

The Hill of Discernment

A. Trevor Barker

Lectures on theosophy by the compiler of the Mahatma and Blavatsky letters to A. P. Sinnett.

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"Let those who have climbed the hill and seen the vision, and in that clean, sweet air have heard the key-note of the dawning cycle — hold fast — and remember in the days that are coming — the sweetness, and the beauty, and the truth they have seen." — A. Trevor Barker, Introduction to *The Mahatma Letters*

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In Memoriam

True Theosophists the world over will grieve at the passing of our brother — and their brother — A. Trevor Barker, on 17th July, 1941, in Torquay, Devon, England. A deep and very simple character, he lived and worked through an unusually complex personality; and because of this few really understood him; but the few who did understand him loved him. Spirit, mind, and soul in him were dedicate to Theosophy; and from the beginning of his awakening in this life to Theosophical work until the day of his passing, Trevor Barker, as far as I know, had but one thought, one objective, one aim: the delivery of our Masters' Teaching to mankind — as is evidenced by the articles and lectures printed in the present volume.

I knew him well and loved him because he was he; and I know that many, many thousands of others who perhaps never met him love him also for his work for Theosophy, and in particular perhaps for his giving to the world the most noteworthy standard Theosophical book we have, *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*.

I understand that Trevor had intended to issue a last edition of this greatest Theosophical work, which would have allowed him to correct a very few errors arising in faulty transcription of sometimes almost illegible manuscript, and of a few other typographical errors; but it was not to be. One of Trevor's last actions was arranging for the depositing of the MSS. of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in the British Museum, where these papers are now held in the Department of Select Manuscripts.

Trevor's last official Theosophical act, just a short time before he passed, was making arrangements, as far as he could do so, for

the safe continuance of the English Section of the Theosophical Society, of which Section he was for a number of years a most efficient, devoted, and enthusiastic Head. Our deeply earnest sympathy goes to his faithful wife, Virginia, as good and true a Theosophist as he himself was, and to his children. His great love for his fellow-men in connexion with his Theosophical work, should operate powerfully in bringing him back again into Theosophical duty as quickly as karman permits.

Dormit in pace stellisque.

G. de P.

International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California, U. S. A.
21st September, 1941.

Compilers' Preface

With the death of A. Trevor Barker on July 17th of this year, the spontaneous wish was expressed by his many friends all over the world that his lectures and writings might be gathered together for publication in some permanent form. The present work, *The Hill of Discernment*, is an answer to this widespread desire. It contains in large part all the available addresses given in various parts of England, mainly to Theosophical groups and lodges, to European Conventions of the Theosophical Society, and to various 'fraternization' meetings with the Phoenix Lodge and other Lodges of the Adyar T. S. in England. At the end of this volume is a Memorandum which gives as far as possible the original source of each lecture.

It should be noted that Dr. Barker, save in a few instances, had no opportunity himself of editing his work, and the Compilers in all cases have felt it best, except for obvious slips and inaccuracies,

to leave his words as given under the urge of his ardent and sincere conviction.

To Miss Margaret Jamieson, who was for many years Dr. Barker's private secretary as well as secretary for the English Section of the T. S., special thanks are given. Without her devotion and her industry in reporting and transcription, the publication of this book would have been impossible.

The Compilers are grateful to Mrs. A. Trevor Barker for the permission she has kindly granted them to use the material which this book contains.

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1. New Year and Other Messages

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[To all students of occultism keenly alive to inner bonds of kinship with Nature, the four great seasonal turnings of the year make strong appeal. Trevor Barker's New Year messages given in this chapter are in close harmony with this and with H. P. Blavatsky's teaching of the importance particularly of the first quarter of the year, from the Winter Solstice to the Spring Equinox, when the "astral light of the earth is young." Worthy resolutions then made are blessed with spiritual impetus and may more consistently and effectively be carried out.]

The Hill of Discernment

At this season of the year we begin to look forward to the vigorous new life that will come to birth within a few short weeks. Often Theosophical students experience many difficulties and find it hard to maintain their grip on the things of the spirit during the dark days of November, when the spiritual currents that flow from the Great Lodge are at their lowest ebb, this period being at the end of the six dark months of the Sun's southern journey, which is said to be under the dominion of Yama, the God of Death. The sternest battles with self often fall upon the soul at this time, and many feel themselves to be isolated, with their feet rooted in terror to the ground. The great ensnarer Doubt, causes them to wonder if they will ever hear again the beat of the wings of the Great Bird sounding anew the Aum through the cosmic

spaces, calling their spirit to that new birth which those with any mystic perception almost invariably discover taking place within them round about the Sacred Festival of the Winter Solstice.

Men generally recognise quite easily the rhythmic sweep of the cosmic cycles: the moon with its periodic influence on all forms of life, the rise and fall of the seasons, the ebb and flow of the tides; but it comes as a new thought to many that this cyclic Law, which is universal in Nature, has its direct application in the life of the soul and its unfolding. No state of spiritual inspiration, nor indeed of consciousness, ever remains with us permanently, and the highest vision gives place inevitably to periods when it is not always easy to see the Pathway before our feet, and these are the testing times of faith. We can climb the pathway to the mountain tops and walk there, serene perhaps in the consciousness of work well done, but the road will inevitably descend again into the valley, and well for us that it is so. One of the most valuable lessons that comes to us as we travel onward, is the equanimity and detachment that come from the recognition that there would be no peaceful valleys if there were no hills on each side of them, and we thus learn to accept both the mountain of difficulty and the valley of fulfilment, and realize that even the pleasant vale can be shadowed and dark until the sun rises over the mountain tops to chase away the terrors of the night.

Shall we not have faith in the Law then — faith based upon knowledge and checked by experience, which gives us the certainty that periods of the greatest darkness are always followed by Light; and if we feel prone to forget this, is it not just then that we should reach out for the strong hands of those who are nearest us in spiritual fellowship, valuing most deeply the touch of those whose inner strength holds us firmly to our highest? Is not that the meaning of brotherhood? Again there must be "willingness to receive as well as to give advice and

instruction," for it is impossible to share with others gifts which they are unwilling to receive. How rich life can be when the mind has learned to dwell in the way of truth, illumined by the Mystery Teachings of Antiquity! Therefore, *Fideles sursum corda!* and may the bright Chohans bring Peace to the hearts, and a new vision to the minds of all Theosophists wherever they may be this Christmas season, whose undaunted efforts show that they have earned the blessing.

The Divine Awakening and the Birth of the Year

Our thoughts rather naturally turn at this season of the year to such a subject as we have chosen for our study together tonight. Just at the moment when the Sun has taken its turn on its yearly pilgrimage, and once again begins to travel northwards, so do we as spiritual pilgrims manifest our unity, not only with Father Sun but with the whole of Nature; so do we at this season of the year turn our own thoughts sunwards, taking stock of our limitations, losing towards the source of strength and light, that we may find the means to leap over the obstacles which have so far hindered us in finding the philosopher's stone that will enable us by a power more than our own to change the base metal of our lower, material nature into the pure gold of the spirit. Is that not the meaning of this mystical season of the year? So it has always appealed to me. For many years now this month of December has signified to me a month of inward searching; a month of spiritual preparation for the six months — the six sacred months — of the Sun's northern pilgrimage during which all spiritual effort should be commenced; because if initiated during this period it has a greater productivity, and that which we try to do yields, instead of tenfold or twentyfold, a hundredfold.

