

**STUDIES IN
“THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE”**

**THEOSOPHY COMPANY (INDIA) PVT. LTD.
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'THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE'

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STUDIES IN “THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE”

I.-THE WANDERING HEART

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The downfall of every civilization is caused by the weak morals of those who live in and by it. False knowledge or misuse of knowledge generally accompanies weakened morals. An unbalanced relation between knowledge and ethics brings about a critical stage which, if not promptly attended to, results in death. Historical examples — the Roman Empire for one — will occur to any reader. War plays a part in the destruction and the reconstruction of civilizations. From the days of the Mahabharata down to our own times we come upon the phenomenon of unbalance between mental capacity and moral responsibility, competition leading to war and wars, then destruction. The destruction of the entire Kshatriya caste took place on Kurukshetra — an event which has a lesson for us all who are witnessing the sinking of European civilization.

Only a few in every century perceive the necessity of maintaining in their own lives the balance between knowledge and love, between head and heart. The great majority shows an unbalance — feelings alone without the light of Wisdom predominate in one portion of the majority, while in the other head-learning without soul-wisdom, without compassion and philanthropy and sacrifice, works havoc. Religious feeling without knowledge is a curse which develops fanaticism, hatred and war; knowledge devoid of a spiritual basis soon develops into false knowledge which begets arrogance, enmity and war. Only a few, a small minority in any century, are Esotericists — not enquirers nominally interested in the Occult but real students learning to practice and to promulgate the grand doctrines of the Science of Life. Their task is to produce that balance between knowledge and ethics in their own constitution without which there can be neither the gaining of enlightenment nor the practice of altruism for the good of all.

For these few H.P.B produced the book called *The Voice of the Silence*, dedicating it to them. In the Preface to that priceless little volume she writes that she offers three Fragments and that more could not be given “to a world too selfish and too much attached to objects of sense to be in any way prepared to receive such exalted ethics in the right spirit.”

Those only who are serious and sincere about molding their own minds will make use of the book. As H.P.B. writes:

Unless a man perseveres seriously in the pursuit of self-knowledge, he will never lend a willing ear to advice of this nature.

Esoteric Philosophy has always taught the art of all-round development — a healthy mind in a healthy body; but also, it has always taught that the course of enfoldment is from within without, and that therefore mind and not body should be the starting point, and that motive and not method should receive primary consideration. Not that body and method were neglected, but-ever and always mind and motive were made the starting point. This is the burden of the *Gita*, of the doctrines of the Buddha, of the teachings of Jesus.

Those who have made friends with *The Voice of the Silence* have noted that it too gives primary importance to the training of the mind, with the right motive. In these four articles we shall consider the place of the motive and the activity of the mind as taught in the three Fragments, each of which should be considered as an independent unit. While there is, of course, an intimate interdependence between them, we should not consider the third Fragment to be in line of succession to the second, nor the latter as a continuation of the teaching of the first. Each emphasizes a particular aspect of the Truth, of the Way and the

Path; each has its own message. One is not superior to the other any more than blue as a primary colour is superior to yellow or inferior to red.

Like all Occult treatises *The Voice of the Silence* is written in a cipher and yields more than one meaning, for there is more than one key to be used in deciphering a profound cipher. The neophyte at his stage, the adept at his, use the teachings, for growth as for service — for growth through service. H.P.B. has made “a judicious selection” for “the few real mystics” of the era to which she came, who recognized her and its worth. For students of the modern generation the book has the same message and offers the same benefits; for them too the formulation of the motive and the training of the mind form the first step.

A phrase of H.P.B.’s might well be used as a touchstone to determine the nature of our motive for assaying the task of gaining self-knowledge and attempting self-improvement. In *The Key to Theosophy*, commenting upon ascetic practices H.P.B. speaks of “what a man *thinks* and *feels*, what desires he encourages in his mind and allows to take root and grow”; what we think greatly depends on what we feel, and we can determine the character of our feelings by noticing the desires which arise from roots so firmly embedded in the soil of the personality. “What desires he encourages in his mind” — what desires he “allows to take root,” what desires he allows “to grow” — this will reveal the motive he harbors. Very often our motives are hidden from us and on the score of motive many fail ere they begin. The Master K. H. once wrote:

The first and chief consideration in determining us to accept or reject your offer lies in the inner motive which propels you to seek our instructions, and in a certain sense — our guidance.

We have to learn to distinguish between inner or real and outer or superficial motive. Again, the same Master points out that “our Eastern ideas about ‘motives,’ and ‘truthfulness/ and ‘honesty’ differ considerably from your ideas in the West.” In India, most of the “educated ’ have

Western minds — to be more precise, Eurasian minds — and they suffer from the same limitations as Western-born men and women. The Eastern idea of motive is a profound one, and in ascertaining our motive we must take time and have to be careful, judicious, alert and attentive.

While it is true that motive is everything, we must never overlook the clear teaching of history that “good motive-without knowledge makes sorry work sometimes.” Mr. Crosbie continues:

All down the ages there is a record of good motive, but power and zeal misused, for want of knowledge. Theosophy is the path of knowledge, It was given out in order, among other things, that good motive and wisdom might go hand in hand.

