is within himself. Says H.P.B.:—

The “great Master “ is the term used by Lanoos or Chelas to indicate one's “ Higher Self. “ It is the equivalent of Avalokitesvara, and the same as Adi-Budha with the Buddhist Occultists, Atman the “Self0 (the Higher Self) with the Brahmans, and Christos with the ancient Gnostics.

The overcoming of the defects born of personal and environmental knowledge, and the development which brings perception of the traps which ensnare the Ego by a disregard of the true philosophy of Universal Brotherhood — these cause the God in us to become our guide and friend. The Master within is patient to wait and watch for the awakening of the personal man; and compassionate to warn, to encourage and to guide him once that the personal man accepts the Master as the Inner Ruler. Study of and meditation on the nature of the Self bring the pupil and learner to the stage described thus in *The Voice of the Silence* :—

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.

Now here, now there, these rays illumine it, like sun-sparks light the earth through the thick foliage of the jungle growth. But, O Disciple, unless the flesh is passive, head cool, the Soul as firm and pure as flaming diamond, the radiance will not reach the chamber, its sunlight will not warm the heart, nor will the mystic sounds of the Akasic heights reach the ear, however eager, at the initial stage.

The personal man is enveloped by “the thick, dark clouds of matter”; through that envelope the Light penetrates because of loyalty to the truth perceived and faith in the Master within. However dim the rays which penetrate the jungle growth of animalism and the separative tendency of cold intellectualism, the pupil is appealed to undertake further exercises for his inner development. Flesh “passive/” “head cool,” Soul “firm and pure” — the achieving of these calls for arduous effort and takes the practitioner a long time. The flesh represents the urges of the senses and the organs; they are active in the personal man; they are in command; they rule. They are positive; they have to become passive or receptive. When they are active they heat the head, and confuse the thinking principle and enslave it. Only a cool head, a calmed mind, a tranquil heart, can control the flesh and make it listen to truth, to reason, to righteousness. To develop a cool head we need “the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions, *i.e.*, appropriate study to learn how to make the head cool. The Soul within is firm and pure and the strength and steadfastness of that Soul must be appealed to. This necessary appeal, made with faith and conviction, brings the response to our lower mind and makes it cool and concentrated.

It is indispensable that the learning aspirant and practitioner apply the basic idea of Occultism, that true growth is an unfoldment from within without. We have to grow as the flower grows, from inwards outwardly.

This prolonged exercise constitutes the first step in its completeness. It may take many years; it may take a lifetime. In attempting to learn the full lesson implicit in the taking of the first step, we are also learning that time has to be conquered. Not past, present and future, but only that aspect of the present which is the Eternal Now, need be our concern.

“ BLEND THY MIND AND SOUL ”

The *Book of the Golden Precepts* advises the aspiring devotee to “ search for the Paths/’ The Inner Life begins with enquiry and search (*cf.* the *Bhagavad-Gita*, IV. 34). The roads of a city like all material ways lead outwards, and the rotundity of our earth brings the wayfarer back to the place he started from. The religious pilgrim bound for Kashi or Mecca also returns to his home to continue the routine of his former living.

The Esoteric Philosophy confirms the intuition of the mystic that the Path to Soul-life is an Inner Path. Sages have taught in allegories that the Inner Ways exist, and that there are milestones in the inner world as in the outer.

The Voice of the Silence refers to the Path of Liberation and of Renunciation; also to the Paramita Path and the Aryahata Path. The would-be chela is asked to begin the “ search for the Paths but there are conditions for the very search :—

Search for the Paths. But, O Lanoo, be of clean heart before thou startest on thy journey. Before thou takes 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.

Preparation for the Inner Pilgrimage should not begin unless we have cleansed our heart in needful measure. The “heart” of the embodied soul is his “ discerning power,” which is *tamasic*, dull and befogged, obscure and mistaken; or *rajasic*, incapable of deciding what should be eschewed and what accepted; or *sattvic*, having knowledge of what to do and how, and also of how to hold fast and how to set the soul free. Therefore the cleansing of the heart consists in purifying our perceptions, in acquiring the pure and true power of discernment.

Now our passage names three pairs : (1) the real and the false ; (2) the ever-fleeting and the everlasting; and (3) Head-learning and Soul-wisdom, or the “ Eye “ and the “ Heart Doctrine.

To overcome the limitations of worldly perception and to unfold higher discernment is the preliminary task; this preparation for the journey is necessary before the first step is taken on the Path that winds uphill all the way. This preliminary task involves the discarding of useless belongings that would make the journey almost impossible, and the making ready of our mental luggage.

Self-purification depends upon Discrimination, *Viveka*, which is the first necessary mental quality named by the great Shankara in his *Crest-Jewel of Wisdom*. What is the Real? The Changeless is the Real. Truth is changeless; it is everlasting; it does not pertain to the past, the present or the future, but to timeless duration, the Eternal Now.

There are two types of knowledge, designated as Head-learning and Soul-wisdom. The former is called the “Eye” Doctrine, for the personal man uses his mind depending upon the data his senses supply. Soul- wisdom is called the *Heart* Doctrine, for it is in the Heart that the inner Wisdom of the Soul, the Silent Thinker and Watcher, springs up spontaneously. The Man “ for whom the hour shall never strike “ *knows*, for it is knowledge.” The great Meister Eckhart’s statement is illuminating in this context:—

Hearing draws in more, seeing leads out more, the very act of seeing. In eternal life we are far more happy in our ability to hear than in our power to see, because the act of hearing the eternal Word is in me, whereas the act of seeing goes forth from me: hearing, I am receptive; seeing, I am active.

Ignorance is a hindrance and a handicap for the mundane man who desires to get on in this world. To compete and win the race in ordinary life — that is his objective. Correspondently, Head-learning is a handicap for the aspirant who strives to obtain Soul-wisdom, to retreat within to the cave of the Heart.

An ignorant man can get at his innate ideas and divine intuitions, but a man of Head-learning cannot do so. His false knowledge, relative knowledge, partial knowledge, is different in kind from Soul-knowledge. The latter is not an extension of Head-learning. Head-learning hinders the aspirant; for him it is worse than ignorance. There is one aspect of relative knowledge which may aid the mind seeking Soul-wisdom. The latter can act as a guide and an illuminator by showing what is true in relative knowledge.

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.

The unified wisdom is registered in *Akasha*, the Divine Astral. Its beams reflected on earth are the Seeds of Wisdom. Every human mind is a ray of the Soul and in every incarnated existence that mind carries within itself the seeds of Wisdom. The weeds of passions, prides and prejudices prevent their sprouting. The atmosphere necessary for the action of the seminal principle in the seed is absent. Men and women do not live; they only exist and go through life; they pass through numerous experiences but fail to learn the lessons. The mind requires the breadth of vision resulting from the assimilation of universal ideas. It also requires the depth and the insight born of noble feelings which are impersonal. Thirdly, the mind needs the beneficent influence of the Magnetic Star of the World of Spirit. The navigator using his compass is aided by the polestar; the incarnated soul must learn to use the Spiritual Firmament, *Akasha* or the Divine Astral, which moves majestically and infallibly round the Spiritual Magnetic Pole, the Logos, *Verbum, Shabda Brahman*. There flow to humanity on earth from the *Akashic* firmament rays of Wisdom-Light which issue from the Diamond Soul "the Lord of all Mysteries." These rays may well be called Lines of Force. Just as from the sun innumerable beams stream forth, so from the Diamond Soul rays of Wisdom radiate. Their collective manifestation is *Akasha*.

The human mind is compared to a mirror. It is a ray of the Shining Soul. The mirror would reflect the light, but the dust of false knowledge, the dirt of passions, the ashes of moral death, are allowed to cover the mirror. Nothing but knowledge of the Occult Science or the Esoteric Philosophy enables a man to brush away the dust and wash away the dirt and the earnest neophyte can use the very ashes of death to polish the mirror and make it reflect the True.

The beginner is advised to seek the process which will enable him to blend his Mind and Soul. In this process the exercise of self-examination plays an important part. It is said that "one looking at his face reflected in a dirty mirror becomes anxious and opines, 11 am he." When in self-examination we see our ugliness, viciousness and falsehoods, have we the courage born of intellectual honesty and moral probity to face them ? If we have not, we shall fail. But if we say, " Out of this ugliness beauty shall be created ; out of this viciousness moral power shall arise; out of these falsehoods the voice of truth will be heard, " then the day of our redemption draweth nigh.

Theosophy is instinct with the grand Power of Masters* Ideation; in the recorded writings of H. P. Blavatsky, William Quan Judge and Robert Crosby is to be found that Power, easily available for the men and women of this cycle. In these writings we must not merely seek information, or even instruction; we must try to tap the Power of the Great Ones enshrined in the records. And then we shall be able to appreciate the heart-pouring of the devoted disciple:—

When I was blinded by the dark fiend of ignorance, Thou, O Lord! opened my eyes with the collyrium stick of Wisdom. Salutations to Thee, O Master.

PREPARE TO ANSWER DHARMA

Many passages in *The Voice of the Silence* are so many direct messages to anyone who belongs to "the sacred tribe of heroes"; such are "the few" to whom the Golden Precepts are dedicated. On pp. 55-57 is a compact passage which begins:—

Thou hast to be prepared to answer Dharma, the stern law, whose voice will ask thee at thy first, at thy initial step:

“Hast thou complied with all the rules, O thou of lofty hopes?...”

The implication of the statement that one has to 'be prepared' and not only prepare himself, is significant. The Teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy and the Great Teachers who are the custodians of those Teachings aid in preparing the earnest aspirant who has resolved to serve the Cause and determined to live the Life.

This passage emphasizes not the discharging of our debt—a huge one—to Karma but the need for preparing ourselves to answer Dharma. It suggests a short cut—what to do with and how to handle Karma.

Karma knows neither wrath nor pardon and seems blind in its justice; but what is Dharma? It is called *4i* the stern law.” It is different from Karma; it reveals the right way of overcoming Karma. Whatever our Karma, it can be overcome by Dharma. Karma is related to the fate aspect; Dharma, to the free-will aspect. Karma teaches us to say, *4i* Endure, suffer, pay your debt”; but Dharma says, "This is the way to learn, to pay your debt and ascend to heavenly heights.”

Action which is duty is one aspect; action, according to the Code of Law and laws is another. In any state worthy of its name, a citizen is free to live his own life as he pleases, but his country's codes of law prevent his liberty from degenerating into licence. Similarly every soul is free to act as he chooses, but the Voice of Dharma warns him if he chooses wrongly, and if it is not heeded the soul loses his caste. The Code of Law of Nature is there to help, not to hinder. It can be and should be used by the person who has the perception that the universe is governed by moral principles and is always maintained in order.

Our appreciation of the fact that we, no one or nothing else, are responsible for our present state prompts us to seek the right way to determine our duty as well as to discharge it. Ordinary men and women, even those who are well educated, are more concerned with Karma, with what they call duties, and see numerous conflicts of duties. The student of the Esoteric Philosophy and the Science of Occultism learns not to regret his present Karma but to seek the right way of action, whatever his Karma. He soon finds that Dharma, the stern law, forms the inner religion of his heart.

The practice of this "stern Law" implies discipline—the discipline of raising the self by the Self. Many rules of life ramify from this basic requirement. The aspirant has "lofty hopes"—and these hopes converge into the one grand hope to gain the Great Wisdom of the Great Sacrifice necessary for the Great Service. The principles and rules of the Esoteric Philosophy demand that we sincerely attempt to live by the power of Theosophy; the strength of the knowledge of the Wisdom-Religion should be built into our very Prana, Life or Vitality.

This knowledge cannot be acquired unless the aspiring practitioner honours the principle of silence and secrecy.