This brings me to the first thought that I want to place before you in relation to the vigorous, inward, psychic and spiritual life that

is at this season of the year brought to birth in the planet itself, which is our material mother. It has been declared in substance by the one who brought us the knowledge of this Ancient Wisdom in our modern era, H. P. Blavatsky, writing in her magazine *Lucifer*, the Light-Bringer, for the month of January, 1888, that it is no vain myth, the idea that resolutions, wishes, determinations, actions, aspirations, begun during the seasons bounded by Christmas and Easter have a hundred times more chance of succeeding, simply because the aspirant has set himself in tune with the great Cosmic urge and rhythm of Nature itself. When the psychic life of the earth is young and strong, the disciple, uniting himself with those uprising currents, and cutting through all the difficulties and obstacles that he has put in his own way by his blind struggling and unilluminated and unguided wandering; seizing the sword of spiritual knowledge, setting himself in tune with the great rhythm of the Cosmos, sets forth with the Sun on its northern pilgrimage. He knows that if, with faith, he travels along that Pathway in the footsteps of those that have preceded him, the light of the Supreme, which he finds burning in his own heart, will show him the Pathway before his feet always and forever, even though it be but the next step. It is not far that we need to see, if only we can see just the next step. Then the Divine Krishna, as we have heard in that reading from the *Bhagavad-Gita* tonight, in the Lord's Song, will enter into our hearts, and be the Warrior that will fight in us, giving us strength to do that which in our feeble, personal humanity we have been unable to accomplish.

Why is it, do you think, that men at this season of the year make so many resolutions upon which they turn their back within a few days or weeks, or sometimes hours? It is not that we have come to the conclusion that the things we set out to do were not worth while — not a bit. We are just as convinced that it was

necessary to make certain changes in ourselves; but we have merely demonstrated once again that as long as a man is divided against himself, as long as he is pursuing not one end but a dozen or two, as long as the different parts of his personal nature are divided up, each one with the little 'I,' the little Ego, pursuing its own little desires, likes and dislikes, just so long will the individual man be unable to make those deep and permanent changes in his own psychology which he recognises to be so necessary when he reflects upon what he really is; when he really faces himself round about the first of January.

It is not necessary for me to ask, is it, whether you have tried the experiment of changing yourselves? I think we have all tried; and have we not all found to our ineffable disgust that if we do seem to change something, it has a most amazing way of changing back again, and we smile and shrug our shoulders and say "Well, one more resolution gone west." A great Sage once said that for a religion or a philosophy to be true it must contain the answer to every problem, and if Theosophy can answer those problems it has done for you and for me almost all that we can ask of any religion or philosophy; because if we can change ourselves, fashioning the base material of our natures into a fitting expression of the Gods that we inherently know ourselves to be, why, it would not be long before we could transform the face of this weary modern world of ours. It is spiritual and individual regeneration that we want to find the key to. "Yes," you will say, "perhaps, but it is a tremendous task — a task indeed the most difficult, the most tremendous, that the spirit of man can undertake." That is true, but should you and I be put off entering the most sublime spiritual adventure that man can embark upon, merely because it happens to be the greatest adventure, the greatest task, and the most difficult one? I do not think so. In fact it is my conviction that too much is made of the difficulty of the

task, and not enough of its possibility of accomplishment for you and for me in this very hour. It is that which is the clarion call of Theosophy to men and women of all religions and all races and all creeds: that if they will arise and seek out the ancient Teachers of the race, they can conquer, they can win in the greatest task that the spirit of man has ever had before it. Otherwise what is the good of philosophies and what is the good of religions, if they have no message for the millions of the outcast, the poor, the suffering and the oppressed — the people that seek for the bread of life and do not know where to find it?

If Theosophy were only for the few, for the one in ten millions, I would doubt its value. After all the same light lighteth every man into the world, the same problems beset humanity; and you have the great Masters of Compassion telling us always that their concern is not so much to care for the successful disciples, those who take knowledge by their own strength — for those people you cannot stop; they will seize their divine heritage and make it their own. But it is to take to the great orphan humanity the knowledge that they also have a Divine heritage; that it is for them also to open the gates of their inner being, to let in the light that is there shining, if they will but have courage to dare to enter upon the great adventure. In all the Scriptures and all the great religions of antiquity you have had the same story, put in myth and parable, in simple language, as well as the more difficult kind of metaphysical ideas. And a very good example is that reading that you had tonight from our Chairman: the end of the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* — the Lord's Song, the Song of the Soul. And note the paragraph that comes at the end of every chapter: "The Holy *Bhagavad-Gita*, the colloquy, i. e., *the conversation*; and the Divine Teacher: not an external man, not a Savior who shed his blood for us in his human nature to wipe away or to make atonement for our misdeeds, but verily the only

Savior that the Wisdom of the Ages recognises — the Divine Spirit in man himself, the Christos in man, the Krishna. And what is his message in that Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Why this: that even the most evil man — note: even the most evil man, when concentrated with singleness of heart and mind in devotion to the Supreme, will speedily cross over the mire of his sins and failings in the bark of spiritual knowledge.

And in another chapter, which is called "The Yoga of the Kingly Knowledge and the Kingly Mystery," viz., the ninth, he uses practically the same phrase, pointing out that such a one should be accounted a righteous man because he had decided rightly; he had learned after all his disillusionment, his sufferings, and his defeats that there was only one means, by whatever road he might travel, to get to that state of consciousness. This was the recognition that his individuality, which with suffering and pain he had built up, developed, grown, through all his age-long evolutionary pilgrimage up to that point, was after all but an instrument of the Divine Self, which at last he was called upon to set aside. He had got to renounce the personal Ego, to realize that of his own power he could do nothing, and he comes to that most difficult of human tasks — to jump over the brink; to plunge into the abyss, as it seems to the human aspirant, willing at last to lose his own life, yet sure by the light of the faith burning in his heart that there would be reborn in him something all-permeating, powerful, strengthening, revivifying, alchemical — transmuting all the baser elements, all the obstacles in his personal nature that he had battled with in darkness and found no victory up to that time. That idea was beautifully put by a disciple that wrote under the pseudonym of "The Dreamer" in his *Studies in the Bhagavad-Gita*:

Happily for him, from his bleeding and lacerated heart now wells up the prayer — "My heart is weighed down

with the vice of faintness, my mind confused to all Dharma. I ask Thee which may be better; that tell me decisively. I am Thy disciple, suppliant unto Thee. Teach me."

Aye, prove it to me. I am defenceless. I have set aside all weapons. I am face to face with myself at last.

This prayer, not lip-deep as before, this complete self-surrender of the immortal man to the Divine, this recognition by the heart of the supremacy of the Spiritual Self, forges the last link in the chain of the sixfold virtues which binds us to the Guru, who is Iswara. This prayer of the human self, the soul whose "feet are now washed with the blood of the heart," this complete renouncing of all Dharmas, this final falling back upon the Self of all as the only refuge, this final union, which in the words of the Sage Sanjaya is the guarantee of the final victory of the human self, goes up to the Divine.

You see, it is in this that we really find the explanation of the statements in mystical literature: that it is not until this moment that the voice of the individual aspirant is even capable of really making itself heard in the courts of the Holy Ones — the great Teachers of the human race. So far his voice has only been the voice of the personal man, but at this moment his cry goes up to the Divine.

And now, and now only, does the soul get the loving guidance of the Logos, and from the Divine comes a down-pouring of spiritual life and energy which unifies the discordant forces in the man; . . .

You will note here that it is the Divine power that does this once the great surrender has been made:

from the Divine pours in the sweet melody of the Song of

Life, the Eternal Gita, the Harmony of Love which synchronizes the jarring forces in the bodies of the man; the Supreme Melody, which opens the eye of the now divine man to the one Life, Consciousness and Love, which unifies the Lokas and the Talas, the high and the low, the virtuous and the vicious, dharma and sin, knowledge and ignorance, attachment and dispassion — the ineffable harmony of the One.

As I understand it, that is the message, the essence, of the teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, as it is the essence of the teaching of the New Testament, the essence of the teaching of Buddhism. You will find it everywhere without exception when you begin to look for it, for it is the age-old message that man can never find redemption by looking outside himself; and the joyful news — the glad tidings — that there is within man a power that will enable him to do that which he and all men really want to do, aspire to do, long and yearn to do, if it were not for the binding forces of those attractions which constantly lead the dual nature of man away from his Divine possibilities. Of course, this idea is implicit in every line of every Theosophical book; it is implicit in every line of the Christian Gospels; it is implicit in every line of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. There are men and women of real spirituality everywhere; wherever you may go, you will find fellow pilgrims, brothers who understand the meaning of the Lord's Song, because they have found it in their own lives. They call it by many names, but that to the Theosophist means nothing. We care not what terminology a man uses. He can call it what he likes; it is not the words that matter. What matters is whether the man has experienced it; whether he can do it.