On the plane of motive the student’s attention is drawn from the beginning to the ideals of the higher life. Not entanglement in the world of matter through ambition and the like, but a withdrawal and a consequent complete emancipation from the universe of Illusion — *Maya* and its Play—*Lila*. The student has to choose between sense-life and soul-life, and when he is sufficiently confirmed in his higher desire to live as a soul, subduing the senses, he is presented with another, the grandest ideal humanity has ever known—Renunciation. Soul-culture leads the practitioner to the idea of Liberation, a state so much desired by the afflicted — by hearts laden with sorrow, by heads full of confusion. Having seen the cause of disease, having drunk the potion of cure, who would want to continue hospital life? Having perceived the degradation of a prostitute’s life, who would want to live in a house of prostitution? Having recognized the world as a vast lunatic asylum, who would want to dwell therein, and not run away from it? Even a little knowledge of Theosophy

Shows to the thoughtful and earnest student that this world is like unto a hospital, full of the ailing and the scrofulous; that men and women in their millions prostitute their minds and their hearts; that the world is full of moonstruck neurotics who rush about hither and thither fancying themselves sane and sound. The Theosophical student registers that to be of this world is to seek disease, to prostitute powers, to become mad; "Let me have none of these," he says. Thus for more than one life the student fixes his mind on Liberation and his motive in leading the higher life is to free himself from "the world, the flesh, and the devil." *The Voice of the Silence* recognizes the place of the Path of Liberation — the conquest of Nirvana.

For many centuries the ideal of Liberation has inspired generations of mystics, and here in India especially the desire for Moksha and to reach Nirvana has become the supreme, nay, the only goal of spiritual striving. The great Buddha taught the Path of Renunciation and exemplified the teaching in his own life. Says H.P.B.:

Esoteric teachings claim that he renounced Nirvana and gave up the Dharmakaya vesture to remain a "Buddha of Compassion" within the reach of the miseries of this world.

With the passing away of His pure Teachings from the land of His birth, the concept of Moksha prevailed in India as the sole ideal, submerging that of Renunciation. Nowhere is the Teaching of the Path of Renunciation so clearly formulated; nowhere are its functions and objectives so profoundly contrasted with those of the other Path, as in *The Voice of the Silence*. One of the missions of H.P.B.'s incarnation was not only to point to this forgotten truth, but, further, to arouse in as many hearts as possible the aspiration to tread the Path of Renunciation. Therefore among the only three Fragments she gave to the public world is that of "The Two Paths" and among "the few" must arise those who will undertake the culture of the heart necessary for the treading of that path. The attractions inherent in the ideal of renunciation are so powerful and potent as well as patent that most among "the few" hastily say to them selves, "I will tread the Path of Renunciation." They overlook that special preparation is needed for that task and that between the great service of the Renounces and the desire, however ardent, of the aspirant to love and to help his fellows there is a difference not only of degree but of kind — of quality. To acquire the wisdom necessary for that Path takes time and especial effort; and this is possible through Chelaship, not as it is understood in the religious and mystical world, but as it is understood in Occultism and Esoteric Philosophy. A special kind of training and development is necessary to walk the Way of Renunciation: it is the renouncing not only of the world of matter but also of the world of spirit; not of life in form only but also of life eternal. It is freedom from the bondage of passion which every Emancipated Soul enjoys but further it is acceptance of the Bondage of Compassion which the *mukta* does not accept.

The training of the Probationer includes the enfoldment of the right motive which the ideal of the Path of Renunciation presents. Chelaship implies the treading of that Path and the displacement of other motives Including that of Liberation by the One Motive, the real inner motive, of which all outer motives should be but expressions and emanations. The choice comes at the end, but that choice is the culmination of innumerable choices made by the soul — from the stage of the Probationer to that of the Adept.

If we encourage in our mind the desire to renounce, if we nourish it that it may take root and grow, we will be getting the necessary training for acquiring the Right Motive. That training is not in mere resolve and verbal repetition of the famous Pledge of Kwan-Yin, but a Remembrance of it during the performance of daily duties. The Great Renouncer does not rush to help here, there and everywhere, but "ever protects and watches over Humanity

Within Karmic limits.” This implies knowledge, especially of the Law of Cycles and “the ultimate divisions of time.” That is why H.P.B. says that “it is easy to become a Theosophist. ... But it is quite another matter to put oneself upon the path which leads to the knowledge of what is good to do, as to the light discrimination of good from evil.” (Students will do well to reflect upon the differentiation made by H.P.B. — *Raja Yoga*, p. 17; it is not easy to become a Theosophist, only comparatively less difficult; the path of the Esotericist “leads a man to that power through which he can do the good he desires, often without even apparently lifting a finger.”)

The cultivation of Right Motive takes more than one life: the control of the wandering mind is a necessity universally recognized but how many think of the wandering heart? When the heart has been steadied concentration of mind becomes easy, for an objective has been found. The mind gathers itself together and makes the objective its centre; but without a goal or an objective the mind can never gain one-pointedness. Many and varied are men’s objectives in life, and the student of Theosophy is no exception to the rule. If he determines his objective to be neither the bliss of Nirvana nor the developing of siddhis, low or high, nor achieving success in this or that sphere, but letting everything go, to tread the Path of Renunciation, disciplining himself for the life of *spiritual* service of Orphan Humanity, then he has found the correct objective, the Right Motive essential for the life of Chelaship. Once an aspirant resolves to follow the Right Motive, it, whether he remembers it or not, will affect his life and force him to work for humanity in one way or another. Directly he attempts to gain spiritual benefit selfishly instead of trying to help his brothers, he will feel the inner call to work, which cannot be evaded. For the Great Choice, his time will come; but its coming will be hastened as he remains faithful to the great Choice of his present incarnation — to endeavour to make Theosophy a Living Power in his Life.