Nature is silent; she observes profound secrecy and yet she opens her *secret* chambers, lays bare her treasures before the gaze of one who works on with her, and even makes obeisance to him. He who thinks too much of himself soon boasts of himself before others and that

almost immediately tarnishes his brain, mind and will. Man is a creator; by thought he creates words, and the rules of the Inner Life demand that he be non-violent in thought and speech ; more, that he be loving in the recesses of the mind and polite, pleasant and truthful in the use of words. To live the Life, therefore, requires a calm reflection of and persistent attention to the practice of Universal Brotherhood. Therefore the second question which follows the one about complying with all the rules is—“ Hast thou attuned thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind ? \$>

The metaphysical aspect underlying the teachings implicit in the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood should be grasped. H.P.B. states:—

Occultly and Kabbalistically, the whole of mankind is symbolized, by Manu in India; by Vajrasattva or Dorjesempa, the head of the Seven Dhyani, in Northern Buddhism; and by Adam Kadmon in the Kabala : All these represent the totality of mankind whose beginning is in this androgenic protoplast, and whose end is in the Absolute, beyond all these symbols and myths of human origin. (Glossary: "Humanity")

.. the spiritual Monad is One, Universal, Boundless and Impartite, whose rays, nevertheless, form what we, in our ignorance, call the " Individual Monads" of men. (S.D., I. 77)

It is not difficult to comprehend, even with the lower mind, the fact that Humanity is of the same substance, spiritually and morally. At the other end, our bodies are composed of the same substances and essences— that also is not difficult for the lower mind to accept. But the nature of the lower mind is combative and it is* most difficult for it to perceive that Humanity is a Brotherhood also intellectually. The aspirant to Divine Wisdom in living his life must learn this teaching of the Occult Science:—

Each human being has his Manodhatu or plane of thought proportionate with the degree of his intellect and his mental faculties, beyond which he can go only by studying and developing his higher spiritual faculties in one of the higher spheres of thought. (Glossary: " Manodhatu ")

The very essence of the discipline of the earnest practitioner is to fight those aspects of the lower mind which create selfishness and egotism, to consider the good of “ all that lives and breathes.” The lower mind raises objections and barriers to transmuting the selfish mind of desires into the mind which moves by altruism, philanthropy and brotherhood.

The Secret Doctrine (I. 58) carries these beautiful and very useful words:—

If thou wouldst believe in the Power which acts within the root of a plant, or imagine the root concealed under the soil, thou hast to think of its stalk or trunk and of its leaves and flowers. Thou canst not imagine that Power independently of these objects. Life can be known only by the Tree of Life.... (Precepts for Yoga)

These philosophical propositions are necessary subjects for reflection; they brush away the dust of illusions and bring about the blending of Mind and Soul.

But who does not know that love for the whole, vast Humanity is an abstraction ? To love Humanity in the mass is as difficult as it is to feel the omnipresence of ‘Deity in the vastness of space. Deity is to be sought in the cave of the Heart, and correspondently our text pointedly refers to the " collective minds of Lanoo- Shravakas.” For those who aspire to tread the Path of.

Chelaship this verse is not only important; it is fundamental:—

Disciples may be likened to the strings of the soul-echoing Vina; mankind, unto its sounding board; the hand that sweeps it to the tuneful breath of the great world-soul. The string that fails to answer ‘neath the Master’s touch in dulcet harmony with all the others, breaks—and is cast away. So the collective minds of Lanoo-Shravakas. They have to be attuned to the Upadhyaya’s mind—one with the Over-Soul—or, break away.

Each disciple is a string of the Vina, capable of echoing the tunes of the Soul. If a single string fails to answer appropriately to the touch of the Guru, it “breaks—and is cast away.” The mind of the learner and the listener must be attuned to the Teacher's Mind; this implies assimilation of the minds of co-disciples. The conductor of an orchestra demands harmony between the players and himself. But this implies that each player, with his own instrument, must play in due harmony with all other players. The unity and harmony between co-disciples and co-workers may be called the horizontal unity, and the unity controlled and used by the Master may be named vertical unity. This latter does not end with the Master; from Him the ray of unity extends onwards and upwards to His Peers and Superiors.

It is necessary to get away from diffusive and vague abstractions ; otherwise we shall not be attuned in our consciousness to "Humanity's great pain." To facilitate our task a Great Compassionate One has given these highly practical directions:—

A band of students of the Esoteric Doctrines, who would reap any profits spiritually must be in perfect harmony and unity of thought. Each one individually and collectively has to be utterly unselfish, kind and full of goodwill towards each other at least—leaving humanity out of the question.

At first sight this sounds strange. But Masters of Perfection are most practical and fully aware of the nature, character and limitations of the mind of the disciple. They try to bring the minds of the aspiring learners to a concrete picture. And so it is added:—

There must be no party spirit among the band, no backbiting, no ill-will, or envy or jealousy, contempt or anger. What hurts one ought to hurt the other—that which rejoices A must fill with pleasure B.

Masters have but a single Will; all of them have a single feeling—Compassion; a single Teaching, ancient and constant, is spread by each of Them, cycle after cycle. One Lodge or Fraternity, One School of Wisdom, exists, and Its Mighty Custodians are ever trying to reproduce a miniature copy of it in the mundane world. This is the true inwardness of the institution of the ,f Path of Chelas hip.”

CELESTIAL EXPERIENCE IN MUNDANE DUTIES

Look to the future ; see to it that the continual performance of duty under the guidance of a well-developed Intuition shall keep the balance well poised. Ah! if your eyes were opened, you might see such a vista of potential blessings to *yourselves* and mankind lying in the germ of the present hour's effort, as would fire with joy and zeal your souls! Strive towards the Light, all of you brave warriors for the Truth, but do not let selfishness penetrate into your ranks, for it is unselfishness alone that throws open all the doors and windows of the inner Tabernacle and leaves them unshut.

—Mahatma **K.H.**

Every tyro in Theosophy knows that present actions mould our future character as well as our environment. The performance of duty, day by day, has also its immediate recompense. The Master implies, in the words quoted above, that such performance would tend towards sustaining our balance and equanimity. The small, plain duties of life hourly call upon us to acquire skill in action as well as concentration of mind. Many have a discontented attitude to mundane tasks; others are bored at peeling potatoes or writing accounts. To be of good cheer during such occupations at home or at office is very necessary.

But the Mahatma points out that "the continual performance of duty " should be " under the guidance of a well-developed Intuition.' This may well be called " a tall order." People are swayed by desires in small as in important affairs; most of the time they fail to make proper use of their rational faculty. To expect them to be guided by a well-developed Intuition "is, so to speak, asking for the impossible.

People often inquire: How can Theosophy help the common man to live a noble life ? Here is one answer: What is going to help is not the doing of works forced upon him by his destiny, with a long face, a wandering mind and a heavy heart, but a cheerful acquiescence in the accurate and punctual doing of what has to be done. The Law of Necessity provides the first help; for, it requires that that which is not necessary to be done is not a duty. The mundane ways, customs and conventions involved in the performance of duties take their toll from the earnest student, and he is compelled to seek guidance from the doctrines of the Esoteric Philosophy. Our perception and evaluation of the routine duties of life undergo a fundamental change when we examine them in the light of Theosophy. But the Mahatma advocates not a well-developed rationality but a well-developed Intuition. Intuitive knowledge depends not on logic and reason; the faculty related to Buddhi, the abode of intuitions, is the faculty of coordinating the mundane and the material to the celestial and the spiritual. This means learning the science of the laws of analogy and correspondence. The study of logic is considered necessary for the correct use of the mind. The development of intuition demands a study of the law of analogy and correspondence, so that we perceive the " world in a grain of sand " and comprehend the profound and mysterious knowledge enshrined in such a formula—"Oh ! The Jewel in the Lotus/'

In the present hour are hidden great potentialities. Can it be that the right, hourly performance of duties would bring us the vision which would prove a blessing to ourselves and to mankind? Can it be that in the " germ of the present hour's effort " there are possibilities of progress undreamt of by us? The words of the Mahatma quoted above certainly point to such an idea. Are our souls fired with joy and zeal during the doing of the small, plain duties of life? One such duty for the Theosophical student is regular attendance at all U.L.T. meetings, once again not with discontent and bored feelings but with a cheerful mind charged with zeal and enthusiasm. Among our numerous small, plain duties there are those which might be compared to the body; others, to the principle of Prana; others, to the mind; and then there are duties which form the soul aspect of them all. Regular, punctual

attendance at U.L.T. meetings is the soul of mundane duties, most helpful in revealing to us the celestial aspect of all events and happenings. But intelligent preparation for such attendance at U.L.T. meetings has to be made. Especially it seems that the Mahatma refers to this Theosophical duty when He speaks of the “ vista of potential blessings to *yourselves* [italics His] and mankind lying in the germ of the present hour’s effort/”

In and through the small, plain duties, intuitively performed, we must strive to catch the vision of the Light. But we must heed the warning: “.do not let selfishness penetrate into your ranks”; we must note the pregnant words about what unselfishness can and will accomplish.

The “ inner Tabernacle ” is mentioned by the Mahatma. Its doors and windows are thrown open, not while we eat or walk or are engaged in mundane works, but, to begin with, when we attend the U.L.T. meetings with a prepared heart.

The real value of U.L.T. classes and meetings is often not comprehended. The student-aspirant's devotion elevates him at such gatherings, which make it easier for him to pursue the principles of Unity, Study, Work.

THE BONFIRE IN THE BRAIN

Those enjoyments which arise through the contact of the senses with external objects are wombs of pain, since they have a beginning and an end; O son of Kunti, the wise man delighted not in these.—Bhagavad-Gita, V. 22

Said the Lama to Kim : "When I was a young man, a very long time ago, I was plagued with these vapours, and some others, and I went to an abbot—a very holy man and a seeker after truth, though then I knew it not. Sit up and listen, child of my soul! My tale was told. Said he to me, 'Chela, know this. There are many lies in the world, and not a few liars, but there are no liars like our bodies, except it be the sensations of our bodies/ Considering this I was comforted/'—Rudyard Kipling

It was once said by a teacher to a pupil, "Extinguish the bonfire in your brain or you will develop into a human fire-blight." Wise words these. What is a bonfire and what is a fire-blight?

A bonfire ordinarily is a large fire in the open air lighted at festivities; time was when it was lighted for the burning of bones. So the teacher must have meant the extinguishment of the fire of sense-pleasures and also of the dead bones of old and crumbling thoughts and feelings. And if this is not done one acts as a fire-blight, a bacillus destroying twigs and leaves, blossoms and fruits—embodiments of beauty and of nourishment.

Sensations light bonfires in the brain now and again; sensations form the second group of the five skandhas (vedana) which constitute the lower man, but which affect the higher man or the Soul. Sensations are very closely related to the senses and the organs. H.P.B. says that the senses are *' the ten organs of man " and that " in Occultism they are closely allied with various forces of nature, and with our inner organisms called cells in physiology." (The Theosophical Glossary)

Sensations are agreeable or disagreeable, pleasurable or painful. They are caused by the contact of the senses with outer objects; these stir the senses and affect the personal consciousness. They are also caused by the desire-mind (kama-manas)—the emotional urges which stir the senses. Sometimes we have no sensation; we are indifferent, and indifference is reckoned as the fifth class of sensations.

Now, in living their lives ordinary men and women are affected by the numerous pairs of opposites rooted in impressions, sensations and emotions. As the senses and organs are living, they have a life of their own. This life engrosses ordinary men and women ignorant of the truths about the Soul or of the very existence of the Soul. They identify themselves with the life of the senses and strengthen the false " I " which comes into being in the antenatal life and which continues to grow after the birth of the body.

The inner life is of the Soul; the outer life is of the senses. The former is the real man—the individual; the latter is the mask of the former—the personality. The Inner Ego is the Immortal Thinker, one with the Supreme Spirit—he calls himself " I am I."* The outer man is mortal, identifies himself with the bodily self and says, "I am Mr. So-and-So" or "I am Mrs. So-and- So." The beginning, the middle and the end of the Higher Life consists, first, in overcoming the notion of " I am So-and-So " ; secondly, in the recognition of and identification with the real " I/* the Thinker, who controls sense-life; and, thirdly in reflecting upon the profound nature and powers of that Thinker and Soul.

"Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver of external shadows?"

We chase the external shadows of wealth and fame, of power over others, demanding love from others; the shadows of ambition, of comfort for the body, and of home-life; we eagerly and zestfully pursue the desire for sensation; we Endeavour to fulfil emotional

urges; we long for praise from others. All such involvement in worldly tendencies wins for us the title "perceiver of external shadows." It keeps us oblivious of the very existence of the Soul; and perchance if under good Karma a man or a woman hears about the Great Self and the Grand Hereafter, he does not cleave to the Self or reflect upon the Hereafter.

Let us quote the whole passage from *The Voice of the Silence* which advises the student-aspirant to master the mental changes in his Self and slay

the army of the thought sensations that, subtle and insidious, creep unmasked within the Soul's bright shrine.

If thou would'st not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm round humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils. Thou hast to study the voidness of the seeming full, the fulness of the seeming void. O fearless Aspirant, look deep within the well of thine own heart, and answer. Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver of external shadows?

If thou dost not—then art thou lost.

Originating from the ocean of jiva, Living Wisdom, these precepts vitalize, like Prana, those "Few" to whom the *Book of the Golden Precepts* is dedicated. They possess the durability, constancy, utility and shining power of the royal metal—gold. They form most suitable frames for the priceless wisdom, the diamonds of truth, the rubies of love and the sapphires of

Beauty—the jewels for the Higher Life.

Let us study the precepts enshrined in the passage quoted above.