What is the meaning of that fellowship which the Theosophical Movement aspires towards when it talks of Universal Brotherhood? Believe me it is not only a recognition that all men

are physically, psychically, mentally, spiritually united by indissoluble bonds, as they are with the whole of nature; it is not merely that intellectual recognition. Why is it, think you, that not only in the Churches, but to a large extent in the Theosophical Movement, there is not that living fire of spiritual fellowship which is a thing that gladdens the heart and liberates men from all feelings of separateness and antipathy? Why is it? I will tell you. All spiritual fellowships and ideas of Universal Brotherhood are built on the assumption of a common experience, of a common realization of God, of deity, of divinity, which each man, each aspirant, finds in his own life, and then walks with that Divine Companion, as it were, following in the direction that is shown to him. Do you not see that in a Theosophical Lodge that is composed of men and women who believe in their own Divinity, who have experienced it and know its power and its tremendous joy; that in such a Lodge there must be a real spiritual fellowship that is entirely different from that which exists theoretically, because of a philosophical conception that all men must necessarily be one? But when you know that in the fellowship to which you belong are men and women who are trying to live day by day in the light of their own Divinity, who never do anything unless they seek out the Warrior within, first pausing to stop and think before initiating any action lest the personal man get in the way — Ah! there is the basis of true Brotherhood.

Did not *Light on the Path* tell us just that thing? Listen to what it says in the beginning of the second series of numbered paragraphs:

Stand aside in the coming battle, and though thou fightest be not thou the warrior. Look for the Warrior and let him fight in thee. Take his orders for battle and obey them.

Now that means it is possible to receive the orders, otherwise you

cannot take them, but you won't receive them unless you believe in your own Divinity; and believing means doing, otherwise you do not believe, obviously.

Obey him not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires; for he is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself. Look for him, else in the fever and hurry of the fight thou mayest pass him; and he will not know thee unless thou knowest him. If thy cry meet his listening ear, then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within. And if this is so, then canst thou go through the fight cool and unwearied, standing aside and letting him battle for thee. Then it will be impossible for thee to strike one blow amiss. But if thou look not for him, if thou pass him by, then there is no safeguard for thee. Thy brain will reel, thy heart grow uncertain, and in the dust of the battlefield thy sight and senses will fail, and thou wilt not know thy friends from thy enemies.

He is thyself. Yet thou art but finite and liable to error.

You see this keynote running right through the whole of mystical literature, warning that the personal man can do nothing of himself except to prepare the instrument, prepare the vessel, and sweep clean the Tabernacle. That is all.

He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth. When once he has entered thee and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee, and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee.

Again there is our beloved H. P. B. telling us that once a man's Divine Spirit enters into the Tabernacle of his body, it will very soon redeem him. I would to the Immortal Gods that we might get

a new spirit abroad in this Theosophical Movement of ours, realizing and practising these ideas, and that we might begin at home right here with this New Year that is dawning before us this very night. Why should we not do it? A new spirit that will enthrone not external leaders, not Presidents of Lodges or National Sections, not priests or those with temporal authority. Let us be willing to step down from our places of authority. I believe that all men who have ever experienced the saving power of the spirit within them must recognise that of themselves they are nothing; that at best they are but instruments of the Universal Spirit of Truth, of Wisdom, of Love and Compassion and Pity that men call God, or Christ, or the Kingdom of Heaven, or Nirvana — I say enthrone That, and let him who would be greatest amongst us be willing to be the servant of all in this that we call a Universal Brotherhood. In that way we can bring into existence a real living Fraternity, not a lip thing, or a mere ideal theory, but a reality based upon an experience of the Soul, whereby each Theosophist recognises in his brother one who has enthroned the Supreme in his own heart — the One Reality, in whose light all are living, working, laboring, in a common Cause. That would be a real Brotherhood, and possible here and now, not for one or two, but for all, otherwise of what value?

Just imagine plans, campaigns, individual and corporate, made under the direction of the Higher Self, which being ultimately the Self of all, could not, by its very nature, be against the interests of any. Each for all and all for each. But let us be honest with ourselves. It is impossible to realize this idea, *impossible*, if in this day and hour we do not invite the companionship, the Divine power of the Spirit within to fight and work in us, so that we may truly change. If we take these ideas into our lives and into our hearts this night, at the turning point of the year, backed by the tremendous energy and faith of our spiritual wills, who shall say

what miracles may not be accomplished in the eventful year of 1934 that will be with us in such a few short hours.

Let us close with the prayer that those who feel called to enter that sublime adventure, will dare to risk all that they have and are, to lose and forget themselves, in order that they may take the Kingdom of Heaven by storm or by violence, or whatever term you may like to use. For it is such men and women that will bring about a new order of ages in this weary world; verily, the Kingdom of Heaven coming in the hearts and minds of men.

Forgiveness and Love

I expect you all remember that phrase of G. de P.'s — "Love is the cement of the Universe: learn to forgive, learn to love. Each one of you is an incarnate God. Be it!" Do you realize how many of us at the present time are prevented from liberating ourselves from all our old troubles and miseries, and the things that are holding us back in our own personal lives; the things we have erected, the obstacles that we have put there with our own hands by a hundred-and-one misunderstandings of our own sublime teachings. Take the doctrine of reincarnation: how many of my Brother Theosophists have I heard say, "Ah! but to gain real illumination, real knowledge, and the power to help people will take me lives of effort. I am only beginning now." And they think they have said something. Well, they have! They have erected the most gigantic barrier with their own hands to gaining that knowledge here and now. Do you think, do you believe, that the great Masters of Wisdom have given us the Teachings of Theosophy, with its message of hope and inspiration to men, for the sake of one or two or three or a few? Oh! It is an impossible thought. We have to understand that Theosophy and its realization is possible for us here and now; and it is because so many have not believed in its practical possibilities that

Theosophy is not today a tremendous success all over the world — I mean as a Movement. Often do we ponder together as to why the millions do not take Theosophy, and that is why: because we do not believe — really and truly believe — that it is for the man in the street. We have got what is really (although we do not recognise it) a kind of egotistic feeling "Ah! But it is only for the few." That is not true. Theosophy is for all. Just think of that sentence "Each one of you is an incarnate God. Be it!" Would G. de P. say that if it were impossible? Obviously not. It means that every man, woman and child can, if he will, gain something of the inspiration of his own Inner Divinity, and find the way out of all difficulties through the power that that alone can give him, through that energy which is his only Savior in this world or the world to come.

You remember what H. P. B. said in *The Secret Doctrine* on page 280 of Volume I:

the Eternal KARANA alone, "the *Causeless Cause* of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart-invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through 'the still small voice' of our spiritual consciousness . . . making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit*, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*.

That is a virile doctrine, a manly doctrine, and in the year that is opening before us I do pray with all my heart that those who have been touched by the real fire of Theosophy, who feel it as a living force pulsing and beating within them, will come and join hands with us here; I mean our fellow Theosophists, members of this Society or any other, sitting in this room here and outside it. I hope they will come and get vocal about it, and say what is in

their hearts. And if they have difficulties, I hope they will come and share these difficulties with their Brother Theosophists, with the faith that if Theosophy means anything at all "*the way out*," in terms of the Masters' teaching, will be given to them. I have proved that to be possible in my own life, and others are proving it in theirs; and it is on that that the real spiritual fellowship of the future will be built.

I tell you, there is no brotherhood, Companions, amongst those who only have a lip-Theosophy, an intellectual Theosophy. It is all very well to explain the Universe in the most marvellous language; but, if you have not experienced the Divine Life in your own heart, and if you have not found the Companionship of fellow-Theosophists who have likewise experienced it, and felt its saving and transforming power, then you do not know the meaning of what real brotherhood can be; real brotherhood is a thing of the soul, of the spirit, which finds expression here in human life. But believe me, though you may have all the compassion in the universe, you cannot build the Temple of Wisdom that the Masters are trying to get us to build, out of men and women who have not brought about that spiritual revolution in their own lives which comes from *realization* — because they have experienced and know for themselves.