II — THE SLAYER OF THE REAL

[Reprinted from *The Theosophical Movement*. Vol. X, pp. 151-54, for August 1940.—Eds.]

The asceticism which *The Voice of the Silence* advocates is that of the thinking principle — the withdrawal of the mind from its present position in which it is a slave. The mind is a victim of internal images composed of elemental-lives which form the desire-principle, and these awaken the senses to activity and make them the feeders of that principle. Man's objective world is but a reflection — a shadowy emanation — of this subjective plane of desire-images.

In the waking state of consciousness man does not live in the world of the mind but in that of the senses ensouled by desires within which the mind is captive. Man's so-called reasoning is not a pure activity engendered by the mind but is premised on sense-impressions which are permeated by desires. Even men of Science in using their minds proceed from sense-data to deductions, and, though in most of them personal desires in connection with the objects of observation are in abeyance, they yet suffer from their dependence on desire-shot senses. The eyes of a drunken man see things askew: the mind of one who in drawing his conclusions depends on the senses fraught with the desire-principle also sees askew. Sense-data to be true and sense-observations to be accurate must be devoid of the forces of the desire-principle. When Esoteric Philosophy calls the world of objects illusory it means that it is so not in the sense that the objects do not exist but in the sense that our valuation of them is false. The objective world may well be compared to a great bazaar in which desire-enslaved minds, not knowing the true prices of things, are taken in, have to bargain, to haggle and to wrangle for things needed and have to be tempted to want and to acquire other things. The mind thus exploited in the bazaar of the objective world gains experience and learns to evaluate each object at its proper worth, and then — and not before then — man begins to live in that world.

Our difficulty, then, as will be readily seen, does not inhere in the objects but in our ignorance of the true values of those objects, due to our desires in which the mind is imprisoned. Desires by themselves, unaided by the power of thought, would be innocuous; energized by it they make man the worst of the animal kingdom. Therefore our textbook calls this mind the Slayer of the Real and at the very outset gives the injunction to the Disciple to slay the Slayer. It also states the method "become indifferent to objects of perception." This mind, captivated by desire, which courses in the nervous system of the body, is called the chief of the senses, and it is this mind-sense which makes man different from the animal — capable of becoming superior to it as also of developing into the most cunning and the most carnal of beasts.

Having become indifferent, to objects of perception, the pupil must seek out the Rajah of the senses, the Thought-Producer, lie who awakes illusion. The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer.

It is the activity of this mind in the objective world which has first to be handled by the aspirant-chela. Unless we see that these objects become channels, offer food to internal images and help to satisfy our cravings we shall not be able to evaluate them correctly. We value an object in terms of the satisfaction or the delight which it gives to our desire- fraught senses. This is the cause of illusion which is ignorance — not total absence of knowledge but the false evaluation of objects, mistaking lust for love.

If thou would'st cross the first Hall safely, let not thy mind mistake the fires of lust that burn therein for the sunlight of life.

The Thought-Producer makes love out of lust and when this is seen in actual life-experience a real step forward is taken by the practitioner. When this is seen the weakness of the world of objects compared to the strength of the world of images is recognized. It is this seeing, when not understood, which tempts the aspirant to run away from the world to the jungle.

When a seeker after the Light within sees the activity of the outer world of objects he naturally attempts to close the windows through which the objects attack him. In that retreat, psychological or physical, a short respite from that attack is all that he obtains. Very soon he locates the root of his trouble: the attraction or the aversion which the objects exert over him are not in the external objects but in the internal images memory pictures of the past, not only of this life but also of previous incarnations.

Withhold thy mind from all external objects, all external sights. Withhold internal images, lest on thy Soul-light a dark shadow they should cast.

This is the formidable work compared to which retreating from the objects of the senses is easy. If in the first exercise the chela learns the illusory nature of the objective world, now he encounters the delusive nature of his own subjective world. Looking for the God within he comes upon the devil; seeking soul-light, he finds darkness — so thick that he does not realize that it is a shadow. “O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon.” It is in that dark that we meet our fancy- created idols, our thought-created images, our desire-created phantoms. But that darkness has the peculiar power of deluding our consciousness. Very soon the sphere of darkness looks to us the region of pearly light — of soothing, restful, twilight sleep. The Maya of the objective world is but an effect caused by the Moha-delusion of this sphere of self-created subjectivity, lighted up by human passions. This is the world of Probationary Learning, which the Chela has to abandon, and he cannot do so till he understands it. The real first pitched battle of the greatest of all wars is in this region, called the Astral Light. When the Power of his Vow, made in the objective world, stirs in him, the fighter in the Astral Light feels that he is in a place where he ought not to be; that he must not listen to the sounds of these images, but to the word of the Soul within.

Theoretically every student knows that Lower Manas is different from Higher Manas, that Kama-Manas is demoniac and Buddhi-Manas divine. But the truth has to be experienced and we know the nature of the Soul’s mind when we overthrow some of the enemy troops, *i.e.*, when we destroy some of our thought-created images. The great temptation for the Probationary Chela issues forth from the enhanced sense-delight when the plasticity of astral light is handled and absorbed; it is like the exhilarated state of the person who has just taken strong drink. Often, instead of fighting right away the already created images, he falls prey to the temptation of creating new ones. In the objective world we have to control the wandering mind, but here we have to fight the creative mind. Thus comes a period of intense fight, and victory ensues when the soldier-soul has grasped this truth:

Ere thy Soul’s mind can understand, the bud of personality must be crushed out; the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection.