We have a shrine in the Astral Body, the shrine of our sensations, built on the pattern of the Akashic Temple of the Inner King, the Lord and Master, whose ambassador we are. Instead of taking our residence in the embassy provided by our royal master, we forget "the kindred points of Heaven and Home" and hire a house where the sensations of pleasure and the dead and dying skeletons of old beliefs and customs tempt us, and we fall prey to them. Thus, thoughts alien to the Soul creep in insidiously, and a whole army of lower sensations is created.

The great Shankara has taught:—

Things of sense are more penetrating in the hurt they cause than the venom of the black serpent. The poison slays only him into whom it enters, but things of sense destroy through mere beholding.

Our thoughts are often cruel and hateful, retaliatory and violent, and, though invisible to the naked eyes, they swarm round our fellow men, including those we love and respect. When we are cruel to someone we dislike, not only is he affected by our wrong emotion but all who come within the sphere of our influence, and among them are our friends and kin and innocent children, our own and our neighbors'. Our hate poisons us primarily and not only those we dislike, and more—vitiate the very air we and they inhale. Retaliation and vengeance, like a boomerang, return to their originator. Violence may strike fear in another who is weak or ignorant and even innocent, but that vice causes psychic apoplexy in him who resorts to violence.

What is the remedy?

Says, once again, the great Shankara:—

When the sick man rightly uses medicine, he is restored to health, but not through the

right actions of another.

What medicine shall we use? Our golden precept says: learn what is implicit in a profound metaphysical truth—the interrelation between the vacuum and the plenum. What seems empty is full: standing on firm earth and gazing heavenwards at the sidereal orbs, man fancies that he is able to see the shining bodies because there is no obstruction between earth and heaven ; he overlooks the fact that the ocean of air is there and rays of light are there ; that the seeming void is full. On the other hand, a solid rock has nothing about it to suggest voidness; and yet the rock as a solid body is maya, says the ancient Sage, and the modern physicist recognizes that illusionary character of the rock in his own way : the rock is composed of atoms, electrons, protons, etc. ; that rock is a seething body of motions, and the rock qua rock has a vacuous aspect.

The Majjhima Nikaya has this to say on the subject of the plenum and the vacuum:—

"By abiding in what (concept) are you now abiding in its fulness, Sariputta ?"

"By abiding in (the concept of) emptiness am I now abiding in its fulness, Lord/'

"This is the abiding of 'great men/ Sariputta, that is to say (the concept of) emptiness."

In one way or another, by continuous study and meditation, the student-aspirant should acquire that habit of mind which discerns “the voidness of the seeming full, the fulness of the seeming void.” But neither study nor meditation will suffice. It is application leading to experience and realization which must be valued and used. Therefore we have to " look deep within the well of [our] own heart,” and by self-examination, through purity and the exercise of virtue, we come to examine the Self, Its powers, Its character, Its nature. If it is true that we proceed from the Teachings to the Teachers, it is equally true that in abandoning as worthless the "external shadows" we come to know 4a of Self the powers/'

The Self IS ; it cannot be said of It that It was, is, or will be. All else come into existence, live and die to become different.

It is in the Well of the Heart that the Waters of Wisdom are to be found; drinking them, we become wise.

It is in the Well of the Heart that the Waters of Immortality are to be found; drinking them, we become immortal.

It is in the Well of the Heart that the Waters of Unity are to be found; drinking them, we shall become brothers to all men, brothers to all women, brothers to all children.

“BY THAT SIN FELL THE ANGELS”

After recording the four preliminary and basic propositions with which real spiritual life should begin, *Light on the Path* mentions the enemies of the neophyte, the first of which is ambition. "Ambition," we are told, "is the first curse: the great tempter of the man who is rising above his fellows." The whole Note on this first Rule—"Kill out ambition"—is important for every aspirant who stands at the threshold of the closed door of the Temple of Occultism. This great book advises the aspiring neophyte not to be deceived by his own heart. It adds :—

For now, at the threshold, a mistake can be corrected. But carry it on with you and it will grow and come to fruition, or else you must suffer bitterly in its destruction.

The intuition of the poet enabled John Keats to perceive this truth; in speaking of the growth of the faculty of imagination—the power and faculty of the Occultist—he wrote in his Preface to *Endymion* :—

The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted : thence proceeds mawkishness....

Between the age of puberty and the age of discretion imagination should be healthy, unless corrupted by wrong education. But often, nowadays, imagination wears itself out in fanciful ambitions about sex-love, wealth, fame and power. How many men and women reach real discretion at the age of 21 ? At what age of the body is mental and moral maturity attained? Keats described correctly the psychology of the human personality during the period between youth and maturity; but in our day and generation that period has become extended. The mature mind and heart are often not visible even at the age of 35. Thick-sighted ambition plays havoc, impoverishing the intelligence and making it dull and gross, and also sapping the integrity of moral principles. Are not the lives of hundreds sheer mawkishness, devoid of discretion, of dispassion and of stability? Their ambitions are frustrated and, even when they are fulfilled, there is frustration of another kind.

The astute politician Kautilya, in his *Arthashastra*, tells us of those whom he cajls ambitious:—

He who is impoverished ; he who has lost much wealth ; he who is niggardly ; he who is addicted to evil propensities; and he who is engaged in dangerous transactions—all these constitute the group of ambitious persons.

In all these classes ambition is thick-sighted ; moral cataract and mental myopia are the joint cause.

The Theosophical student-aspirant is bound to develop ambition in proportion to his own earnestness. Therefore the five classes of those who are ambitious, mentioned by Kautilya, are to be found in Theosophical ranks. The more a neophyte resolves and attempts, the more subtle is the way in which the force of ambition invades him. "Well is it known that ambition can creep as well as soar," wrote Edmund Burke in the first of his glowing *Letters on a Regicide Peace*.

This double action of ambition (practised visibly to all as it soars and practised underground and invisibly like the creeping white ant) often succeeds in the world of commerce and politics as well as in society; though very often frustration mars the result because there is dissatisfaction and discontent. But in the world of Soul and Spirit ambition always ends in failure. The neophyte may turn his back on the Path because of his hurt pride, and he may wallow in the muck of worldly success. Having lost the guidance of Theosophic Genius he will play with the genii which rule the earth. This is a mistaken course. What then,

Is the right course?

.. .from the stronghold of your Soul chase all your foes away—ambition, anger, hatred, e'en to the shadow of desire —when even you have failed.

LUST FOR POWER

All power is a trust—we are accountable for its exercise. From the people and for the people, all springs and all must exist.

—BENJAMIN DISRAELI

The life of a chela is made up of tests and trials. The prosaic and ordinary acts one has to perform every hour offer opportunities for the practice of the right discipline; otherwise they become future hindrances. We allow ourselves to be robbed by our ambition.

"Ambition is the first curse; the great tempter of the man who is rising above his fellows," says *Light on the Path*.

The illusory nature of ambition should be perceived. Shakespeare calls it "a shadow's shadow."

One ambition leads to another; the ways and methods of achieving success in the fulfillment of ambitions differ not only with different people but also within one's own consciousness. There are persons who try to achieve what they desire by hook or by crook ; there are others who conscientiously labour with honest motives and clean methods. Within one's own consciousness alterations and adaptations of both motives and methods take place. All such changes point to the illusory nature of ambition.

The ambition for money is very general, but the reasons for the ambition differ with different people. The sordid motive of the miser, the motive to achieve comforts in life for one's self and for near and dear ones, the motive to amass wealth to do good works, etc., make people ambitious for material possessions and wealth.

There is the ambition for fame which very often follows the ambition for wealth. Some become famous by honest, worthy and righteous means. Others elbow out other men and women to get to the front rank.

Power is another goal for the ambitious—power to be a political leader, to be a great social celebrity, to be acclaimed a mighty hero. This power needs, for its real fulfillment, the power to love and to be loved. This ambition calls for subtle ways and means for its realization. Soldiers must love their general, whose influence on the mind and character of his soldiers pronounces the general great or mediocre or unworthy. So in political life a party leader must have the respect and love of his followers, or he is a failure. The *grande dame* of social life must be loved and respected by all men and women, or she is not the great lady she professes to be.

The curse of ambition to which *Light on the Path* refers is no doubt engendered by the longing for wealth and also for fame. The aspirant to the Higher Life must "kill out" those ambitions. But he faces the most difficult of all his trials when it comes to conquering the ambition for power. The other two ambitions are easily detectable, however difficult their overcoming may prove to be. They have their own masks; but the subtlety of the ambition for power is as great as it is insidious.

The ambitions for wealth and fame make a pair; they affect each other as they live in the hearts and minds of men. Similarly, the ambition to wield power and the ambition to love and be loved are related.

Though ambition is " the great tempter of the man who is rising above his fellows," yet "it is a necessary teacher." For the man of the world this tempter and teacher functions in the worldly way. But for one who aspires to bask in the warmth and the light of the Divine, the temptations and teachings are of a high and very different order. It is recorded:—

. . .these vices of the ordinary man pass through a subtle transformation and reappear with changed

aspect in the heart of (the disciple. It is easy to say, I will not be ambitious; it is not easy to say, When the Master reads my heart he will find it clean utterly.

Ambition must be transmuted into altruism. The ambition for wealth and possessions must be used for the service of all; but we must learn to regard ourselves as trustees; in our trustworthy and altruistic hands all wealth is placed.

The ambition for fame must be transmuted into the loving and altruistic, *i.e.*, impersonal, service of all who gave us fame, who fulfilled our ambition for fame. Fame is a mental possession for universal use; not for self-aggrandizement.

Ambition for power requires a special knowledge of higher alchemy, of the transmutation of the personal self into an impersonal power. "That power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men."

This is spoken of as a crucial stage in the life of the disciple. The intuitive poet, Browning, has spoken of it:—

There are flashes struck from midnights.
There are fire-flames noondays kindle,
Whereby piled-up honours perish,
Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle.

Unless his good Karma, from some far-off past, comes to his aid, so that the disciple is spurred to proceed from unselfishness to selflessness, the ambition and love for power will become lust for power, and make him first a fault-finding and wrathful man of egotism, and if he does not check himself he will enter the declivity that leads to the "loss of all."

The ambition to be loved and respected can never be transmuted into love for others till the lust for power is destroyed. The instruction given to the disciple will never be accepted or approved by the worldly, even though they possess much goodness of heart. Says *Light on the Path*:—

The ordinary man expects, not to take equal fortunes with the rest of the world, but in some points, about which he cares, to fare better than the others.

This because the Law of Human Brotherhood is not understood and accepted. But the disciple has understood and accepted it, and therefore he "does not expect this."

The king rises and falls, the poet is feted and forgotten, the slave is happy and afterwards discarded. Each in his turn is crushed as the wheel turns on.

The disciple learns that to rearrange the circumstances which arise out of the forces of human nature itself will not avail.

When the disciple has fully recognized that the very thought of individual rights is only the outcome of the venomous quality in himself, that it is the hiss of the snake of self which poisons with its sting his own life and the lives of those about him, then he is ready to take part in a yearly ceremony which is open to all neophytes who are prepared for it. All weapons of defence and offence are given up; all weapons of mind and heart, and brain, and spirit. Never again can another man be regarded as a person who can be criticized or condemned; never again can the neophyte raise his voice in self-defence or excuse. From that ceremony he returns into the world as helpless, as unprotected* as a newborn child. That, indeed, is what he is. He has begun to be born again on to the higher plane of life, that breezy and well-lit plateau from whence the eyes see intelligently and regard the world with a new insight.

The desire and the ambition to be loved can be transmuted when the disciple acquires the Power to Love born of Dispassion, *Viraga*, which, rising above fame and ignominy,

pleasure and pain, also rises above heat and cold. To love when one is beloved is comparatively easy; to love, whether or not one's love is requited, and even when it is not returned, is not so easy. "Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks, But bears it out even to the edge of doom," as Shakespeare's sonnet points out. His lines speak of conditions which none can fulfil save one who is practicing the discipline of the disciple:—

Love is not love

Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove;
O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark.
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

Evil and evils are understood and valued differently by the good man of the world and by the struggling disciple, determined to gain victory over not only his personal evils but the corporate Evil which is engulfing the entire human kingdom. Satan

is simply the personification of the abstract evil, which is the weapon of Karmic law and Karma. It is our human nature and man himself, as it is said that "Satan is always near and inextricably interwoven with man." It is only a question of that Power being latent or active in us. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 478)

To overcome Evil the disciple has to give up weapons not only of offence but also of defence. This is felt to be a great hardship, almost an injustice, by the progressing disciple. More, if we allow the rascal, the robber, the exploiter, a free rein and do not oppose him and overcome him, his rascality and hatred will overcome all of us. *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 643) says that with "right knowledge" and "a confident conviction that our neighbors will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them" the disciple should proceed to practice the Law of Human Brotherhood. The consummation devoutly to be wished is thus described:—

The disciple who has the power of entrance, and is strong enough to pass each barrier, will, when the divine message comes to his spirit, forget himself utterly in the new consciousness which falls on him. If this lofty contact can really rouse him, he becomes as one of the Divine in his desire to give rather than to take, in his wish to help rather than be helped, in his resolution to feed the hungry rather than take manna from Heaven himself His nature is transformed, and the selfishness which prompts men's actions in ordinary life suddenly deserts him.