Shall we not together, in the year that is now opening before us, in our work, in our studies, in our Lodge Meetings, concentrate upon the essential things, the vital things, the things that will help us to live our lives? Let us share with others those difficulties that we want to get over; and let us be willing to give to others the light that we ourselves have found, and on occasion to accept helpful advice and criticism.

We have many things to face in 1934. First ourselves individually: to find the God within us and to make restitution to those that we

have injured in thought or otherwise; being willing to say *Mea culpa* and then with the hand of fellowship join with those people that you could not get on with before, and could not work with, and could not co-operate with; and perhaps by telling them the difficulties that you have had, get a new light; get the grouch out of your system and start again. Learn to forgive and learn to love. Aye, forgive others first and then forgive yourself if you can. The past can then be wiped out. We can afford to forget, good lord, the personal difficulties that we have had in the last year, can't we, and join together as a great army of the Spirit? Of course we can.

We have got to organize for success, and success means that we believe and know it is possible, for us and for the man in the street. We have a message for ourselves because we are solving our problems; and if you individually have got problems that you have not solved, well, give your brother Theosophists a chance to help you; so may we find something worth while in 1934!

A Call to Action:

Individual Regeneration or World Chaos

For our doctrines to practically react on the so-called moral code or the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc., we have to popularise a knowledge of Theosophy. . . . For as everyone knows, total emancipation from authority of the one all-pervading power or law called God by the priests — Buddha, Divine Wisdom and enlightenment or Theosophy, by the philosophers of all ages — means also the emancipation from that of human law. Once unfettered and delivered from their dead-weight of dogmatic interpretations, personal names, anthropomorphic conceptions and salaried priests, the fundamental doctrines of all religions will be proved identical in their esoteric meaning. Osiris, Krishna,

Buddha, Christ, will be shown as different names for one and the same royal highway to final bliss — NIRVANA. Mystical Christianity, that is to say that Christianity which teaches self-redemption through our own seventh principle — this liberated Para-Atma (Augeoides) called by some Christ, by others Buddha, and equivalent to regeneration or rebirth in spirit — will be found just the same truth as the Nirvana of Buddhism. All of us have to get rid of our own Ego, the illusory apparent self, to recognise our true self in a transcendental divine life. But if we would not be selfish, we must strive to make other people see that truth, to recognise the reality of that transcendental self, the Buddh, the Christ or God of every preacher. — *Letters from The Masters of The Wisdom*

We recognise no higher authority than the writer of that letter, and therefore at least all Theosophists will pay a good deal of attention to these words that come from a great Master of Wisdom, although it is from an abridged letter. The point that I want to draw attention to is that it does not very much matter what you call this universal Divine principle in nature — something which the Christian is accustomed to call "God"; which in older times in Egypt they referred to as Osiris; which the Buddhists look upon as Nirvana; which the Hindus look upon as Brahman, with the Teacher, the incarnate God, as Krishna — Krishna, whom many of you are probably familiar with now, through the Hindu epic of the *Mahabharata*, where he appears as the Divine Teacher speaking to Arjuna in very much the same way as the Jesus of the Gospels is the God incarnate giving his Divine message to the Theosophists of that age.

Now, the thing that I want to talk to you about tonight is the problem of how we are going to contribute something — to do our part in solving the crisis towards which Europe and the

Western peoples generally are hurtling at breakneck speed. You and I know, if we have read the signs aright, that something is on the way, and that something we are going towards very, very fast; and unless there is a universal Spiritual awakening now immediately, particularly amongst the Western peoples — this civilization is in danger of destruction. Can the Theosophical Movement contribute to the solution of that problem in a dynamic and practical way which you and I as ordinary men and women can apply, or are we going to talk high metaphysics and be generally and beautifully vague — not really getting down to brass tacks in our own lives, and certainly not bringing any real influence to bear upon the hearts and minds of the people at large or the world in general?

One of the purposes of the Theosophical Movement is to change the hearts and minds of the peoples of the world, so that we can usher in a new world order based, not upon selfish and materialistic thinking and living, but upon the realization by each individual man, that he is literally in himself the Temple of an incarnate God — that he *is* an incarnate God. This Deity is his very essence, the root of his being, which means if you understand it correctly, that we — not as separate isolated personalities, but as Spiritual beings — are one with the heart of the Universe. Again not to be abstruse and metaphysical, but striving to find words to express the sublimity of the idea, the Universal Self is that which is the same in you and in me: that something in which we live and move and have our being; which is nearer to us than hands and feet, and closer than breathing. All men and women can, if they will, have at their command the knowledge, the wisdom, the power, to solve the world problem we are facing today, and stop this headlong rush along the broad road to destruction. Do you believe that to be a practical possibility? I do, and that is why I am here tonight; and every

man and woman who seize hold of the ideas that I am going to try and lay before you can in proportion to their sincerity, their determination and self-abnegation, become resolvers of chaos, first in their own lives, then in their homes, then in their towns and in their nations. Thus by transforming and changing the lives of individuals, they become instruments for the universal splendor of Divine power, wisdom and love to flow into the world. Wherever we live we shall be able to bring to bear that resolving, ameliorating, inspiriting, purifying, energizing, dynamic force of the Supreme itself.

It is useless to talk about serving humanity in some vague way, and appealing to people in the mass — it cannot be done if we cannot go to a single individual and meet his needs and problems. And unless you and I as individual Theosophists are convinced from having proved it in our own lives, from having conquered ourselves, and are therefore able honestly and sincerely to declare a victory where we previously had defeat, we cannot do anything. It is useless to attempt to solve the world problem until we have solved our own problem. Theosophy is there if you want it; and if you don't want it, it has nothing to say to you. If you have suffered, if you have struggled, if you have had to register defeat in your moral and spiritual life — (and show me the man or woman who has not) and more, if you see men and women and children around you that you want to help by bringing to them the saving and regenerating power of Spiritual knowledge — then you will come to recognise that you never will be able to do it, until you have learnt the secret of regenerating your own life and making of yourself a reborn man, a spiritual man. Does this mean years and years and years of studying endless books, and a tremendously complex, metaphysical and philosophical system; or is it something that you can apply here and now? Again, there is no time to teach men abstruse metaphysics and philosophy in

this hour of universal crisis. The World today is on the brink of collapse, and it is not an economic collapse primarily, but a spiritual one, as all collapses are. If a man collapses it is because his spiritual life is at fault, and if our own nation, and if our own homes, are in chaos or misery or disharmony, it is because the spiritual life of that home, the spiritual lives of the individuals concerned in it, are wrong. It is the mission of the Theosophical Movement at all times, but particularly in these hours when we are hurtling to destruction, to change this state of affairs and to change it rapidly — but this means you and me. You cannot leave it to somebody else. The human race is made up of individuals, and you are one of them.

Perhaps by now you will be wondering how these things are to be accomplished. First you will have to ask yourself the question: Do you believe that in your own inmost essence there is Divinity, Power, Wisdom, Knowledge? If you believe in it because you have experienced its strength and its peace, then your problem is how to incarnate it in your life so that you become a center of conscious, dynamic, spiritual energy — going out into the world as ordinary men and women but capable spiritually of doing extraordinary things. That is the first question you have got to ask yourself: Do you believe in the Divinity and power of your own innermost nature, and if so how are you to reach it and make it effective so that it will not only transform your own life, but transform the environment around you? Do you believe that the Sermon on the Mount is a practical affair, a practical statement that can be lived in this modern world by ordinary men and women; or do you regard it as a beautiful ideal to be put on the shelf somewhere and worshiped from a distance — to dream about as a possibility for us in some infinitely remote future; or do you think that that great master mind that lived and worked in Palestine meant what he said when he commanded all men to be

perfect as their Father in Heaven is perfect? So many of us just shrug our shoulders and say "Stuff, platitudes, impractical nonsense!" What do *YOU* think about it? I believe it is not only practical, but that it is sheer folly to ignore it.