The grasping of this truth means that the Probationer has seen that he is other than the Personality, that the worm which early and late feeds upon the senses, once crushed, would lead to the death of the separative and ever-separating self which makes the Personality the supreme enemy. The glimpse of the Soul which uncovers the inimical nature of the Personality makes the fighting Probationer take refuge in that Inner Soul. And this implies some knowledge of the nature and the powers of that Soul.

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

Thyself and mind, like twins upon a line, the star which is thy goal burns overhead.

The Master is the Higher Self, “the equivalent of *Avalokitesvara*, and the same as *Adi-Budha* . . . CHRISTOS with the ancient Gnostics.” Unless this Master is felt as a Presence in Hall the second, that of Probationary Learning, entrance into the third, the Hall of Wisdom, remains closed. It is through the mind of the Soul that we touch the radiance of the God within, and it is through contact with the great Gurus that we touch the radiance of the God within Nature — Compassion Absolute.

When the mind-activity is silenced, the soul, aided by the Light of the Spirit, perceives itself as distinct and separate from the mind. Freed from Kama, it sees the possibility, nay, the certainty of a perfect unison with its Star — its Father in Heaven. In the translucent lake of the pure mind the star in high heaven reflects itself, and even that reflected influence stirs the mind to behold the glory that is — the greater glory to be. It is not sufficient to silence the thoughts; it is necessary to perceive the Star of Hope — the Parent Star, the Dhyani-Buddhic Source of our existence.

The obliterating of the internal images is the same as crushing the craving for sensuous existence. The process demands that we centre our attention on the inner Light. But turning away from internal images is not to be accompanied by turning away from the objective world. To be in the midst of objects but not to be their slave makes the fight a long one; for, in the long past we have created a whole army of personal thought-images; by our moods we have given birth to a brood of vices; by our mental indulgence we have committed many sins. One by one we have to slay them.

Woe, then, to thee, Disciple, if there is one single vice thou hast not left behind. . . . Woe unto him who dares pollute one rung with miry feet. . . . His sins will raise their voices like as the jackal’s laugh and sob after the sun goes down; his thoughts become an army, and bear him off a captive slave.

This does not mean that the Probationer is expected to be flawless ere he starts, but he has to learn and attain purity ere he passes through the Golden Gate into the Hall of Wisdom, and has won the right to abide therein permanently. As a Probationer he has his day when he basks in the radiance of the Spiritual Sun, and then his night — the dark night of the Soul, during which his mind-sins laugh the jackal’s laugh which is the cry of agony, terrifying to him, tempting him to his fall, nay, to his very doom. The jackals move in packs and therefore are able to hunt down sheep and even antelopes. When unable to obtain living prey they feed on carrion, and cunningly they follow cheetahs and even lions in order to finish the carcass after the latter have eaten their fill. The comparison of our lower thoughts to jackals is most apt, for they attack in packs our high thoughts and our noble aspirations, and when they cannot prey upon these living images they sniff out slumbering and dying ones and gorge on the latter — a phenomenon which is related to precipitation of Karma and the like. Also, like the jackal, our lower thought-images have an offensive odour, for they, too, like the jackal, secrete foulness from the base of their tails.

Now, we are told how we should deal with these our past creations:

One single thought about the past that thou hast left behind will drag thee down and thou wilt have to start the climb anew. Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences. Look not behind or thou art lost.

If we do not choke off the memory of the past, if we dwell in it, we re-live the past *subjectively* and rejuvenate the thought-images. But now we have increased our power of

thought and so those images express themselves more strongly. All students of Theosophy know that a store-house of past Karma exists, but all do not know that in the subjective realm ghosts and elementaries of dead objective actions often work havoc.

The last quotation of the first Fragment of our textbook that we should consider is this:

Before the path is entered, thou must destroy thy lunar body, cleanse thy mind-body, and make clean thy heart.

In a footnote H.P.B. explains that the astral form produced by Kama has to be destroyed. The Kama-rupa, ordinarily, is formed after the death of the body and ere the Ego goes into Devachan, freeing itself from that form. But in the life of the Probationer, as he enters the kingdom of the quickened, leaving behind that of the dead> there is the Kama-rupa phenomenon related to that of the Dweller on the Threshold. The quickened soul becomes consciously alive when, by chasing away from the field of the mind all Kama-fed thought-images, he begins to live by the power of the clean heart, *i.e.*, by the influence of Buddhi. For this dual process — dispersing the Kama-rupa and awakening Buddhi so that it can ensoul Manas, the objective world proves of great benefit.

The objective world of actions is not only valuable for enabling us to compare, to contrast and discriminatively to learn to concentrate, but it also proves a most helpful sphere when the strife of the subjective kind is on, of which mention is made above. The way the Probationer has to learn to make use of the objective world is through the right performance of duty. Duty is the axis round which his objective world rotates: mistakes made about Duty, neglect of or dilatoriness in that which should be done, undertaking that which is not our business, etc., all become sins of omission and of commission. If a Probationer is rightly busy with real duty he finds no time for “mischief” — unconsciously done. Furthermore when attacks come from the subjective side of his lower nature, a wise engagement of the senses and the brain in objective functioning weakens the attack. Occultism advocates that we do not strengthen the enemy by brooding about him, nor by directly fighting him. Take no particular notice of the enemy, but keep the consciousness busy with protective and profitable mental and physical work. No Probationer can meditate and study hours on end and therefore calls of mundane duty like the earning of livelihood, etc., are highly beneficial and very necessary. Not the invention of special work but the doing of what there is to do expands the field of duty till humanity becomes our family and the world our country. Duty is the Divinity that shapes our objective world to perfection: Duty is the God of the objective world -- that is the Truth: Om Tat Sat.