ANGER

The *Vishnu Purana* is said to be “equal in sanctity to the Vedas.” In response to his pupil Maitreya, Parasara tells the tale of all evolution. It is a great work, and H.P.B. makes use of it to explain deep esoteric teachings.

Parasara is the son of Saktri or Sakti, and the grandson of the holy sage Vasishtha. In the *Adi Parva* of the *Mahabharata* the story of the birth of Parasara is given. King Kalmashapara, meeting with Sakti, the son of Vasishtha, in a narrow path in a thicket, desired him to stand out of his way. The sage refused, on which the *Raja* beat him with his whip; Sakti cursed him to become a *Rakshasa*, a man-devouring spirit. So the *Raja* having become a *Rakshasa* killed and devoured not only Sakti but his brothers also. But at the time of his death Sakti’s wife was an expectant mother; Parasara was her son and was brought up by his grandfather Vasishtha. The son came to know of the manner of his father’s and his uncles’ death; so he instituted a sacrifice for the destruction of all *Rakshasas*. Thereupon the great sage spoke to his grandson:—

Enough, my boy. Let thy wrath be appeased. The *Rakshasas* are not culpable; thy father’s death was the work of Karma. Anger is the passion of fools; it becomes not a wise man. By whom, it may be asked, is anyone killed? Every man reaps the consequences of his own acts. Anger, my son, is the destruction of all that man obtains, by arduous exertions, of fame and of devout austerities, and prevents the attainment of heaven or of emancipation. The chief sages always shun wrath: be not thou, my child, subject to its influence. Let no more of these unoffending spirits of dark-

ness be consumed. Mercy is the might of the righteous.

Self-evident is the truth of these noble words of the holy sage. The *Purana* records the gift bestowed by the high gods on Parasara because of his non-violent act: “You have exercised clemency; therefore you shall become learned in every science.”

Anger is named as one of the three gates of hell (*Gita*, XVI. 2t). An angry man lives in hell or *kama-loka* in waking life. A mad man does not recognize his lunacy, nor does an angry man remember the saying of Horace: “Anger is momentary madness, so control your passion or it will control you.”

There are men who suffer from irritation born of impatience or discontent, and these soon gain strength and turn into wrath. The ultimate effect is that such a person becomes one of those who, in the words of Shakespeare, “carry anger as the flint bears fire.” Then there are those who feel indignation (and some salve their consciences by naming it “righteous indignation”) but refrain from expressing it in words. The Christian scriptures have a telling proverb: “Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned The world is full of the force of violence and anger is a pronounced and formidable expression of it. There is anger hotly expressed by words and with fists and kicks. There is cold anger, like hard ice, which burns. From its expression in slight displeasure which is merely shown by the face, to the extreme variety which produces apoplexy—the human kingdom suffers from anger. For all such Gandhiji’s precept and example are excellent. He says:—

It is not that I do not get angry. I do not give vent to anger. I cultivate the quality of patience and agelessness, and generally speaking I succeed. How I find it possible to control it would be a useless question, for it is a habit that everyone must cultivate and must succeed in forming by constant practice.

If wrath is bad for the ordinary mortal, it is one of the greatest of hindrances for him who attempts to live the higher life. The violent shaking up caused by anger in a practicing neophyte is spoken of by W. Q. Judge in his “Culture of Concentration” (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 18*, pp. 11-12). He concludes: “anger must be strictly avoided, and it cannot be avoided unless charity and love—absolute toleration—are cultivated.”

Those who study that article carefully and attentively will naturally wish to know what is the force and the substance of anger. “ Force or energy is a quality; but every quality must belong to a something, or a somebody/1 says *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 509). To say that it is disorderly motion, tending towards inertia, hardness, darkness and *tamas*; or that the nature spirits or elementals act as the agents who arouse our anger, is not an adequate explanation. The force of anger belongs to the dark side of Nature and emanates from the mysterious source symbolized as Mara, Ahriman, Devil. The dark intelligence pervasive in material Nature or *Prakriti* colours the Kama principle in man, and something of this dark intelligence and its progeny can be understood if we brood over these words of *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 260) :—

It is not molecularly constituted matter—least of all the human body (sthulasarira)—that is the grossest of all our “principles/’ but verily the middle principle, the real animal centre; whereas our body is but its shell, the irresponsible factor and medium through which the beast in us acts all its life. Every intellectual theosophist will understand my real meaning.

But all this is not as graphic as the words of Mr. Judge who refers to the progressing neophyte: “...you may soon begin to get the attention of the Black Magicians, who then begin to try to knock you out, so beware.” How is this knocking out done? “Attempts will be silently made to arouse irritation and to increase it where it now exists M (Letters That Have Helped Me, p. 115). Again, “ No irritation should be let dwell inside. It is a deadly foe. Sit on all the small occasions that evoke it and the greater ones will never arise to trouble you “(ibid., p. 137).

Irritation springs from impatience and grows into anger. The root and the remedy are revealed by Mr. Judge. The statements quoted above should provoke thought in every earnest student-server.

The Mahatma K.H. has written:—

It is a meritorious act to extirpate with the roots all feelings of anger, so as to never feel the slightest paroxysm of a passion we all consider sinful.

Here anger is designated as a sin, and in the Science of Occultism sin is a step to soul-less-ness. In that strange story *Vathek*, by the highly eccentric William Beck ford, occurs a statement about the sin of anger. *Vathek* is an Oriental story of a megalomaniac, an Arabian Caliph, who sells himself to Eblis, Satan. From crime to worse crime he moves; the tragic end of his burning heart we will not speak about. But at the very beginning of the story occurs this:—

When he was angry, one of his eyes became so terrible that no person would bear to behold it; and the wretch upon whom it was fixed instantly fell backward, and sometimes expired. For fear, however, of depopulating his dominions, and making his palace desolate, he but rarely gave way to his anger.

The Old Testament wisdom should be remembered: “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that taketh his spirit than he that taketh a city/’ Better that we close this outline study of anger with a reference to the patient, spiritual eyes which bring peace and enlightenment. Says the pupil to his Guru:—

Master, obeisance to thee. Save me sunk in the sea of life, bending on me thy steadfast glance, which rains down righteousness and compassion.

THE WAY DOWNWARD

Pious but false is the belief that the Soul enjoys eternal happiness if the person dies holding to the “right faith.” By right faith, belief in churchianity is implied for the Christian, who dies believing; the Muslim considers himself faithful if he dies with the words on his lips: “There is no God but Allah and Muhammed is his prophet and so on.

A wicked sinner, however, does not turn into a saint because his body dies; nor is an ignorant blunderer suddenly transformed by bodily death into an all knowing sage.

Contrariwise, people believe that a heathen, an infidel, a *durvand* or a *mlechcha* is bound to suffer in hell, either never-never-ending, or terminating through metempsychosis as the sinner expiates through abject and ghastly long, long suffering.

Nature clearly indicates and Theosophy teaches that life-processes have the character of perpetual motion. Eternal heaven or eternal hell for one life’s wickedness or religious belief is, on the face of it, unnatural, against common sense and moral perception.

Among the numerous crimes of priest craft the upholding of this false belief is a major one. But is there any basis and any explanation for this crass and crude notion? There is. *Nirvana* and *Avitchi* are terms which imply knowledge about the Eternal Bliss experienced by the emancipated *Nirvanees*, and the eternal torment experienced in *Avitchi* by the lonely entity who, having lived many lives of increasing wickedness, finds himself isolated with a peculiar type of memory which gnaws at him. Eternal *Nirvana* and eternal *Avitchi* are not eternal in the sense of never-never-ending. Eternity, however long, begins and ends. Philosophy speaks of sempiternity and eternity, and Theosophy distinguishes between Time and Duration. *Nirvana* and *Avitchi*, however long, come to an end, and the Absolute Power of Nature and Nature’s Law spells continuous and never-ending progression. Beginning less and endless is the process of Perpetual Motion—the symbol of the Supreme Spirit.

What, then, do the downward path to *Avitchi* and the upward gliding to *Nirvana* signify?

Every man and every woman is not immortal; each person has to win immortality. Writes H.P.B.: “Personal virtue could claim no merit, unless it had passed through the furnace of temptation.”

The technique is given in the third of the Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled*:—

Man is also triune: he has his objective, physical body; his vitalizing astral body (or soul), the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third—* the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity. (*Isis*, II. 588)

Progression and retrogression are the eternal ways which the human kingdom ever encounters. If a man does not attempt, or attempting does not succeed, in winning his own immortality he recedes and often enters the declivity which leads to *Avitchi*,

How and where does this downward course begin? Both in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Dhammapada* the downward path to destruction is described. The *Gita* succinctly speaks of the fatal descent:—

He who attended to the inclinations of the senses, in them hath a concern; from this concern is created passion, from passion anger, from anger is produced delusion, from delusion a loss of memory, from the loss of memory loss of discrimination, and from loss of discrimination less of all! (II. 62-63)

Musing on objects of sense creates a concern in them and leads to a longing to possess them. By attachment we want to yoke ourselves to them as intimately as possible. From this

longing, passion is born — not only passion for those particular sense-objects but passion for possessing the entire world of the senses and the organs. A person has passion, not only for money, for example, but also for fame, power, etc., born of passion for money. A person does not have only sex- lust but other lusts akin to it—*e.g* obscenity of speech arises; and so on. *Kama*—passion—is the builder and sustainer of egotism—the lower ‘T’-making tendency. Failure to secure the object of desire produces anger; success in obtaining it produces covetousness; covetousness ultimately, through frustration, produces anger. Anger results in *Moha*—Delusion. A deluded man parts company with his memory, which is closely allied to knowledge and experience. A man develops delusion, like any other quality, gradually. Every indulgence in anger deepens delusion. Delusion begets loss of judgment, through loss of *Buddhi*, and the entire life process is one long line of destruction—“loss of all”.

So, by not controlling the senses and letting the desires and passions have their way we lose the power to control and the guidance of the controller.

The 22nd chapter of the *Dhatmmapada* offers the same truth in a different way: An evil deed is better left undone. Guard yourself within and without. Speech which reports the untrue and refrains from expressing the true drags a man downward. Better for a man to swallow an iron ball than to live unrestrainedly, eating the food of other-dependence.

Of special value is the instruction to the practitioner: the psychological demerit of false asceticism, of an act carelessly done, of a vow badly kept, of disobedience to accepted discipline, is directly pointed out. A lax practitioner scatters more and more the dust of his passions. False shame, false fear and evil-seeing are contrasted with right shame, with what should be feared, with right handling when real evil is perceived.

The Pythagorean downward track has four steps— Belly, Sloth, Luxury and Rage.

Whatever way we look, we find that the senses and organs arouse desires, for the satisfying of which *Kama* presses the mind into its service and exploits it; loss of mental integrity causes further retrogression and delusion ensues, destroying the Soul, the Thinker.

GENII, GENIUS AND GENIUSES

As my earthly part is a portion given to me from certain earth, and that which is watery from another element, and that which is hot and fiery from some peculiar source (for nothing comes out of that which is nothing, as nothing also returns to non-existence), so also the intellectual part comes from some source.

—MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS

Two lines of evolving forces meet in man and on his attitude to them and his action on them depends his own evolution. The Third Fundamental Proposition describes them as: (i) Natural Impulse, *i.e.*, the propelling force from within outwards, of Nature, Matter or *Prakriti*; (2) Self-Induction, *i.e.*, the propelling of Spirit, *Purusha*, Man, who guides the course of evolution, of his own material or animal nature, and of the entire assemblage called Nature.

This propelling force is Will—“ that which governs the manifested universe in eternity. Will is the one and sole principle of abstract eternal MOTION, or its ensouling essence” (*The Theosophical Glossary*), Therefore this Power or Force of Will has a dual aspect: that which functions as the impelling motion in matter, and that which functions in the human kingdom as the mind of man. Thus Will becomes free under the influence of the thinking-feeling principle in man.

Fohat, the Light of the Logos, is intimately related to Will; it is the Divine Power which moves matter to build forms, using the three attributes or *Gunas*, preserves those forms, and destroys them to recreate. All that action is designated as Natural Impulse or

Fohatic Will.

But *Fohat* acts also as the Light of Wisdom. In the human kingdom, in man’s reflective self-consciousness, it is the power by which he is able to determine for himself his own course of action, and in doing so he uses that aspect of Will which is designated as Free Will. The root of Life and the root of Light are the material and spiritual aspects of *Fohat*. These two are the lower and higher natures (*apara* and *para prakriti*) of Krishna, the Logos.