Of course it means, if you are going to tackle it, that you have to begin with being honest with yourselves, and with others. It means sincerity; it means truth in daily living; it means love at all times and in all circumstances and in all situations. I do not mean personal love, I mean Divine love, shining like the sun impersonally for all men, whether you like them or whether you dislike them; whether they are your friends or you think they are your foes. And therefore it means unselfishness, real unselfishness, absolute unselfishness, to the extent and power of your being.

There are four keynotes: honesty, unselfishness, love, and purity of life, of beauty of thought, heart and mind. Is that an impossible standard? If we mean business, it must not be an impossible standard. It has got to be the only standard that is worth living by, and it is the condition of our success, it is the condition of our power to save the situation today.

Now let me tell you — you cannot change yourselves, make yourselves over over-night, conquer yourselves. I cannot conquer myself as I am, with my own feeble personal will. I cannot do it, you cannot do it — and I am differentiating now the personal man from his Divine counterpart of which he is the child. Somehow you have to find the means of dropping that personal self, losing your ego, losing your life and finding it in a spiritual regeneration and rebirth. You have got to find the means of uniting the scattered parts of your being which are now being pulled hither and thither in this direction and that, so that you are enabled to conquer yourself and transform your own life, and

affect the environment for good in which you live. And if you have reached the point where you have suffered enough, when you really hate the rotten, weak side of your nature, with its faults and weaknesses, and have within you that yearning of your heart towards what you may call God or Deity, or Goodness or Wisdom — then you can do something. But make no mistake about it, it does mean that you will have to exert every ounce of physical, emotional, psychic, intellectual and spiritual powers that you possess. You will have to go all out for it, and you will have to dedicate everything that you are and have. Every day surrender your personal will and your personal ego; and then if you know how to pray in the real sense of the word — which means the upward urge of your purified desire or aspiration to the God within you, to the universal and supreme Spirit that dwells within you and around you everywhere — it will flow into you, it will make you a new being instinct with power to change yourself and the world. You cannot do it by yourself, but you need the power of the Supreme itself — God, Buddha, Christ, it does not matter what you call it. It is a Divine power, a Godlike power; and every one of us is an incarnate God, and we have only got to learn how to lose ourselves, forget ourselves and make ourselves instruments, willing to go anywhere, do anything, that is dictated by that inward power of Divinity, to get a new direction in our lives, and a God-directed one; not an impossible dream, but a minute to minute and hour to hour and day to day direct guidance and inspiration. That can be done by every man and woman that lives if they want to do it. Moreover it is the *only* thing that makes life worth living.

There is an old saying that one man and God is a majority, and he is, because one man dedicated, cleansed, purified, filled with the power of the spirit, can work what seem to the ordinary man and woman miracles. They can change the lives of people and help

them to a recognition of their own divine nature. I have seen it work, and I have seen men and women who have all their lives registered spiritual and moral defeat transformed by just these ideas — and they are ordinary men and women, and their faces reflect the splendor of a risen sun, and they are able to bring into the lives of others, into their businesses, into their factories — aye, into the very Parliaments, the strength, the peace and spiritual vision that is theirs. And that work is going on, but it is not going on fast enough, and the Theosophical Movement must wake up and do something about it. Wherever there is a Theosophical Lodge, provided those who are responsible for it have dedicated themselves strongly enough, they will become centers of that holy and spiritual power which will enable them to take the message of good news, glad tidings, hope, and spiritual beneficence everywhere they go.

The world problem is the individual problem. Once we change ourselves, and what is more, invoke the Holy Spirit within us to bring about that alchemical transmutation and change which can only take place in a dedicated life, then we will begin really to do something. And when we can live in terms of absolute honesty and sincerity with ourselves and others, a life of purity, selflessness, and a life of love, then we have taken the first step — the first step mark you — on the small, ancient and narrow way that leads to Life; but we shall have done enough, even in that short time, to have made a profound impression upon the collective state of the world's misery. Just imagine, if all the Theosophical and religious communities throughout the world were filled with regenerated, vital, spiritual, purposeful men and women. Is there any limit to the possibilities? None. There would be no universal chaos under those conditions. We have got to work a spiritual revolution, and we cannot do it unless we work a spiritual revolution in *ourselves*, and that we can do if we want to.

Every man and woman of us has the responsibility to be up and doing in this hour.

Ancient Ideals in the Modern Home

Friends: Those of you who may possibly have come here for the first time, or who have for the first time come into contact with a Theosophical Society, may be wondering for what purpose such a body of people exists, and what are the teachings that they study. A Theosophical Society is an association of individuals, men and women, who are seeking to find a deeper explanation of the phenomena of existence, a deeper understanding of the laws upon which the whole of nature and of life are based, and who recognise that one of the essential prerequisites to obtaining such an understanding is a recognition of the fundamental unity that exists as the very basis of nature itself. That is why the first object of this Society is to demonstrate practically that universal brotherhood is a fact in nature.

It is possible to come to an understanding of the laws upon which nature, man, and the universe, are constructed. The philosophy which we study, the philosophy which we endeavor to practice and to spread a knowledge of, is an eternal one, the essentials of which have never changed. It has always existed, and from time to time has been restated by each in turn of the great Sages and Seers of antiquity. Therefore you will not meet here with any ideas and theories which are mere speculations of some student who may happen to be an Associate of this Society. On the contrary, however imperfectly it may be done, you will always receive a statement of those ancient laws in the light of which we endeavor to study every problem of nature and of life.

Tonight we are going to try to come to an understanding, in the light of that ancient teaching, of the problem of the spiritual life

in modern conditions; because Theosophy has an answer to that problem. You know that we have only to look around us to see that there is something radically gone amiss with the spiritual life of the people today. We do not have to look particularly deeply to satisfy ourselves that the fundamental basis of spiritual living for the great masses of the people in every class — I do not care which class it may be — has been lost; they have lost their hold upon those great spiritual truths that make a nation truly great.

We do not have to think or reason very far to come to the conclusion that the life of the individual has its roots in the home; and the degree of spirituality in the home from which any individual springs will very largely determine the difficulties that that individual will have to meet, and also the degree of spirituality that he may be able to express in the life which is opening before him. Take a look at our daily newspapers, and notice, for example, the enormous lists of the divorce cases. They have become a commonplace. This is an indication — a symptom if you will — of the disease which is sapping the spiritual vitality of the peoples in every nation — at any rate I speak from a knowledge of the Western people, of Europe and America. However you may look upon it, there is no shadow of doubt that it is a symbol of something very clearly and tremendously wrong with the spiritual life of that people.

What is the life of the youth in the average home of the wealthier classes today? Although they may be engaged to some extent in the conduct of the affairs of life, in proportion to their freedom from the cares of material existence, the youth today almost entirely — there are fortunately many exceptions, but accept it as abroad general rule — take it as a matter of pride that they believe in nothing — nothing at all! It is a terrible thing really when you come to think of it, because it is an expression of ignorance, and it results from ignorance, lack of knowledge as a

direct result of the absence of spiritual reality and virility in the life of the homes from which they sprang. They have not known anything else. They see the dead formalities of dogmatic religion to which possibly their parents adhere, and with the virility of modern education stimulating their intellects, they have rejected the teaching of dogmatic religion. They look around and they say: "Well, what is there in life? Nothing. Let's forget it!" And so they seek to replace the inner realities of the spiritual life by a chasing of the will-o'-the-wisp of mere sensual pleasures and indulgences of every sort, kind, and description; and — it seems a trite thing to say, but nevertheless it is a true one — mixed up with it is a tremendous amount that is summed up in the one word 'cocktails.' Leaving aside its psychological aspects which are so deplorable, from the physiological standpoint even the drinking of 'cocktails' clogs the mechanism of the human body to such an extent that the awakening of the spiritual faculties is made to a degree more difficult.