III—THE MIND OF THE RENOUNCER

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The guiding principle in the Probationer's life is Discrimination between the Real and the Unreal. But these terms take on a special meaning for him; not the ordinary discrimination, between soul and sense, between mind and matter, between Being and Being, but discrimination between Selflessness and Selfishness as ultimate cosmic principles. If he is bent on Liberation his discrimination follows one channel; if on Renunciation, it cuts a different canal. In the former case the neophyte's aspiration is for freedom from the world of erring humanity and entrance into the state of spiritual bliss. On the Path of Renunciation his whole concern is with Humanity — not with his own realization of Bliss ineffable, but with bringing the bliss of enlightenment to the minds of men. The knowledge necessary for spiritual Self-Realization is limited; but that necessary for the service of other souls is vast and complex. Esoteric Philosophy, advocating for its votaries the treading of the Path of Renunciation, requires that they obtain the latter knowledge.

The first necessary step shown in the second fragment of our textbook, "The Two Paths," is that of the Buddhi-yoga of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, with one important difference. It not only recommends seeking asylum in mental devotion and doing one's duty without caring for the fruits of action, but also adds — "Gain Siddhis for thy future birth."

Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, .and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain. Exhaust the law of Karmic retribution. Gain Siddhis for thy future birth.

To practice the most difficult art of doing good to others requires exceptional knowledge. It is not sufficient to gain "deliverance of mind from thralldom by the cessation of sin and faults."

Not cessation of sins, but something more; not suppression of vice but its elimination. The man who seeks and gains Mukti not only abandons humanity but leaves behind a particular set of his skandhas, which perforce must attract him back to incarnated existence, be it in another manvantara. Among the weaknesses and the conditions to be overcome by the future Adept are not only "desires for possession and power" but also "duties which, however honorable, are still of the earth earthy." Here is a subtle difference in the evaluation of Duty from that which is ordinarily made, a difference which the future Renouncer has to note. The development of right renunciation at the early stages and for the Probationer consists in the performance of duties; in not shirking them, but discharging them. In discharging them, however, he has to learn the lesson contained in the performance and develop the power which goes with that performance. Liberation comes by the payment of our debts to all duties. But unless effort along a special line* is made the powers which follow that performance will not unfold in his consciousness, and the treading of the Path of Renunciation will be impossible.

There are two kinds of Siddhis — the one lower and psychic, the other higher and spiritual. When the Probationer is told, "Gain Siddhis for thy future birth," it is the powers of the second type that are meant powers belonging to Buddhi-Manas. In the performance of duty one should have not only detachment from the lower personal self and from the results of actions, but also attachment to the higher egoic self, so that the field of Dharma-yagna, sacrificial service, widens. He who desires liberation discharges his duties in such a fashion as to create no new causes — exhaustion of Karma is his method. But he who aspires to tread the Path of Renunciation performs actions in such a manner as to create new opportunities to

serve an increasing number of human minds. Each sacrificial action of his, naturally unfolding from his congenital duties, Karma-Dharma, is like a pebble thrown in a lake — the circles of Karma made by it grow and grow. But, the aspirant is thrown back into his old sphere if, through lack of knowledge and because of limited perception, in serving he does not unfold the spiritual Siddhis. Each sacrificial deed deepens the spiritual insight, provided that both in motive and in method it is according to the teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy. Occultism teaches how to turn the forces of evil to good and unless the Probationer on the Path of Renunciation learns this and thus gains Siddhis his success will be very distant. Therefore this is said:

To live and reap-experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in Maya's realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the changeless Sat, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions. For mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul.

The ordinary man has for his horizon his street; his insight is surface- deep and the points of his magnetic compass draw him to his appetites. He lives in his sense-created state, which looks to him like a real world but which is not any of the seven Worlds of Rest Eternal. His mind made subservient to his senses, and his senses to his appetites, he goes from death to death. The man who has begun to live, who recognizes that life being probationary, afflictions are opportunities, looks beyond his street. Modern education does give him some breadth of vision, but not the depth, and therefore the gap between his knowledge and his practice, between his mental and his moral life, between his sacred beliefs and his secular deeds. Theosophy educates the human mind to gain depth, to see below the surface, to penetrate into the very kernel of form. When the horizon of the student is broadened, when the insight of the practitioner has deepened, and therefore he has begun to live, he must secure the magnetic compass of the higher life. In navigation, by means of the magnetic compass the directive force of Earth, the great magnet, upon a freely-suspended needle is used and it is indispensable. Equally indispensable, nay more so, is the corresponding instrument to navigate the ocean of Samsara. The depth of insight develops Viveka-discrimination, and for the learning soul, that aspect of it which enables him to select ideas and aphorisms which, under Karma and for his particular stage, are necessary. The points of his magnetic compass show him the way to Sat — Truth. It is for the human mind to maintain the breadth and the depth gained by not allowing desires and fancies to exert their power of suggestion and to draw him away to Maya's realm. This has to be achieved by the mind blending itself with the Soul.