In our lower nature the impulse of material life functions. Having arrived at the stage of manhood, we find that the balance principle of the manifested cosmos operates in our being. We are now weighed down in the scale of evolution and gravitate matter-wards, and then by self-effort ascend spirit-wards. Our lower nature is made up of the Genii which rule our earth; and they do not like to be controlled by the Genius which is the centre of our higher nature.

There are Genii and Genii; and there are Geniuses and Geniuses. The terms are now loosely used and the one class of intelligences and their functions are mixed up with the other class and their functions. For the purposes of this article we are using the term Genii for the powers of life which operate in man’s lower or divisible nature, and the term Genius for the Powers of Light which shine as his higher nature, the Indivisible which informs and leads the thinker, the Man, the *Manushya*, to perceive and realize his absolute Unity with Perfected Men—*Mahatmas*, Perfected Seers— *Rtshis*, Perfected Sages—*Dhyanis* or *Buddhas*.

Man, by the right use of his Will, which implies the right knowledge acquired by his mind, can become the master of the Genii of the earth and water, the air and fire, and can know the secrets of material life; but this is possible only when man has sought and secured the company of the Holy Ones of the earth—“ the conquering of the desires of the outer senses will give you the right to do this/” says *Light on the Path*.

Standing as we do in the balance position, the seesaw play between our two natures must be slowed down. The material life is not to be destroyed; it has to be made the vehicle of the Spiritual Light. The Genius and His Peers and Elders must use the Genii to serve Nature. Nature, *Prakriti*, Matter, Life, must not be feared or hated, must not be dirtied or degraded, but must be served, cleansed and elevated to receive the Light of Soul and Spirit. The Wisdom to use the Light emanates from the Divine *Fohat*, which holds the Secret in the inmost abode of the Most High. *Fohat* the Light of Wisdom, is the Robe of Glory which veils the Logos. As we serve the Powers of Life by the Powers of Light, the latter illumine our mind and we acquire self-consciously the knowledge of the Supreme Secret—man attains to the state of the Superior Man (*Uttama Purusha* of the 15th Chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*).

We have used the term Genii to draw the student's attention to the highly important words of Hermes Trismegistus quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 294-5), on which H.P.B. throws light which is of great practical value to every earnest Esotericist. Pertinent as they are to our subject, these words of Hermes are more than a mere hint:—

All these Genii preside over mundane affairs, they shake and overthrow the constitution of States and of individuals; they imprint their likeness on our Souls, they are present in our nerves, our marrow, our veins, our arteries, and our very brain substance... at the moment when each of us receives life and being, he is taken in charge by the genii (Elementals) who preside over births....

H.P.B. contributes an explanatory footnote of great practical value:—

The meaning of this is that as man is composed of all the Great Elements: Fire, Air, Water, Earth and Ether—the elementals which belong respectively to these Elements feel attracted to man by reason of their co-essence. That element which predominates in a certain constitution will be the ruling element throughout life. For instance, if man has a preponderance of the Earthly, gnomonic element, the gnomes will lead him towards assimilating metals—money and wealth, and so on. “Animal man is the son of the animal elements out of which his Soul (life) was born, and animals are the mirrors of man,” says Paracelsus.

Continues Hermes:—

They [the Genii] permeate by the body two parts of the Soul, that it may receive from each the impress of his own energy. But the reasonable part of the Soul is not subject to the genii; it is designed for the reception of {the} God, who enlightens it with a sunny ray. Those who are thus illumined are few in number, and from them the genii abstain ; for neither genii nor Gods have any power in the presence of a single ray of God. But all other men, both soul and body, are directed by genii, to whom they cleave, and whose operations they affect. . . .

And to this H.P.B.'s priceless explanation must be added; the *u* God “referred to above is

the God in man and often the incarnation of a God, a highly Spiritual Dhyana Chohan in him, besides the presence of his own seventh Principle.

Now, what “god” is meant here? Not God “the Father,” the anthropomorphic fiction; for that god is the Elohim collectively, and has no being apart from the Host. Besides, such a god is finite and imperfect. It is the high Initiates and Adepts who are meant here by those men “few in number” And it is precisely those men who believe in “gods” and know no “God” but one Universal unrelated and unconditioned Deity.

These extracts from *The Secret Doctrine* are not mere metaphysical teachings to be speculated upon; they touch the constitution of our brain and blood, our bones and marrow. These Genii are the agents of the *Fohatic* Will functioning in the Life of Nature or Matter. We contact them in our body and “they permeate by the body two parts of the Soul n; and only the higher aspect of the incarnated soul is not subject to the Genii, for that higher aspect is “*designed* [italics ours] for the reception of” the influence of the Light of Genius and

Geniuses as explained above.

Now H. B. has said that the mystery of the two minds is profound, intricate and almost insoluble for us at our present stage. She has, however, given us enough for practical application at our own stage of psychic development.

The lower mind is the seat of human free will, of our volition. This will functions in freedom whenever the lower mind disconnects itself from *kama* ("Psychic and Noetic Action": *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, p. 59). *Manas*, when extricated from *Kama*, becomes *Antah-karana*. When *Manas* extricates itself from *Kama* it means that man has freed himself from the enslavement of the Genii. It implies some knowledge of the subject of elementals, but primarily man's recognition of his "God," the Being of Light, *Rex Lucis*, who is the Genius keeping company with his peers and superiors. *Antahkarana* is "designed for the reception of the God" in man, "a highly spiritual Dhyana Chohan in him."

The *kama-manas* in Vedantic classification is *Manomaya Kosha* and it is in close kinship with its Elder Brother, *Vignanamaya Kosha*, a Being of Pure Knowledge; the Parents of both are *Atma* and *Buddhi*, the Father and the Mother of the Human Soul.

The duty or *dharma* of every man is to begin to transmute the *kamic* nature of the Genii by his own inherent Will, and look for and appeal to the Genius, Embodied Knowledge, to help him to master the Genii—the progeny of Gnomes, Undines, Sylphs and Salamanders. The Religion or *Dharma* of the Genius being the spirit of sacrifice and service, He will come to the aid of his little brother suffering the torments of worldly passionate existence.

And there is not only the Genius within us but there are also the Geniuses, Those who have perfected themselves—the Holy Ones who hold the secrets of Light for us.

The goal is not only worth the effort. It is the Great Necessity. And the Goal?—

Behold the mellow light that floods the Eastern sky. In signs of praise both heaven and earth unite. And from the fourfold manifested Powers a chant of love ariseth, both from the flaming Fire and flowing Water, and from sweet smelling Earth and rushing Wind.

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 :

Joy unto ye, O men of Myalba.

A Pilgrim hath returned back from the other Shore/'

A new Arhan is born.

PEACE TO ALL BEINGS.

LET US REGENERATE OURSELVES

The Theosophical neophyte values *The Voice of the Silence* as a book of divine discipline. What type of discipline is divine discipline ? It may be defined as archetypal discipline: it includes the discipline of the body and the sensorium, of the mind and the heart; it is the discipline of the whole of the personal man: what he should eat and how he should study; when he should put his body to sleep, the why of dreams, the way of waking and the how of doing things. This discipline affects his motives as well as his methods.

Who is the Disciplinarian ?

(a) The Inner Self beyond the personal man.

(b) The Esoteric Philosophy or the Science of Occultism.

II The Instructor, representing the *Guruparampara*.

The Inner Self is divine in essence as well as in substance; the Esoteric Philosophy is also divine in origin and content; the real Chain of Teachers is made up of links, each a possessor of Divine Wisdom, whose realization of the truths of the World of the Spirit is genuine and deep enough to enable him to pour out Compassion in the shape of instruction for the benefit of others.

There are worldly, ambitious and money-making gurus; there is worldly and false knowledge; but there are many good and earnest men who desire to learn, to grow if power. The shadow of divine discipline is mundane discipline.

In *The Voice of the Silence* there are two golden precepts—sounds enshrined in words—whose reverberations must be heard if their real meaning and import are to be osmosed:—

O Disciple, unless the flesh is passive, head cool, the Soul as firm and pure as flaming diamond, the radiance will not reach the *chamber*, its sunlight will not warm the heart, nor will the mystic sounds of the Akasic heights reach the ear, however eager, at the initial stage.

Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain lake.

The radiance of the Spiritual Sun, the Light of the Logos, warms not the hearts of men; it reaches not the chamber or cave of the heart; and naturally, therefore, its radiance and voice are of no avail to the man of the world. The divine discipline is the training of the personal man so that the Hidden Light and the Soundless Sound are known. For this a prescription is given in the two verses quoted above.

However, something more than eagerness is demanded to attain divine discipline. Both action and inaction must find room in the learner; he must learn to act without caring for the fruits of action; he must act and yet feel within himself that he is not acting, *i.e.*, that he is not the actor.

“The path of action is obscure,” says the *Gita* (IV. 17). “Even sages have been deluded as to what action is and what inaction.” He who learns to see “inaction in action and action in inaction” is described as a wise man.

The neophyte finds himself fettered by self-made fate; these fetters cannot be broken or done away with; they have to be faced and transmuted. Each and every fetter represents an effect, and care and knowledge are required in handling it. The right technique consists in examining our duties. The so-called conflict of duties can and should be resolved by every neophyte at the initial stage. Duty spells necessity; that which is necessary must be done; on the other

hand, that which is unnecessary should not be done. Practice of this rule of divine discipline takes us a long step towards freeing ourselves from the fetters of fate.

In deciding what is necessary and what unnecessary we must not succumb to the demanding or persuasive voice of desires, or to the machinating and plausible pleading of the mind; we must seek guidance from that in us which is unaffected by the desires arising from the sensorium and from the mind. Within us are the Guide, Philosopher and Friend called the Higher Manas. But—he is far distant from Kama-Manas which is ever busy with the senses and the organs, with the flesh and the devil. Therefore we must seek aid from without: from the Divine Teachings we can obtain help readily and easily. No one can become a neophyte without aspirations; no one can become an aspirant without knowledge. To become a learner, study is the first step; knowledge purifies and elevates spiritual aspirations; Soul aspirations lead to the actual living of the higher life, and thus the neophyte is born.

The performance of necessary duties and the strict avoidance of all unnecessary actions develop both discrimination and detachment. Soon the neophyte is led to perceive that his new knowledge points to a higher necessity—the doing of deeds which are not only personal duties or karmas. The Divine Virtues of Charity and Sacrifice call for deeds and not only for words, for actions and not only for thoughts and feelings. Divine discipline requires that ideation and imagination be used in speech and deeds, and harmony be established between words and acts so that no further room is left for Karmic action.

Bearing all this in mind, let us return to the prescriptions offered in the verses quoted above about the discipline of body, mind and Soul.

- (a) The flesh to be passive; the body to be agitated.
- (b) The head to be cool; the mind to be tranquil.
- (c) The Soul to be firm and pure as a flaming diamond; the Soul to be as limpid as a mountain lake.

The flesh represents sensuous cravings, *e.g.*, gluttony. The worldly indulge the bodily appetites. The activity of the flesh and the titillation of the senses produce bodily ailments, and even the signal of disease is not heeded. Bodily health is necessary for discipleship. Therefore the neophyte has to learn to distinguish between two types of corporeal agitation. Even modern science recognizes that the body may be thrown into agitation under a wave of strong feeling. Thus attractions of personal affection which make people cling to life in the body, aversion to or fear of death, and all other likes and dislikes agitate the brain and the body.

However, desires of the sensuous nature and aspirations of the Soul produce two distinct kinds of agitation. Agitation in and of the body can be engendered (*a*) by the without-by the cravings aroused by the sights, sounds, etc., of the world of objects; and (*b*) by the response of our higher nature to our aspirations which are built around our ideation and imagination. The first type of agitation of the body is a great hindrance in the living of the higher life. Therefore the neophyte is told to make the flesh passive—*i.e.*, inactive, so as to prepare it to be receptive. The corpus must be made ready to be a receptacle. The second type of agitation has to be inducted into the brain and thus into the whole sensorium. It is this second type of bodily agitation that is referred to when we are asked to make our “body agitated.”

Next: Hot heads can never succeed in the neophyte's life. In *Letters That Have Helped*

Me (p. 106, Indian ed.) Mr. Judge Makes pointed reference to the heating and cooling influences and to the excitement and calmness of the mind and of the body, in the neophyte's discipline the mind plays the most important part. The starting point is the handling of the desire- mind. The head in the human body is the organ *par excellence* of the lower mind, and the mind made tranquil becomes the channel of the Soul.