Then you take the great middle classes. In a sense there you have an almost greater deadness, because they are so to speak evenly balanced. They are afraid sometimes to do the things which those who are on a so-called higher social level do. They do not do them — sometimes because they cannot afford it, and sometimes merely out of fear. They are held tight very largely in the trammels of dogmatic religion. And as for the great masses of the people: they are so immersed at the present time in the struggle for existence — both the men and women — that there is indeed little time left for a search of their inner needs, for the bread of spiritual wisdom. It is a state of affairs which the Theosophical Movement came into existence in our own era, came to life again, deliberately to aid us to cope with.

Theosophy has an answer to this problem. It is that answer which we want to consider tonight, because Theosophy invariably

begins with the individual. The Theosophical remedy for all ills — no matter what they are — is never a remedy which deals with effects, but it goes right to the root cause in every case, and therefore it begins with the regeneration of the individual. There is a tremendous power, a tremendous spiritual capacity, in Theosophic knowledge to bring about a rebirth and a regeneration of those who give their lives to study it and to teach it and to propagate it.

Taking the life of the family, the life of the home, as the basis of the spiritual lives for the individual, we have to consider exactly what forces, what obstacles, the individual who is going to set out to change those conditions has to vanquish. In the first place, any aspirant, any Theosophist, any man, whatever category in religious matters he may belong to, if he wants to set out and conquer these obstacles, has to tread a sixfold path, according to the ancient teachings that we study. We have seen in the short fifty odd years which have passed since the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875, many anomalies in that Association of people who have come together for mutual help and assistance in the living of the spiritual life. And why is it? It is this: The student takes as his ideal the perfected Sage, the Initiated Adept. He reveres his power of renunciation, his living of the ascetic life, his capacity for a universal point of view. Yet this superior development is the result of lives of effort.

The individual student who comes fresh and eager to the study of Theosophic truths, has mistaken those qualities in the illuminated Sages for the qualities which he himself has to practice immediately as the means to the end which he is seeking; and this has resulted in unprepared people rushing upon the rocks of asceticism, and entering upon the path of renunciation of worldly duties before they have learnt how to perform those duties. In other words, out of a fear of life they do those very things which

are going to take them away from the spiritual goal instead of leading them step by step into the light which they seek. Therefore have the ancient teachers given a very firm warning upon this question. They say that the individual who would enter the light and regenerate himself must do six things. First he has to overcome in himself the weaknesses, the faults, the disabilities of heredity and character, which he finds in his own particular family; that is the first step. Having recognised and accepted those characteristics, then he has to proceed to conquer the particular faults and errors of the national temperament to which he belongs. It is not very difficult for us to examine ourselves honestly and to discover what are the weaknesses of our family; what are the particular faults of the nation to which we belong. Then lastly, he must overcome those faults which are common to the man himself, and to all human nature besides — commonly and more largely understood as the weakness of human nature — "Adam's first transgression" as W. Q. Judge put it.

There you have a sufficiently big task. And a corollary of these activities under these three heads — remembering meanwhile that the entrance to the pathway of spiritual life depends upon the grasp and understanding of these points — is to strengthen and bring out fully and completely the *good* points and the *good* characteristics under each of the three heads. The whole thing really comprises a definition, in terms of the ancient teaching, of family duty: to undertake that course of action which will eventually eliminate in yourself and in your father or mother or brothers or sisters and all with whom you may be associated, the weaknesses and faults of human nature that exist there. That is to be understood then as family duty; and 'family' defined thus of course has a peculiar meaning, a peculiar value that we have to understand. Therefore we rule out of consideration those conceptions of family duty which other people impose upon us

according to some narrow conventional or dogmatic standard. You will find if you really examine it and go into it fully that this definition covers all the duties of life, and not only that but it brings to bear upon them a light which is entirely different from anything that we are accustomed to have upon those particular duties.

Beginning, therefore, with a consideration of the duties of family life, since the basis of existence for the individual lies in the home, the subject must have a very great importance for us. Marriage in ancient times was in a very real and true sense a religious contract, it was by no means a method of satisfying personal ambition or animal passion; and for that reason marriage in ancient times had a spiritual significance which it has lost today. Thank heaven there are exceptions to every rule; but the instances that have already been quoted tonight are sufficient to convince us — we do not need to labor the point — that there is something wrong with the point of view in these matters. Let us consider where Theosophical teaching help us to change the point of view. In ancient times marriage was entered into first for mutual help in leading the spiritual life, and second for the bringing into the world of children of a type spiritually regenerate, who would be a blessing not only to their families and nations but to the world at large. And therefore it behooves us to consider one of the pitfalls that so many people fall into right at the outset of the building of the family life. It is this: they enter into the bond of marriage upon a basis of sentiment almost entirely. They marry in so many cases simply upon a passing attraction, something akin to what some modern philosopher said: that when he met the lady who was to become his wife, he fell into a state of unconsciousness, and when he awoke, it was too late, he was married!

Well now, Friends, there is a profound truth in that statement. It

is simply an expression of the fact that the spiritual guidance of the individual was for the moment in abeyance, and something else drove the machine. Take another illustration of the poverty of our conceptions of the married state. Go, my friends, into any music hall and almost any show in the theater land of London today, and you will find that every comedian is perfectly sure to get a rise and laugh out of the audience by making derogatory remarks about the state of marriage. You know it is a degrading thing, and yet you will always find the house absolutely rocks with laughter at the most vulgar jest about the holy state of matrimony. But it is a tremendous confession. It is a confession that the comedian is quite right. He is playing up to the feelings of the majority, and the majority do not realize the sanctity of this particular state and its possibilities from a spiritual point of view.

I am going to put it to you that one of the tests by which any two individuals may examine their feelings when they are prompted to enter into that relationship is this — and you will find that it is a very fundamental one — would either one choose the other party as the parent of their children? Now that, stripped of all sentimental nonsense, brings you down to the bedrock of fundamentals; because I do not think that anybody, any potential parent, would wish to make the parent of the child someone in whom he or she did not have that respect from a spiritual point of view. It is a test which if applied I think would stop an enormous number of the sentimental kind of marriages.

But if the key and solution to this problem is the regeneration of the individual, then the necessary practices cannot be carried out, and probably cannot even be begun, by those who have no knowledge of the spiritual light that should exist as a matter of conscious knowledge in their own being. It is useless to lay down, to hand a man so to speak, a lot of negative restrictions, and without giving anything else to supplement them, suggest that he

should carry them out, when you know perfectly well that he has not that knowledge of his being, that fundamental realization of the divine-spiritual consciousness which does exist if only he knows where to find it.

If you examine all the evils, so-called, of the life of the home and of the family today, you will see that the cure for a great many lies in the direction of the development of the impersonal point of view; and that impersonality can only be developed for us by entering upon the study of the sacred scriptures, or of the Theosophical philosophy, which has the capacity of purifying the emotional and mental depths in our natures, thereby kindling the spark of higher intuition within us and awakening our spiritual nature. It is one of the ways that we can go to work, and you will find that those who have studied and applied the Theosophical philosophy in their lives for any length of time at all, do begin to get that impersonal sense of detachment, of detachment from the objects of the senses; with the result that in their own homes, in the lives of the children who are entrusted to their care, they are able to take an impersonal attitude, a detached point of view, which will not permit them to allow those growing children to enter upon those little indulgences that the great teachers tell us are at the root of many of the crimes of later life.