Daily, nay hourly, from the sphere of memory the dust rises and settles on the mind, taking away its capacity to reflect the Divine Ideas of Akasha. Therefore daily and hourly the mirror of the mind has to be dusted and study of the Esoteric Philosophy does it. Sustained effort to reflect Divine Ideas polishes the mind, transforming the mirror and giving it the superior capacity to reproduce, more and more accurately, the Living Images of Devas and Dhyanis, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. These reproductions are the real points that draw the Chela-Soul to the Vairasattva, the "Lord of all Mysteries."

It is during the process of brushing away the dust of illusions, of blending mind and soul, of soaring into the sphere of Sat, that the choice to tread the Path of Renunciation is confirmed, because we see the hidden meanings and the occult implications of that choice. The Great Choice comes at the end, when the knowledge-concerning the two Ways is obtained:

Thou hast the knowledge now concerning the two Ways. Thy time will come for choice, O thou of eager Soul, when thou hast reached the end and passed the seven Portals. Thy mind is clear.

No more art thou entangled in delusive thoughts, for thou hast learned all. Unveiled stands Truth and looks thee sternly in the face. She says:

“Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of Self; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men.”

He, who becomes Pratyeka-Buddha makes his obeisance but to his Self. The Bodhisattva who has won the battle, who holds the prize within his palm, yet says in his divine compassion:

“For others’ sake this great reward I yield” — accomplishes the greater Renunciation.

A Saviour of the World is he.

Behold! The goal of bliss and the long Path of Woe are at the furthest end.
Thou canst choose either, O aspirant to Sorrow, throughout the coming cycles!

OM VAJRAPANI HUM.

The student will do well to make use of *The Theosophical Glossary* and to reflect upon the terms (1) Pratyeka-Buddha; (2) Vajrapani; (3) Vajrasattva; and (4) Vajradhara.

IV—THE VIRTUOUS MIND

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Universal respect is paid to a man of virtue. A good-hearted man is admired, but so is a clever-minded man. In our modern civilization mental capacity and moral power are allowed to remain dissociated, education almost fostering the dissociation. A gentleman in club land will not cheat at the card-table, but the same man will not hesitate to cut the throat of his friend who happens to be a business competitor. Most Occidental church-going people condemn polygamy and polyandry most severely, but they connive at adultery in both men and women. The orthodox Hindu, philosophizing, argues and proves that Brahman is in the heart of each, but he sees no illogicality in observing in practice the immoral doctrine of untouched ability. We can go on multiplying instances to show how moral principles are set at naught by intelligent minds, even by so-called logicians and philosophers.

The integration of hands, head and heart is the central and fundamental teaching of *The Voice of the Silence*. Moral principles are not only to be acknowledged — all the world does that — they are to be applied. The value of the mental habit of looking for the underlying moral principle before any deed is done or any word spoken is not at all recognized by the “educated and the cultured.” Occultism demands the constant practice of bringing into juxtaposition moral principles and intellectual doctrines. If it is immoral to cheat at the club, it is also immoral to cheat in the office; if polygamy is wrong, adultery is worse, for in the latter hypocrisy is present; if Brahman is in all men, then untouchables is false and its practitioner is an irreligious man. The man on the path of chelas hip is called upon to consult his code of rules and laws at every turn. Like a lawyer he has his memory, but almost always the lawyer refreshes his memory and before acting consults his code-books. This the learner of Occultism is expected to do. “To sleep over a letter and to wait on a plan” is a rule because it gives the necessary time to refresh the memory and to search the scriptures. To seek the principles of action, both moral and mental, is essential, and even on the field of battle the Master Krishna thought it necessary to set them forth.

The general rule, the fundamental and foundational law to be always and ever kept in mind, is that of Brotherhood. If a thought or a feeling, a word or a deed, harms another soul, it is wrong. To the true practitioner H.P.B. gives this advice:

He must think of himself as an intestinal something, not even as an individual atom, but as a part of the world-atoms as a whole, or become an illusion, a nobody, and vanish like a breath leaving no trace behind. As illusions, we are separate distinct bodies, living in masks furnished by Maya. Can we claim one single atom in our body as distinctly our own? Everything, from spirit to the tiniest particle, is part of the whole, at best a link. Break a single link and all passes into annihilation; but this is impossible. There is a series of vehicles becoming more and more gross, from spirit to the densest matter, so that with each step downward and outward we get more and more the sense of separateness developed in us. Yet this is illusory, for if there were a real and complete separation between any two human beings, they could not communicate with, or understand each other in any way.

The Law of Brotherhood is infinitesimal recognized by all students, and earnest practitioners begin to make applications. But the influence of the race-mind is very strong, and so even practitioners are swayed by the difference between mental understanding and moral application. All Probationers are called upon to examine themselves by the light of their own Inner Ego and with the help of the divine virtues — the *paramitas*. Ordinarily, virtues are considered to be attributes of the heart; we do not usually speak of mind-feelings; integration or yoga-union between mind and heart demands that the mind become virtuous. We have to learn to think of virtues and to use our reason and our intelligence, our -

discrimination and our discernment, in practicing the *paramitas*, with which deals the third fragment of our textbook, called “The Seven Portals/” It is from the point of view of the relation between mind and morals that we want to examine the golden Keys.

Because the mind is driven by human feelings and passions. it roams in the field of the senses, destroying them and itself. Therefore the injunction: “Thou shalt not let thy senses make a playground of thy mind.”