The complexities of the lower mind or Kama-Manas are many. *The Secret Doctrine* points out that "Mind is a name given to the sum of the states of Consciousness grouped under Thought, Will, and Feeling" (1.38). The part played by ideation and by memory is also referred to. *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 701) contains also an important statement of practical significance to the neophyte : " The ordinary man has no experience of any state of consciousness other than that to which the physical senses link him".

The neophyte must come out from among them who are "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in" by their senses. He must recognize the Manasic nature of his being and perceive the necessity of disciplining the senses for which a prior disciplining of the mind is essential. A quiet reflection on the two statements of *The Secret Doctrine* will bring him to the realization that "matter, after all, is nothing else than the sequence of our own states of consciousness, and Spirit an idea of psychic intuition" (I. 542). Kama-Manas, Manas freed from Kama, and lower mind influenced and guided by the human Soul, the Higher Mind, are three distinct states of consciousness, in each of which thought, will and feeling function. The mind cannot become tranquil when swayed by doubts and fears, attractions and aversions. Our disposition must be free from the taint of sensuousness, agreeably inclined to pure reason based on philosophical principles, and the will must be steadfastly resolute to follow the dictates of our divine conscience. A tranquil mind is not a passive mind; it is concentrated and is receptive to the influences and impresses of the Human Soul, the Ego, the Inner Ruler—a ray of the Divine Mind.

Theosophy teaches that the intimacy between the Divine Ego and the human personality is not established in the man of flesh till the neophyte learns to evoke, by purity, sacrifice and control, the power and the radiance of that Divinity.

When the mind is freed from desire and then trained to unfold its inherent latent powers, it becomes firm and pure under the benign influence of the Divine Man; it reflects the firmness of the diamond, and sparkles steadily with the colours of the Akashic heights. The second image shows that the personal soul becomes like unto a mountain lake, limpid and translucent.

In the calm of the Soul lies real knowledge. Experience of holy, celestial Joy is the real sign of true spiritual life.

The mountain symbolizes the far-sightedness of Prometheus himself reflected in the purified waters of the astral personality which is capable of responding to the Wisdom of the Great Lord who dwells on the high altitude of the plane of Spirit.

Just as the worldly man reflects in his deeds and words worldly illusions and delusions, so the neophyte begins to reflect, in his actions and speech, the sacrifices and wisdom of the Divine Man. The goal of the neophyte is to become divine here, in his present embodied state, purified of the dross and dregs of Kama, and shining with the Power of the Immortal and the Eternal.

THEOSOPHICAL REFORMATION

Our movement is a reform one, dealing with the very character of the race.

—W. Q. JUDGE

The U.L.T. seems to be very different from all other organizations in this (in the words of W. Q. Judge) "that in others plenty of money is furnished by members—clubs and churches can raise large sums of money because they offer definite creeds... where we offer nothing of that kind but demand real altruistic work/1

By application and work on ourselves we forward the cause of the reform of the social order in which we live. That is of vital importance, and from one point of view this is the real reform. But Mr. Judge's words carry an implication of corporate reform of human character.

Political reform, to which the world pays so much attention, is not highly valued by the Esoteric Philosophy, for reasons well explained By H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy* (see Indian edition, pp. 229-30). Similarly, social reform through specially organized social service is not accorded the importance given to it by the world.

In the words of Mr. Judge quoted above reference is made to the reform which touches human character. The educative value of any reform consists in its ability to change and elevate the citizen's character. Thus Prohibition legislation in the U.S.A. in the '20s of this century degraded instead of ennobling the character of citizens and a good reform proved a failure.

There are numerous habits and customs which every nation and face needs to alter. For example, already a great change has taken place in the employee's behavior towards the employer; more consideration is shown by the former towards the latter, but it is not a real reform inasmuch as the changed behavior is due to Trade Unionism with its strike weapon. The outer behavior has changed but not the inner attitude. The same is true of the attitude of the employee towards the employer. Similarly, the relation between the mistress of a house and her servants has undergone a great change, mainly rooted in the plane of economics, but on the social plane adjustments remain to be made in wealthy U.S.A. as well as in poor India.

In both these instances relating to labour-capital problems or the master-servant problem the old and real difficulty persists—lack of friendliness, even though there be kindness. *Noblesse oblige* on the part of those who have wealth or power or knowledge, and gratefulness on the part of those who are their beneficiaries, are not in evidence. Students of Theosophy should deliberately make due adjustment in these spheres as Karma offers them opportunities.

Or take another reform overdue in every country, penal reform. The treatment of prisoners has improved in many countries and new experiments are being tried. But as long as the truth of reincarnation is not taken into account real reform cannot be achieved. In discussing penal reform students of Theosophy should stress the fact that the criminal is a brother to all men and that his treatment should be educative; and in planning his education the aim should be to bring about a renovation in the consciousness of the criminal, and what is better calculated to accomplish this than knowledge of Karma, the doctrine of responsibility? The true explanation of fate and free will alone will start real reform.

Take the problem of the abolition of capital punishment. Facts about the after-death state of the soul of the executed, the new menace to society when execution takes place and cognate teachings should be popularized.

In all these matters students of Theosophy themselves fail to apply to their own ideation what is implicit in the teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy, and this Mr. Judge has pointed out in more than one place.

Then, there is the problem of what is known as the colour bar. Not only in the present barbarous policy of South Africa but also elsewhere different aspects of this problem are in manifestation. The Negro problem in the U.S.A. and the untouchability problem in India are but aspects of the basic problem of the colour bar. Inter-marriages between the Whites and the Negroes or between the high-caste Hindus and the Harijans are only one aspect. Inter-dining, social intercourse and inter-marriage should be understood by the student in the light of Theosophy and it will be a very different understanding. The study of races, cycles, evolution, etc., will give the student basic principles for right application.

The next pair of reforms we should consider is in the sphere of social customs and religious orthodoxy which militate against the principle of Universal Brotherhood. The superstition and dogmatism fostered by the priests in every country and in every creed corrupt not only the mind but also the morals of the people. Students of Theosophy should try not only to understand but also to apply what is implicit in the closing clause of our Declaration: "The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all." The student of Occultism must belong to no exclusive creed or sect, yet he is bound to show outward respect to every creed and faith if he would become an Adept of the Good Law. He must not be bound by the prejudiced and sectarian opinions of anyone; he has to form his own opinions and to come to his own conclusions in accordance with the rules of evidence furnished to him by the Science to which he is devoted. Thus, if the student of Occultism is, as an illustration, a Christian, then while regarding Jesus Christ as a grand Adept he will regard Gautama Buddha also as a grand Adept, an incarnation of unselfish love, boundless charity and moral goodness; and so with other Prophet-Philanthropists. The student of the Esoteric Philosophy must abstain from observing the rites, ceremonies and customs of the creed into which his body was born; he should study these rites, ceremonies and customs, rejecting what is chaff and using what is grain; but he has a similar duty towards the rites, ceremonies and customs of all other religious creeds.

To help persons or groups of persons by right reform one must free himself from the limitations of political, social and religious taboos. Spiritual freedom demands mental freedom, and there can be no mental freedom unless the thinking principle is extricated from desires and passions, from prejudices, prides and violence. Friendship and brotherliness are the soul of every reform, for love understands and the spirit of unity never fails to uplift.

LOYALTIES

It has been said that every man is a philosopher. Each lives by his philosophy. He does so most often unconsciously to himself. His inner attitude to life remains undefined to himself, till he progresses to the point of inquiring about the purpose of the life which surrounds him. But for any observant and thoughtful inquirer the philosophy of any man is not very difficult to determine. It is the outer behavior which bespeaks the man's philosophy.

The outer behavior of a person has a myriad sides. It is a congeries of the expressions of thoughts and feelings in words and deeds. But there is one factor common to a man's many acts. His loyalties speak loudly, revealing his defects and merits. He may have many or only a few loyalties; he may have conflicting loyalties. Again, his loyalties may change, bettering or lowering his status as a person in one or another phase of life.

His loyalty to his city was emphasized by the late Pherozeshah Mehta, a man of great civic qualities ; so it was by Joseph Chamberlain of Birmingham ; and by his superb loyalty to the City State of Athens Pericles has come down to us as a great figure in history;

There is patriotism-loyalty to one's own country.

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land I

A very long list of names could easily be made of those coming in this category.

A more restricted sphere is the family, but as a field for the practice of loyalty it plays a very significant part.

The peasant's loyalty to his farm, the scholar's to his knowledge, the artist's to his art, are all telltale expressions of the man's philosophy.

A man's loyalty is often very restricted and in that measure defective. A man who praises his own city, exclaiming, "Of no mean city am I," and condemns the worth of other cities shows a paucity of knowledge and a narrow-mindedness. At the present hour, here in India, the champions of the Adi Dravida Movement, who claim for Tamilnad special place and position, show a lack of true and noble patriotism. A chauvinist who proclaims, "My country, right or wrong," and who is therefore unjust to other nations is less than man; he acts like a beast of prey, unmindful of the destruction that he causes. Partial loyalties, like half-truths, bespeak moral blindness and mental limitations.

Personal loyalties which hamper the growth of the liberal mind, which harden the heart of love, which inhibit growth in the power to sacrifice, do not further the progress of the human soul.

Great movements in human history have resulted from the expansion of personal loyalties. Great men become such by letting their loyalties in a restricted sphere grow and embrace vaster loyalties. The Indian village *panchayat* of old was not a constrictive institution; it laid the foundation for the future district board, provincial state, united India.

The village state evolved into the city state in world history, as the feudal orders and dukedoms evolved into nations. A simple-minded girl from Domremy, Jeanne d'Arc, changed history, not so much by compelling the English to raise the siege of Orleans as by raising the cry: "France for the French." This was in the Europe of the early 15th century. In our own times Wendell Willkie's cry of "One World/1 has already evinced its great potency in fashioning One World.

There is the famous statement of the Prince of statesmen and diplomats, Sri Krishna, in

the *Udyoga Parva* of the *Mahabharata* —

For the sake of a family, an individual may be sacrificed. For the sake of a village, a family may be sacrificed. For the sake of a province, a village may be sacrificed. And lastly, for the sake of the Self, the whole earth may be sacrificed.

For enabling man's Great Self to perform its *dharma* to the Supreme Spirit, the petty personal self should be subdued. That is why Krishna called upon the blind Dhritarashtra to bind his wicked son Duryodhana and to avert the tragedy of war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. For every student of Theosophy there is more than one practical lesson in the thesis presented by Krishna at the court of the Kaurava King where he acted as the Ambassador of the Pandavas in the cause of peace and to prevent the fratricidal war.

Our worldly loyalties should be used in the service of the spiritual soul; we should not allow them to exploit the cause of truth, of virtue, of beauty. He who loves his son (Duryodhana) more than his friend Krishna is an unworthy King, is an unworthy man.

The Esoteric Philosophy teaches that we should so love our parents and children that the loyalty to our personal family may grow into the superb loyalty to the spiritual family of all human souls. Our patriotic feeling for our motherland should expand into loyalty to the One World, when it comes into being.

Every small loyalty should become an avenue to a greater loyalty. For the love of the Supreme Spirit one should not call his father "house holder"—that is reversing the process: making the Supreme loyalty utter falsehood, become evil and express ugliness. Similarly religious loyalty should expand from loyalty to a single sectarian creed to loyalty to the Truth which manifests itself in living Nature as the Most High. Personal loyalty to the Pope should grow into loyalty to Christ and to God. One cannot be faithful to the Pope and to Christ, to Mammon and to God.

Traditional and historical loyalties, spatial and geographical loyalties, when rightly considered and -evaluated give birth to universal and eternal loyalties. He who is loyal to the dead past, or he who is loyal to the passing present, or he who is loyal to hopes of a future heaven, is bound to become a narrow, dogmatic and fanatical person. But he whose loyalty grows to embrace the ever-lengthening history of soul culture, to perceive the superb beauty of the Eternal Now, who learns to see the expanding universe in a tiny grain of sand—his evolution brings to him the Vision of Truth, of Light, of Joy.

What are the great thoughts of Theosophy which will -enable the student whose sphere of loyalties is limited to unfold them into eternal loyalties? In *The Key to Theosophy* H.P.B. speaks of the real nature of Theosophy as the Religion of Life: "Its creed is Loyalty to Truth, and its ritual 'To honour every truth by use.'" The seekers of Wisdom-Truth "in every age have more or less clearly apprehended the Theosophical doctrines and wrought them into the fabric of their lives."

Applying this to the present generation of earnest students, which truths of the Esoteric Philosophy should first be wrought into the fabric of our lives?