Examine, for example, any particular family of young children, and notice how the little children delight to make themselves attractive in order to gain permission to break some already recognised rule, perhaps even such a simple thing as to eat sweets between their proper meals. They will ask and ask, and then the mother says "Oh, well, yes, bless you my child," and she gives him a sweet, and the child quite unconsciously to itself, and quite unconsciously to the mother, begins the habit of indulging the emotional, the passional nature. Katherine Tingley has pointed that out in that beautiful book *The Gods Await*, and I recommend

anybody who is interested in following that subject farther to read what she has to say there, because she works it out in a hundred and one ways, showing how step by step the indulgences — the almost criminal indulgences in parents — lead to the undoing of the children in later life. Instead of being brought up to listen to the impersonal voice of the Divinity within, they listen only to the voice of their own desires, and they think that the mere fact that they want something is quite sufficient excuse for the parent to give it to them. Then side by side with the petty indulgences comes the tendency of I think almost any parents to be always dressing up their children and stimulating the vanity in them to such a point that the child does develop the germ of vanity, of pride and self-satisfaction — and Heavens what nemesis there is in store for the child just from that simple thing! Think of the girls and boys (and men and women too) that have entered on the path of perdition simply from those two facts. They have been led away by vanity in the first place, and then a tendency to self-indulgence, and they take that first step which leads them away from spiritual principles. Then there is all the deceit of the covering up of their first wrong action, and then they drift, as we all know, farther and farther on the road; and on the one hand you get fallen women, and on the other you get criminals. It has all come about from a lack of the performance of family duty as understood by the sages and the great teachers of the human race.

What has Theosophy to say, what has it to offer to the men and women who have become, for any one of the reasons that have been mentioned, outcasts? I think that if Theosophy can demonstrate its living power to bring healing and regeneration to those who have sunk to the lowest depths, then indeed there is hope for all of us. That is the whole idea of our Theosophical Association: that no matter who the individual may be — at

whatever stage he may be upon the spiritual pilgrimage, he will find, at any rate in a Theosophical brotherhood where the truths are studied and lived and taught, that there is someone ready to hold out the hand of spiritual fellowship to him; and it is the great aim of Theosophical endeavor for those who have at a given moment the conscious knowledge of the spiritual light in their own hearts, to, as it were, contact, stand beside, claim identity and fellowship with, the individual who has been brought by his own actions face to face with his own lower nature. It is only in that way that the dark river that has to be crossed on the way to the gates of gold can be crossed indeed with safety. How many of us when we have had to face the greatest trials of our own lives have cried out in the darkness for just that touch of spiritual fellowship; just that conscious recognition — that we may have the association with us of those to whom the light means and has meant something, those who know as they know that they live and breathe, that reliance and faith and strength can be gained.

How is it to be done? I am going to refer you to what H. P. Blavatsky, the first great teacher of Theosophy in our era, told us about the philosophy of prayer. It is a tremendously significant thing for each one of us. She was asked the question as to whether Theosophy believes in prayer, and she said: "As ordinarily understood No! If you are going to pray to some external agency, some sphere outside of yourself to remit your sins, to forgive you your transgressions, then decidedly we do not believe in it." She said: "We do believe in what we call 'will prayer'; we do believe in following the teaching of the New Testament in that respect: to go into the secret chamber of the heart and there to pray to the Father which is in secret — the spiritual part of the individual man." She told us that prayer actually is one of the spiritual mysteries. It is a means by which finite thoughts and desires which are not assimilable by the Spirit

are changed by an alchemical process into the one Will itself, and is capable of bringing about results in accordance with our spiritual aspirations. Is it not a tremendous thought?

Therefore what are we to do with the priceless gift of Theosophy in our hands? Why, to anyone with whom we come in contact, who is in a state of despair — no matter for what reason — we can give knowledge, something vital, vital to regenerate his own life with. Believe me, friends, there is absolutely no joy in the world like the knowledge that, having the light in your own heart, you can strike a flame into someone who is sorely in need of it. It is a tremendous thing that, and more than — ten times more than — compensates for giving up the few transitory things, which after all have no significance and no reality and do not matter at all, in our own personal lives — the things that have to be given up in order that the light may burn in our own consciousness. Once we understand the psychology and possibilities attaching to prayer of the right kind, we find it is something that everybody can practice. It is something that has effects in accordance with the sincerity and the real faith — not in something which we call in ordinary religion 'God,' which generally means something outside of ourselves — but faith in a principle which is immortal within ourselves, within our own being, something to believe in which is actually strengthening and ennobling to everybody who practices it.

I want to put one closing idea in front of you, and that is this: to make use of prayer to the utmost limit, and to bring about a regeneration in the individual, take what H. P. B. told us upon the meaning and the power of a vow. It is not possible for us to gain anything at all by taking a pledge or a vow rashly without due thought and consideration, and with a certainty in our own minds that we cannot carry out that pledge. The rule of the spiritual life is that you should never take a vow that you do not

feel the strength in you to carry out to the bitter end. Do not be like the wretch that Mr. judge quotes in one of his articles, who rushed upon the rocks of asceticism and then discovered that he could not keep that pledge; because, friends, when vows are entered into and not carried out, the result is a permanent weakening of the whole spiritual nature.

But H. P. B. has cleared the ground for us: she has told us what are the pillars as she called them, upon which every pledge must stand and without which no vow is recorded in the realms of spiritual nature. She said there has to be absolute sincerity, unflinching determination, and most important of all, and of most practical significance for us, an altruistic purpose, and lastly moral power. Without these four pillars it is useless to take a vow of a spiritual kind; and if you like to apply them to the consideration of the elimination of the faults of individual, family, national and racial characteristics, you will see that Theosophy places into the hands of every one of us a magic key, the philosopher's stone, a very talisman, to bring about that result. Because for the man or woman who is face to face with the lower nature, determined to rise above it, what is the usual tendency? The tendency is to become so fixed in contemplation upon, so worried or disturbed about the contemplation of, weaknesses in ourselves, that the power to cope with them is forgotten altogether; and then one becomes immersed in the fight, the head is no longer cool, the vision no longer clear. But then the saving message of Theosophy comes and it says: If you would conquer the desires of the flesh, do it that you may eliminate the tendencies to evil in the family to which you belong, in the nation of which you form a part, of the very human race itself.

Thus every action that you undertake should be done with altruistic motive. In that way your every endeavor is not for yourself at all. In purifying your own nature you raise that of the

family to which you belong, you raise the nation of which that family is a part; and so the tendency, by a multiplication of individuals striving to live in terms with their own spiritual nature, will as the Theosophical Movement progresses make such an impress, such a record, upon the memory of Nature — upon the Astral Light if you will — that instead of being tempted constantly by the emanations of that astral sphere, gradually, little by little, the tendency will be reflected upon man to live in terms of that inner light that all of us are seeking.

And now, Friends, because it is the purpose when we come together here that we should all by the effort of thought and mind and meditation draw some sustenance and some strength for our own spiritual living from the doctrines that are taught in this ancient Wisdom of mankind, I am going to close our study together tonight by reading for you that beautiful Invocation by Katherine Tingley which actually is addressed to the Higher Self in man, that Higher Self which we can all come in contact with, to the lasting benefit not only of ourselves but of all with whom we come in contact, of all with whom we shall be associated now and in the future. That Invocation is as follows:

Oh my Divinity! thou dost blend with the earth and fashion
for Thyself temples of mighty power.

Oh my Divinity! thou livest in the heart life of all things,
and dost radiate a golden light that shineth for ever and
doth illumine even the darkest corners of the earth.

Oh my Divinity! blend thou with me that from the
corruptible I may become incorruptible; that from
imperfection I may become perfection; that from darkness
I may go forth in Light.

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[The life of a President of a National Section of the T. S. is arduous. His problems are many and difficult, and yet, strange truth, it is in the very endeavor to solve these that there is revealed the essence of the truly Theosophic life. This life demands of any leader constant self-sacrifice, the ability to draw ever renewed inspiration from the teachings, and in this way revitalize them for others; the genius thus to lead, to inspire, to encourage, where need be to warn and to advise, yet never to impose.

These must have been the qualities which dominated the life of Trevor Barker, for we find them reflected in his articles and lectures, and perhaps pre-eminently in those heart to heart talks with members and friends in which advice and suggestions were given to Theosophical lodges or study-groups. These are gathered together in this chapter.

As perhaps the best medium for keeping in touch with his membership, Dr. Barker used *The English Theosophical Forum*, the first issue of which appeared in January, 1933, under his editorship. The articles in this chapter (except the extracts from his Inaugural Address) are reprinted from that magazine.]

Let Us Go Forward

— Extracts from Inaugural Address on Dr. Barker's assuming the duties of President of the English Section of the Theosophical Society, 7th September, 1930.