Before the mind can absorb the virtues the learner has to see within himself the difference between desire-mind and soul-mind. A bridge called Conscience exists as a third factor. Conscience is Antahkarana — the internal organ — and it is both the voice of experience accumulated in the world of matter and the channel of divine light streaming forth from the world of Spirit. Conscience rightly activated bridges the gulf which ordinarily exists between mental and moral activities. Before the actual treading of the Path begins and the first of the divine *paramitas* can be correctly practiced, the integration between head and heart is necessary.

Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal.

This does not imply that the art of separating the body from the mind is acquired; but it does mean that each time, if Dana-Charity is to be lightly expressed, an attempt has to be made to examine the relative position of body and mind, to live, be it but for a moment, in the eternal, to feel that something of our self abides in all things and that all things are in the One Self. This preliminary to the exercise of the Dana-paramita brings to it the strength of the mind and of true ideas. As it is most difficult, almost impossible, to attune our mind to the mind of the whole of humanity, advantage is taken of the Chela-institution, and we are told to attune our mind to “the collective minds of Lanoo-Shravakas.” The feeling of unity illuminates the mind; the enlightened mind uses the virtue of Dana, charity and love immortal, not sentimentally and sensuously, but egoically.

What is true of Dana is equally true of Shila and of Kshanti; these form a triad, for love creates harmony, and without patience, harmony cannot be created. The balanced offspring, whether a word or an act, a poem or a picture, has for its father love and for its mother patience. When the child is created, its nature of perfection makes it a masterpiece, and there is Bliss “for ever after.”

Similarly, the last three paramitas, Virya, Dhyana and Prajna, form a triad. When, with dauntless energy, the father pursues contemplation, the result is Prajna — full spiritual perception.

Between the two triads is the paramita of Viraga (Vairagya) without which neither can Maya-Illusion be conquered nor can Truth-Sat be perceived. Detachment, dispassion, indifference, is, in more than one sense, the most important of the virtues. And we are told:

Have mastery o'er thy thoughts, O striver for perfection, if thou would'st cross its [the middle portal's] threshold.

It is the mind which fructifies attachment to objects of sense. If the mind did not lend itself to the dictates of the desires and the passions there would be no attachment. Detached from the lower, it has within itself the power to attach itself to the higher.

Now, the gratification felt by the elemental beings who make up our desire nature is due to the interplay between them and the senses and the organs — the Gnyana-Indriyas and the Karma-Indriyas. Desire-per- ception leads to desire-action. Therefore we are told:

Stern and exacting is the virtue of Viraga. If thou its path would'st master thou must keep thy mind and thy perceptions far freer than before from killing action.

The action which is not pleasing to Ishvara and which kills the Soul is selfish action; its opposite is sacrifice; sacramental action is *vagna*. Any action, however trivial, can be transformed into a sacrament by the magic called Yagna (see *The Theosophical Glossary* under **Yajna**). All the Karmas we inherit from the past form our duties, our Dharma: the Esotericist *has* to perform his Dharma, so that each performance becomes sacramental. But—

Before tine hand is lifted to upraise the fourth gate's latch, thou must have mastered all the mental changes in thyself and slain the army of the thought sensations that, subtle and insidious, creep unasked within the Soul's bright shrine.

The unwanted thoughts overpower the consciousness even before their presence is registered — that is the first stage. To oust them is difficult, but the effort brings the *Siddhi*, the power, of sensing their approach. In this second stage danger lies in keeping the mind vacant. It is important to learn to keep ourselves mentally engaged. It is necessary ever to have near at hand thoughts and things which would hold the mind steady and firm. "Possession is nine points of the law," it is said, and that is equally true of the mind possessing true ideas, which make it immune to attack from the enemy.

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.

It is through our thoughts, good and bad, that we bind ourselves to humanity, and to the universe. The thought-links are very powerful binders and Vairagya is detachment of our own mind from all thought-links. The thoughts of others bind us to them, in proportion as we are consubstantial with them. This law, however, works on the beneficent side as well: *thoughts* link us to the Supreme Self, to the Blessed Ones who live in the infinitudes of space or on earth. Our desires fill our world now; they impel us to think, to plan, to act; a void is the world of Spirit for the man of flesh. But when the higher choice is made and the resolve taken, the emptiness of the world of the senses is seen. Invocation of the higher, daily contact with the higher, sustained repose in the higher reveal how grand and blissful the plenum is. Detachment from the lower, cleaving to the higher, transfer the loves of the aspiring practitioner to a spiritual realm, and from there the *Maya* of the material universe looks like a play, a drama, a *lila*. The symbols of the vacuum and the plenum are excellent metaphysical ideas, contemplation on which strengthens the virtue of Vairagya.

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?

Every effort to reach and to hold a new position in a higher world requires spiritual energy — Virya. The source thereof is in the spiritual pole of man's being. Bodily energy related to the prana-principle in man is but the lowest expression of Virya. Virya is called the semen of the Soul and it is activated by spiritual celibacy — Brahmacharya of the mind. The Chelas of the Great Gurus are real Brahmacharis— young learners gaining the strength of knowledge, who presently will enter the Great House of the Fathers of the Race. If the practice of bodily Brahmacharya is a difficult undertaking, much more difficult is Soul-celibacy, necessary for real one-pointedness, Dhyana. As in all else, unfoldment from within without is the law in Brahmacharya: inner psycho-spiritual celibacy makes the outer psycho-physiological celibacy possible. Those who try to practice the latter without a basis of the former fail — and worse than fail.