(1) The Immanence of Deity clearly points to the positive practice of Universal Brotherhood. Castes and classes, discriminations based upon the colour of the skin and creedalism, and other factors which are upheld by modern civilization do violence to the sacred idea of the omnipresence of Spirit. Such a phenomenon as untouchability in India clearly points to a denial of the wisdom taught by Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, that He, as the Light of all lights, presides in the heart of each and every one—not in the Brahmana only but in the *Mlechcha* also ; in all men and all women dwells *Hart*, the Divine, and St. Paul

proclaimed that in God we 41 live and move and have our being,1' The student of Theosophy refuses to call others heathens or heretics, *kafirs* or infidels. Recognizing the One Self in the many forms of life, he is able to understand the diversity in Nature because he knows the doctrine of Emanations, and in human nature because of the fact of Reincarnation.

(2) The differences between the learned and the illiterate, the wise and the foolish, the healthy and the diseased, the saint and the sinner, are easily understood in the light of reincarnation and metempsychosis. The eye of wisdom is the eye of love, and he who loves, understands. But what piece of knowledge gives birth to love and understanding?

(3) The universe is governed by Law. Every event, every form, organic or inorganic, so-called, is an effect from a cause. Justice works incessantly; but, being divine and infallible, it ever and always adjusts, and its punishments are opportunities for growth in harmony. Each man is the maker of his own destiny.

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars.

But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

Also, each man is, albeit unwittingly, an agent of Karma for many, for the whole of Nature. By the Law of Unity the many are linked by and in the One.

By correctly applying the three truths we shall be able to expand and elevate our small loyalties and transform them into greater loyalties. Creedal beliefs learnt at home or at school, to which we are loyal today, will become transmuted into the Religion of Knowledge which will enable us to endeavor successfully to make Theosophy a living power in our lives. Karma spells self-improvement; there is no purifier like spiritual knowledge. If we try to attain to spiritual wisdom we shall draw to ourselves the help of the Wise Ones.

Expansion of loyalties implies acquiring a more enlightened faith. Loyalty to Truth means loyalty to many truths in the One Body of Knowledge, and the Faith in our Heart manifests itself in expressions of Loyalty in the world of deeds.

DISCIPLESHIP

Disciples may be likened to the strings of the soul- echoing Vina ;

Mankind, unto its sounding board ;

The hand that sweeps it to the tuneful breath of the Great World-Soul.

The string that fails to answer 'neath the Master's touch in dulcet harmony with all the others, breaks— and is cast away. So the collective minds of Lanoo-Shravakas. They have to be attuned to the Upadhyaya's mind—one with the Over-Soul—or, break away.

Among the Blessed Works of H.P.B.. Unique importance attaches to the proclamation she made in the first sentence of the first volume of her first book, and the achievement which enabled her to give to the world *The Voice of the Silence*, "Dedicated to the Few."

The old, forgotten Path in the jungle of this civilization was cleared by her, so that the aspirant might walk it. But that aspirant has to unfold true Devotion to Wisdom, to the Sages who are its Custodians, and to all who are its students and pupils and whom he must recognize as his companions.

The above quotation from the *Book of the Golden Precepts* enshrines a vital instruction for all would-be Chelas. Those who have attained the sweet fruits of Discipleship have done so by the actual practice of the truth contained in these lines.

The Path to which H.P.B. pointed can be trodden by the would-be disciples of this cycle. The inspiration of the Esoteric Philosophy she taught culminates in the learner's heart as a concentrated aspiration to walk that Way. The strength and loyalty with which a learner adheres to his resolve express his inner faith and vision. The depth of that faith and the purity of that vision are tested by the Power of Time; in the life of the devotee that Power flows, testing and trying, and it does not belong to the past, the present or the future, but to the Eternal Now. Chelaship is a continuous development toward Immortality and may be called an Immortal Process.

It is taught that Chelaship begins with the inner attitude of mind: what one thinks and feels is of greater importance than outer acts, though outer behavior has to conform to the inner perceptions; and the first task of the aspiring devotee is to cultivate his perception by the study of right knowledge and the practice of right discipline.

In the measure in which he overcomes the five hindrances—(1) lust, (2) ill-will, (3) torpor and languor, restlessness and mental worry, and (5) doubt—does he achieve the success to which the first statement of the above quotation points. A would-be Chela is but a string, capable of echoing (there is an important idea in this word "echoing") the Soul. In this world of personalities and persons the aspirant-devotee has to become the echo of his own Soul, of the Divine Singer within himself.

To become such an echo is not a negative but a positive process. How to achieve the wonderful position of the true echo of the Soul-Singer in this noisy, bragging, boastful, angry and greedy civilization of the dark cycle and the Iron Age? In one place the Mahatma K.H. Has said these words which are exactly applicable to the stage in Discipleship of which we are speaking:—

No men living are freer than we when we have once passed out of the stage of pupilage. Docile and obedient but never slaves during that time we must be ; otherwise, and if we passed our time in arguing we never would learn anything at all.

Next, our echoed song is for mankind. Once again in the measure of our assimilation of the Divine Song of the Higher Manas can we enable the voice of our personal self to

influence mankind. The service of humanity is therefore an early *sine qua non* in the devotee's daily life.

In this quotation is stressed the idea of a special type of unity between the minds of *Lanoo-Shravakas*— learner-listeners. Unless there is dulcet harmony between co-students who are learning to listen and then to echo, the voice of the solitary individual will be a voice lost in the wilderness of civilization. It is a condition of Chelaship that each aspirant learns to be devoted to the interests and welfare of co-aspirants, co-students and co-servers. It is the *collective* minds of the learners which have to be attuned to the Master's mind* All the strings of the soul-echoing Vina must be tightened to produce the song for the help and service of mankind.

All tests and trials of the would-be Chela are directly related to his inner attitude, which reflects itself in his outer behavior. The neophyte's first privilege is to be tried in the searching fire made up of his lower non-spiritual attributes. He is tested on the psychological side of his nature—especially by " Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy and finally Temptation—especially the latter," said the Master K.H. The agents employed in this testing are "the jealous Lhamayin in endless space."

These trials and tests have the effect of bringing out the evils of the lower man, which coalesce to fight the effort of the would-be Chela to oust them. They make a deadly hard weapon of iron smelted by the Lhamayin, who wield it against the erect integrity of the neophyte. Asks the Master—"Why is it that doubts and foul suspicions seem to beset every aspirant for chelaship?" The answers to this question are numerous, but of fundamental importance is this one: In the strife between the Living and the Dead, on the Battlefield of Dharma, the neophyte must see, face, fight and conquer the conglomerate evil. This produces a two-sided experience: As water develops the heat of caustic lime, so the honest and sustained Endeavour of the neophyte brings into fierce action every unsuspected potentiality latent in him; but at the same time his vivid and vital, moral and intellectual forces are set free for his constructive use. Every test passed, every trial faced, is a step forward on the Path in the direction of the Master, which, one of them says, "forces us to make one towards him/'

This battle of the living portion of the personal man against his dead aspects with their nefarious, deadening effects produces despondency and despair, and Arjuna- like the neophyte wants to withdraw, does not desire to fight out the field. It is very necessary to remember that the first chapter of the *Gita* which deals with this first real experience in Chela-life is designated as a type of Yoga—"Vishad-Yoga/" Does it not imply "making union with despondency'"? And what does it mean? Does it mean that we should hug despair to our bosom and bolt from the field of battle, refuse to engage in the greatest of all wars? Or, Arjuna-like, should the neophyte make union with despondency with the purpose of taking a good look at that fear-causing demon, of understanding its demoniac nature, of seeking the explanation about it from the Teachings and the Teachers? Real union with despondency implies mastering and using the demoniac in the service of the Divine.

Which virtue will enable the neophyte to continue to live his life aright? *Vishad*—despondency—brings one to *Vairagya*, detachment—detachment from the self of matter, from the pairs of opposites. Illusion has to be conquered if Truth is to be perceived. Indifference to pleasure and to pain implies freedom from " thirst for perceptible and scriptural enjoyments/' says Patanjali.

Vairagya, indifference, desirelessness, detachment, is the very first *Paramiia* which

the aspiring and devoted neophyte should unfold. It involves a mental abnegation, to begin with, and this is not agreeable to our modern mind; but it must be acquired if discipleship is to be successful. This *Paramita* leads to the flowering of the higher Resignation which has dauntless energy- *prana* as its heart and patience sweet that nought can ruffle as its head.

There are two suggestive sayings by two Zen teachers:—

Gettan used to say: “There are three kinds of disciples: those who impart Zen to others, those who maintain the temples and shrines, and then there are the rice bags and the clothes-hangers. ”

Gasán, the victorious disciple of Tekisui, remained when weaker fellows ran away. Gasán remembered

“A poor disciple utilizes a teacher's influence.

“A fair disciple admires a teacher's kindness.

“A good disciple grows strong under a teacher's discipline.”

To aid the earnest student to mould his mind in the new style of thinking and to acquire the right attitude we draw attention to a collection of reprints in our Volume X, pp. 137-143, under the caption " Masters and Their Companions."

SACRIFICES AND SACRIFICE

O hapless race of men, when that they charged the gods with such acts and coupled with them bitter wrath! What groaning did they then beget for themselves, what wounds for us, what tears for our children's children! No act is it of piety to be often seen with veiled head to turn to a stone and approach every altar and fall prostrate on the ground and spread out the palms before the statues of the gods and sprinkle the altars with much blood of beasts and link vow on to vow, but rather to be able to look on all things with a mind at peace.

—LUCRETIUS : On the Nature of Things, Book V.

The great text called the Bhagavad-Gita has a universal appeal to politician and poet, philosopher and mystic, aspirant and Adept. Mr. Judge has referred to it as the study of Adepts. To each mind the Gita has something to offer; and, what is more, its deeply profound teachings have their simple aspect which touches a person, however short-sighted or shallow-minded he may be. Among these teachings there is one about the oft-cited triad of Dana-Tapas-Yagna. Charity; effort at pure living and noble thinking, which is conveyed by the almost untranslatable term Tapas\ and Sacrifice, which stands generally for Yagna, are reiterated and recommended for practice.

We want to consider the value and importance of Yagna—Sacrifice. The term has a hoary background and the original concept forms a grandiose Mystery Teaching. Today sacrifice is much extolled, but what prevails is a materialistic view which misleads people. The social aspect of sacrifice with money (the Dravya- Yagna referred to in the Gita, IV. 28) is today more a veneer than a reality; the veneer strikes the eye of the populace but does not fool its heart. Sacrificing, out of one's abundance, a pittance of money, even with a good motive—though often it is colored by selfishness and the desire for recognition and reward—is not true sacrifice. Similarly, the religious aspect of Yagna is today a superstition, and sometimes a gross, degenerated superstition; e.g., animal sacrifice, practised by the orthodox followers of several religions.

Great Teachers like Krishna and Buddha, Pythagoras and Plato, and others in east and west alike, have ever attempted to bring men and women back to a rational understanding of Dana, Tapas and Yagna, and to their clean and correct practice. It is part of the mission of Theosophy to rescue the grand concept embodied in these terms; in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky much about them is offered for the consideration of students and for the exercise of aspirants and devotees.

The prevailing notion of sacrifice which is respected in our civilization is epitomized as service. Hospitals for the sick in body, asylums for minds diseased, rescue houses for prostitutes, orphanages, homes for the aged and the infirm, and such like, represent the services rendered by organized bodies sustained by donations which the wealthy take out of their purse, but which do not touch the quantity or the quality of their sumptuous breakfast, their well-stocked wardrobes or their many forms of pleasures. In his opening editorial in the very first number of *The Path* (April 1886), W. Q. Judge wrote:—

Prisons, asylums for the outcast and the magdalen, can be filled much faster than it is possible to erect them. All this points unerringly to the existence of a vital error somewhere. It shows that merely healing the outside by hanging a murderer or providing asylums and prisons, will never reduce the number of criminals nor the hordes of children born and growing up in hotbeds of vices. What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny?

Once a Master wrote to a good-hearted German lady:—

You have offered yourself for the Red Cross; but, sister, there are sicknesses and wounds of the Soul that no Surgeon's art can cure. Shall you help us teach mankind that, that the soul-sick must heal themselves? Your action will be your response.

From one point of view such social service and sacrifice is superior to the degrading forms of religious sacrifices—from the burning of candles at the Roman Catholic altars to the killing of goats, etc., at Hindu temples. Jews, Muslims and the followers of other sectarian creeds have similar superstitious "sacrificing," some more, some less objectionable in method.

The present-day degrading superstition of animal sacrifice was practised as a rite of magic in an earlier epoch. W. Q. Judge in his Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita refers to the sacrifices established for the Jews by Moses (P* 87), and also makes mention of the "peculiar explanation" that has been given of the same (p. 88). That blood has certain occult properties, and that it has the power of absorption and assimilation, was known, and so was made use of in certain magic rites.

"Atonement through blood/" says The Secret Doctrine (II. 699), "has been too long in the way, and thus was universal truth sacrificed to the insane conceit of us little men/"

The knowledge of the magic rite was forgotten, but the evil practice of killing doves and goats has persisted. Orthodox Jews may quote the example of Cain who brought to God "the fruit of the ground" as sacrifice, which did not please the deity; whereas Abel offered 44 the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect" (Genesis, IV: 4-5). To understand this teaching literally is wrong; for to accept it literally means favoring the vice of cruelty. The allegorical and mystical interpretation should be sought. One such may be considered by the reader: it is in a conversation between the boy Jesus and a rabbi, in the story Mary by the well-known Jewish novelist Sholem Asch (pp. 260-61).

In India also the magic rites of blood offerings were known and practised; today the knowledge is gone but the practice continues—a degradation which brings home forcefully the teaching of Lucretius, from which an extract is quoted at the beginning of this article.

Theosophy cannot but condemn every species of animal sacrifice. The great Buddha, too, condemned such irreligious action. We quote some beautiful verses of The Light of Asia:—

Round about the pile

A slow, thick, scarlet streamlet smoked and ran,
Sucked by the sand, but ever rolling down,
The blood of bleating victims. One such lay,
A spotted goat, long-horned, its head bound back With irinj grass; at its stretched throat the
knife Pressed by a priest, who murmured, " This, dread gods,
Of many yajnas cometh as the crown From Bimbisara : take ye joy to see The spirted blood, and
pleasure in the scent Of rich flesh roasting 'mid the fragrant flames;
Let the King's sins be laid upon this goat,
And let the fire consume them burning it,
For now I strike."

But Buddha softly said,

" Let him not strike, great King! " and therewith loosed
The victim's bonds, none staying him, so great
His presence was. Then, craving leave, he spake
Of life, which all can take but none can give,
Life which all creatures love and strive to keep.
Wonderful, dear, and pleasant unto each,
Even to the meanest; yea, a boon to all

Where pity is, for pity makes the world
 Soft to the weak and noble for the strong... ..
 .. still our Lord went on, teaching how fair
 This earth were if all living things be linked
 In friendliness and common use of foods,
 Bloodless and pure ; the golden grain, bright fruits,
 Sweet herbs which grow for all, the waters wan,
 Sufficient drinks and meats. Which when these heard,
 The might of gentleness so conquered them,
 The priests themselves scattered their altar-flames
 And flung away the steel of sacrifice.

This was some 2,500 years ago, but even today India reeks with the blood of animals murdered for sacrifices or butchered for food. Cruelty is a sin against God and Nature and of the many forms of this sin, the killing of beasts and birds is not difficult to stop. In the name of sport also the sin flourishes, and states and churches connive at it.

But go further back in India's history.

Tradition assigns Krishna a definite antiquity; he ends the cycle of the Dwapara Yuga and his death marks the beginning of the Kali Yuga, 5,000 years ago.

Whatever the mode and procedure of yagnas—rites of sacrifice—in the previous cycle, what Krishna stressed in the Gita deserves most serious consideration. Should not Krishna be regarded as one of the highest Planetary Spirits? Theosophy teaches that the highest Planetary Spirits appear on Earth but at the origin of every new human kind; at the junction of, and close of the two ends of the great cycle. And, they remain with man no longer than the time required for the eternal truths they teach to impress' themselves so forcibly upon the plastic minds of the new races as to warrant them from being lost or entirely forgotten in ages hereafter, by the forthcoming generations. The mission of the Planetary Spirit is but to strike the Key Note of Truth. Once he has directed the vibration of the latter to run its course uninterruptedly along the catenation of that race and to the end of the cycle—the denizen of the highest inhabited sphere disappears from the surface of our planet—till the following "resurrection of flesh."

Let us see what Krishna has to say about Yagna— Sacrifice.

In the Third Chapter the instruction of Prajapati, the Lord of all peoples on earth, is quoted. The kinship of man to the other kingdoms, to the invisible forces and with spiritual intelligences, is stressed. According to what is said, most of us are " thieves/' robbing Nature and hoping to go unpunished!

In the Fourth Chapter many kinds and modes of sacrifices are referred to. Born of action are all sacrifices; to gods and godlings, to archangels and angels, to Ameshaspentas and Yazatas, to the Supreme Spirit under different names, objects are offered as sacrifices. Senses and organs and vitality of body are sacrificed by one mode or another. But it is taught that all such actions purified of their blemishes culminate in Wisdom. Men and women offer their belongings and possessions; such offerings of objects are not enough, so some religious practitioners offer their senses and organs and even breathing; all such ultimately, in one life or through many lives, come to see the value of study, discipline and knowledge as objects of sacrifice; ultimately they come to realize the basic verity

The sacrifice through spiritual knowledge is superior to
 Sacrifice made with material things; every action without exception is comprehended in spiritual knowledge. (Gita, IV. 33)

And then, the soul of all practices in spiritual living is proclaimed—that through enquiry and search, humility and service, the disciple is taught by the Seers and Knowers of the Essence of things.

This is the sublime goal, and every man without exception is provided a chance to realize it by bountiful Nature and by the merciful Law.

In the Seventeenth Chapter sacrifices of three types are described, according to their characteristics, derived from the gunas, attributes of matter. Motives and methods are involved in any act of sacrifice; Theosophy or the Wisdom-Religion reiterates the teaching offered by the Knowers of Karma. In verses 10 to 13 very definite words are used, and the aspirant to the Inner Life should perceive the superiority of sattvic sacrifices, in which both body and consciousness are involved. Dnyaneshwar points to this in his commentary on the verse.

Orthodox Hindus have for long limited the term Yagna to religious sacrifices, with mantras and mudras which have become mummery and gestures. Yagna as a principle, as an institution to be used and applied in daily life to mental, moral, verbal and bodily acts, is completely forgotten. Krishna tried to restore its use by those who aspire to tread the Path which leads to the Temple of Initiation.

Therefore we find that there is another teaching on the subject of sacrifice which the Gita puts forward in the Ninth Chapter which deals with the Secret Science of Raja Yoga, the Royal—i.e., the Superior—Way of Living the Inner Life. The prescription offered for the performance of sacrifices is simple and forthright. It is the way for those who aspire to rise above the three gunas. The Gita recommends in more than one place that we should rise above the effects of the gunas, including sattva guna. This sacrifice of the Ninth Chapter, described in verses 26 to 28, follows a very telling piece of instruction in the preceding verse; it is the fruition of the different sacrifices previously mentioned:—

Those who devote themselves to the gods (Devas) go to the gods ; the worshippers of the pitris go to the pitris; those who worship the evil spirits (Bhut as) go to them, and my worshippers come to me. (IX. 25)

The highest kind of sacrifice is that offered to “ Me,” says Krishna. This “ Me ” has two recognized aspects— (a) Man’s own Higher self, and (b) the real Guru, the embodiment of the Supreme Spirit, the Most High.

The Adhi Yagna, the Great Sacrifice, has a psychological or microcosmical aspect and also a Theogonic or Macrocosmical one; both can be better comprehended by the metaphysical and the purely spiritual aspect.

As students and practitioners of the Secret Science, the life and labour of all aspirants should be dedicated to rising above the three qualities of matter, using the sattva quality as a stepping-stone to the higher state.

What state of consciousness should one have to observe the simple-sounding but profound injunctions of Verses 26 to 28 of the Ninth Chapter?

The striver for Supreme Renunciation should offer every thought, word and deed to the Shining Self within. That Self is to receive, by the blessing of the Gracious Guru, the Light from “the star which is thy goal/1 says The Voice of the Silence; and H.P.B. explains in a footnote that “ the star that burns overhead is 1 the star of initiation.’ ” This initiation, it is said, reveals the Mystery of Compassion Absolute and its living expression in those who are.

The embodied Great Renounces. Our one aspiration and only hope should be to attain to that vision by the Self of the True, the Real.

The effulgent end has a beginning. The first step is in front of us, to be taken with knowledge and daring now, today. Leaves of small and passing acts, flowers of beautiful acts and fruits of creative acts should become the offerings to the Ishwara in man. That Lord within is ever intent on purifying and elevating the many intelligences on whom he depends; they give him the opportunity to learn and to teach. All these living intelligences, the deities presiding over our own senses and organs, must be made pure by the baptismal water which transubstantiates the gross into the subtle, and makes each deed, each word, each thought a vibrant sacrament.

Each aspirant has to perform daily actions in the natural course of his life, using his own free will and knowledge. He has to eat to build his body as a shrine of his soul; again, he has to sacrifice himself to fulfil his obligations to his inner life and self-discipline; further, he voluntarily gives of himself and his possessions as gifts—all these are acts of austerity, of mortification, resulting from his tapas-meditation, held out as silent, secret and sacred oblations to the Inner Ruler, and to the Guru to whose bidding he has devoted his life and whose Hand is extended in protecting love over him.

By this process the secular life is made holy; the performance of this continuous Yagna or sacrifice is the means whereby the good and pious soul who has hitherto undergone human evolution on the Path of Forthgoing, Pravritta Marga, enters the Nivritta Marga, the Path of Return. No more need he propitiate the devas by rites and ceremonies, following the precedent of Daksha, the Archetypal Ritualist and procreator of the good but mortal man. He now comes under the regenerative power of the Egyptian Thoth, the “Thrice-great Hermes,” Shiva-Mahadeva, the Maha Yogi, the Patron Saint of all Yogis, the Archetypal Renouncer, the Teacher par excellence of Immortality. He is called “the first divine physician” “for he cures the disease called mortality and so he is “the auspicious.”

The highest aspect of Yagna-Vidya is described by H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* (I. xlv):—

“The Yajna “ exists as an invisible thing at all times; it is like the latent power of electricity in an electrifying machine, requiring only the operation of a suitable apparatus in order to be elicited. It is supposed to extend from the Ahavaniya or sacrificial fire to the heavens, forming a bridge or ladder by means of which the sacrificer can communicate with the world of gods and spirits, and even ascend when alive to their abodes.

This Yajna is again one of the forms of the Akasa, and the mystic word calling it into existence and pronounced mentally by the initiated Priest is the Lost Word receiving impulse through will-power.

But *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 169) gives warning:—

Without the help of Atma-Vidya, the other three [Yagna- Vidya, Maha-Vidya and Guhya-Vidya] remain no better than surface sciences, geometrical magnitudes having length and breadth, but no thickness. They are like the soul, limbs, and mind of a sleeping man : capable of mechanical motions, of chaotic dreams and even sleep-walking, of producing visible effects, but stimulated by instinctual not intellectual causes, least of all by fully conscious spiritual impulses. A good deal can be given out and explained from the three first-named sciences. But unless the key to their teachings is furnished by Atma-Vidya, they will remain for ever like fragments of a mangled text-book, like the adumbrations of great truths, dimly perceived by the most spiritual, but distorted out of all proportion by those who would nail every shadow to the wall.

The good man who lives the good life to the best of his ability and practices sattvic sacrifices must in course of time understand the occult significance of the Yagna of Raja

Yoga taught in the Ninth Chapter of the Gita, and thus begin his return journey. Whither will he turn? To the heavenly home of Pure Bliss—Light, Peace or Nirvana? Or to the mysterious retreat of some Great Renouncer of Nirvana itself, there to acquire the Secret of secrets, how to render endless Service to Humanity through many yugas, many kalpas? There, too, he will learn the hidden meaning and power of Yagna and also the right and righteous use of it. The Secret of Service is supreme and is the continuous living out of the Maha Yagna allegorized in The Voice of the Silence:—

Self-doomed to live through future Kalpas, unthanked and unperceived by men ; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the " Guardian Wall," such is thy future if the seventh Gate thou passest. Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

CENTENARY EDITION

LIVING THE LIFE

by B. P. WADIA

This Centenary Edition of **LIVING THE LIFE** by Shri B. P. Wadia contains 30 articles written by him during his anonymous editorship of *The Theosophical Movement*, a monthly magazine started in 1930 and which is still being published regularly. Shri Wadia, who belonged to The Theosophical Society, later became associated with the United Lodge of Theosophical and started several of its centres in the US, Europe and India.

The articles contained in this book have been specially brought together for their immense value to all those who wish to walk the Path to the Masters. The first batch of 8 and another of 3 contain the basic steps to be taken on that path. The remaining articles relate to the high discipline, re-education and transformation that should take place within the individual. The articles bring to bear on the reader the warmth of kindness and compassion that Shri Wadia exuded all his life.

Shri B. P. Wadia (b. 1881) passed away in Bangalore in August 1958. In his long work for mankind he was involved in the Home Rule movement, during which he was interned; started the Madras Labour Union—the very first trade union in India; was assistant editor of *New India*, a fiery paper that was published from Madras; founded the *Indian Institute of World Culture* at *Bangalore* which is a premier institute of its kind in India.

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF WORLD CULTURE

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