For attaining Dhyana-paramita the learner has to acquire the art of using energy for both offensive and defensive purposes. The consciousness has to attain a state wherein attacks from the lower regions do not touch it; and also in that state the movement towards the ultimate goal is steadily continued. The Dhyana-state is static in relation to the lower, but dynamic in relation to the higher. In it the attacks from the astral light have to be met and warded off, while a steady rising in the Divine Astral or Akasha has to be attempted. This dual task is implicit in the following verses, arranged to facilitate the reader's understanding:

“Ere the gold flame can burn with steady light, the lamp must stand well guarded in a spot free from all wind.” Exposed to shifting breeze, the jet will flicker and the quivering flame oast shades deceptive, dark and ever-changing, on the Soul's white shrine.

And then, O thou pursuer of the truth, thy Mind-Soul will become as a mad elephant, that rages in the jungle. Mistaking forest trees for living foes, he perishes in his attempts to kill the ever-shifting shadows dancing on the wall of sunlit rocks.

Thou hast to reach that fixity of mind in which no breeze, however strong, can waft an earthly thought within. Thus purified, the shrine must of all action, sound, or earthly light be void; e'en as the butterfly, o'ertaken by the frost, falls lifeless at the threshold — so must all earthly thoughts fall dead before the fane.

Build high, Lanoo, the wall that shall hedge in the Holy Isle, the dam that will protect thy mind from pride and satisfaction at thoughts of the great feat achieved.

Thine “Isle” is the deer, thy thoughts the hounds that weary and pursue his progress to the stream of Life. Woe to the deer that is o'ertaken by the barking fiends before he reach the Vale of Refuge — Dhyana-Marga, “path of pure knowledge” named.

Ere thou canst settle in Dhyana-Marga and call it thine, thy Soul has to become as the ripe mango fruit: as soft and sweet as its bright golden pulp for others' woes, as hard as that fruit's stone for thine own throes and sorrows, O Conqueror of Weal and Woe.

As the diamond buried deep within the throbbing heart of earth can never mirror back the earthly lights, so are thy mind and Soul; plunged in Dhyana-Marga, these must mirror nought of Maya's realm illusive.

A task far harder still awaits thee: thou hast to feel thyself All-Thought, and yet exile all thoughts from out thy Soul.

The Dhyana gate is like an alabaster vase, white and transparent; within there burns a steady golden fire, the flame of Praina that radiates from Atma.

The Dhyana Path, the haven of the Yogi, the blessed goal that Srotapattis crave.

The Probationer is on the shore of the Manasa-sarovara where, Occult tradition teaches, great Sages recorded what they had heard as the Vedas. He has to enter the Waters of Wisdom and dive deep and deeper till he sees the Naga, the Dragon-Lord of the Lake. He teaches, it is said, the man tram to the new Arhan who comes out into Myalba to repeat it, and it is—

PEACE TO ALL BEINGS.

THE HUMAN BODY A STUDY IN “THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE”

The student of the Esoteric Philosophy must learn the purpose for which he wears the body, the value it is assigned and the use he should make of it.

The final authority for any subject of the Esoteric Philosophy is the ethical and moral instruction enshrined in our devotional books. Of the latter, *The Voice of the Silence*, dedicated by H.P.B. “To the Few,” naturally takes the first place. Then there are *Light on the Path*, the *Dhamrnepada* and the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

In the Preface to the *Voice* (p. iii) it is said that the body is the vehicle of the embodied Self, which is not the eternal, indestructible SELF which kills not and is not killed.

“Thy Soul cannot be hurt but through thy erring body” (p. 63). It is the embodied Self or Soul which can be hurt by the body.

“Thy body is not Self, thy SELF is in itself without a body” (p. 29). The embodied Self is not the body, much less the SELF which “is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not”; but they do affect the embodied Self or Soul. Praise or blame are born of sensations and desires. “Desire lingers only in the body, the vehicle of the embodied Self” (p. iii); hence the instruction everywhere to kill out sensations, kill out desires, etc. And yet the body is called “the shrine of thy sensations” (p. 29); more, what is asked of the neophyte is that his body should be “agitated”—agitated by the higher thought-feelings engendered by the embodied Self. “Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain lake” (p. 32). Here we find an early use to which the body should be put. It is to be “agitated” by the tranquil mind and the Soul which is as limpid, crystal-clear, transparent and lucid as a lake in high mountain altitudes. It is in this condition of the conjoint harmonious action of body, mind and Soul that the body becomes the shrine of sensations.

The body, the mortal coil, is the “pregnant cause of anguish and illimitable pain” (p. 43). It and its shadow, the lower personal man, guide all the affairs of life. The word “coil” in its archaic and poetic sense as in “mortal coil” is indicative of the spring for the turmoil of life. The personal man becomes a mere shadow of the body-life with its senses and organs. The body is the master and the personal man the slave for all worldly men. The process is to be reversed, so that we come to experience the truth—“Thy body is thy slave.” Therefore it is that “our physical bodies are called ‘Shadows’ in the mystic schools” (p. 33 fn.). What is substance to the worldly man is a shadow to the mystic.

This process of the transmutation of the body and the embodied one is spoken of on pp. 53-4: “Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind.” Then only the second step can be taken, *viz.*, “to dissipate the shadow,” which accomplishment enables us “to live in the eternal.” Then only “the pilgrim saith: ‘I have renounced this passing frame; I have destroyed the cause: the shadows cast can, as effects, no longer be’ ” (p. 60). Only then we are ready to answer the question: “Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver of external shadows?”

In this wise the evolution of the body takes place for the purpose of the higher life. The Doctrine of the Three *Kayas* takes us to the summit of the evolution of the Body.