Friends and Brothers: I want tonight, with your permission, to have a heart-to-heart talk with you as members of the Theosophical Society. I want to tell you frankly and intimately what is in my mind and heart in taking up the responsible position of President of the English Section, which our Leader, G. de P., has placed upon my shoulders.

In view of the fact that I am personally unknown to the majority of members in this country, it may perhaps be interesting to you to hear what it was that caused me to join your ranks. Up to February or March of this year I had never contacted any member of this Society, nor had I had any correspondence with Point Loma. Together with my friend Mr. R. A. V. Morris I had been working for some time upon the preparation of the old magazine writings of H. P. B., with a view to their publication in book form. The work was already far advanced when Dr. Kenneth Morris arrived in this country from Point Loma, and hearing from his brother what we were doing, and realizing that similar work was in progress at Point Loma in connexion with the H. P. B. Centennial Committee, the work of which at that time had not been made public, he drew our attention to the matter. This resulted in a meeting and some conversation between Dr. Morris and myself, during the course of which he suggested that it might be worth while communicating direct with G. de P. in regard to these literary matters.

I immediately wrote to Dr. de Purucker, stating frankly what we were engaged upon, and offering to co-operate with him if our

purposes should be the same. I received in response one of the most courteous and friendly letters that it has been my lot to receive from a leader of any Theosophical Society. The correspondence continued. The co-operation of Mr. Morris and myself with the H. P. B. Centennial Committee became a fact, and it was not long before we turned over the whole of the manuscript of the H. P. B. articles which we had prepared to Point Loma.

As you will discover when the Centennial Edition of her works is published there will be something like *thirty* large volumes of those teachings for our instruction — so much is there that I venture to think for most of us, what remains to us of one short life will be insufficient even with concentrated attention thoroughly to grasp and understand it. The task of a real Theosophic student demands some little sacrifice of personal preconceptions, of the ideas which he may have acquired as a result of his education, heredity and environment, and from teachers of other systems of thought. If we would truly enter into the spirit of her teaching, then we must try to come to it with a fresh mind.

Our Leader has declared in no uncertain terms that we must concentrate our efforts upon what he calls our *magnum opus*, the understanding and dissemination of the teachings of Theosophy. In order to do that successfully a spirit of union, peace, and brotherly harmony is essential. Whatever we do, therefore, in the promulgation of Theosophic teachings through the lodges in this country, I appeal to all members everywhere to regard it as a sacred duty to let it be known and understood that in this Society we are loyal to the great Founders of the movement, and to the teaching which They gave through H. P. B. There is a dynamic force in this idea which together with the principle of brotherly charity for all, is alone capable of unifying the Theosophists of all

societies — which is the aim which lies closest to our Leader's heart. All the bitterness and strife which has occurred since H. P. B.'s passing is rapidly being forgotten under the beneficent policy which our Leader is following. No Theosophist would dare to belittle H. P. B. and remain worthy of the name. And while it must necessarily take them some time to prove for themselves that our Society has never departed from the program and the teaching which she gave, they will all respond to the note of H. P. B. — because H. P. B. is in reality but a symbol of the work of the Masters Themselves.

Let us look at the matter now quite impersonally, and let us get the idea that we are not here, as it were, to enthrone a president, but rather to enshrine in our hearts a few main ideas which will help us to guide our activities along the main lines which our Leader has laid down.

The great guiding principle to be followed in our meetings is to endeavor to forget our own views and personal opinions entirely. The public in general and students in particular are not interested in or hungry for the necessarily incomplete personal opinions of any one of us on philosophical matters in general, but I suggest that they and we do want to hear the Message of the great Masters on any aspect of the teaching which may be under consideration. Therefore let our attitude be not '*I think,*' but rather '*the teaching is*' so and so. In this way, all answers to questions should be given in terms of the teaching so far as we understand it — ever bearing in mind that there is meaning within meaning, and that as veil after veil is removed from before our eyes, still beyond there are yet other veils before we reach the final understanding and know the whole Mystery.

And so I stand before you, Brothers, pledged to carry out this great task, and asking for your help, your co-operation and your

encouragement. With hearts aflame with the Light and the Peace of the Great Lodge, let us go forward shoulder to shoulder, knowing that we can trust each other because we are united by a common purpose, a common teaching and a common love for all humanity without distinction of race, of caste, of creed, or of color.

Individual Responsibility

You have a marvelous opportunity here. You have done magnificent work, and I know it will prosper. The splendid nucleus of people which you have is proof of what can be done with the divine fire of the Wisdom-Religion burning in your hearts. You and I know that it is an illusion to suppose that any of us is alone in this work. Any one of us, no matter where he may be situated, whether he knows a brother Theosophist in the district, or whether he does not, has only got to think Theosophy for a few weeks or months, to talk Theosophy to those he comes across, in order immediately to prove to himself that as members of the Theosophical Society, plus the desire to forward its work, we become energetic centers through whom the influence that flows from the great Lodge of the Masters passes to all with whom we come in contact, consciously and unconsciously, but who nevertheless respond to the current of thought that we ourselves generate and live in.

Try to get a knowledge of the teachings yourselves. Make them your own and help the work of the Society by spreading those teachings, endeavoring to arouse interest in the Society's work yourselves, and you will find the whole aspect of your own personal and individual life begins to change. You will become a center of conscious activity which will bring not only illumination, peace and an added strength to master yourselves; but what is infinitely more important you will find if you work,

study and help that you will be able to bring that same light and inspiration to all those with whom you come into contact. As I see it, that is the call the Theosophical Movement makes to us individually. First it gives to us individually out of the riches of its Teachings. We take from it; we take from those who were the first to teach us; then if we are true men and true women we should want to make the only return that is really worth while, which is to give it to somebody else who has it not.

Remember that every single Theosophist who comes into our Movement becomes a dynamic center of energy. Oh, we do not do these things of our own power, you know! It is as Mr. Judge pointed out in one of his articles — each member is a *center*. Aye, because we are linked to the dynamic energies that flow from the great Lodge of Masters: and each member is a magnetic center distributing that energy that works magic in the hearts of men if we have faith in our own higher nature — faith in the Masters who stand behind our Work.

Idolatry and Leadership

If you would go on with your occult studies and literary work — then learn to be loyal to the Idea, rather than to my poor self. When something is to be done never think whether I wish it, before acting: . . . I am far from being perfect hence infallible in all I do; . . . — K. H.

There is no subject that at the present time so occupies the minds of Theosophists of all colors and degree, as the much vexed question regarding the place and true meaning of Leadership in Theosophical affairs. It is a problem before which the stoutest heart may at times be forced to quail, because the duty to Truth and the impersonal ideals that the great Masters have set before us come in conflict with the demands made upon the nature of

the student by ties of personal devotion spontaneously rendered to some Leader, or perhaps in some cases unreasonably demanded by the latter as being more important than free and untrammelled service to an impersonal Cause by workers in the Theosophical field, who are capable of individual initiative.

What is the Truth about it? By what touchstone shall we measure and test the principles which we hold for our individual guidance on this most difficult and thorny problem? What should come first? The dedication of life to Truth and the Higher Self: to the Holy Cause of which the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion are at once the purest ideal and the best exemplars; or the personal devotion demanded by one or other of the many Gurus who walk their way amongst men, and who promise salvation to the aspirant if only personal devotion to the said Guru is strong enough?

Let us ask ourselves the question: what kind of devotion would we choose as the dominant characteristic of any group of Theosophical students if any of us individually were called to lead them as an officer, whether of high or low degree? Would it be of the personal kind? Would we ask first of all for unfaltering trust and devotion to ourselves? Surely not — for to do so would be to invite failure at the very outset. It would be in fact like taking the tiller of each man's individual boat out of his hands, and thereafter to incur a most dangerous and all but impossible responsibility; and moreover it would result in a group of individuals incapable of individual thought and initiative.

What are the qualities then which we should look for and encourage and welcome in those whom we may be called upon to lead? First and foremost we would have free and vigorous searchers after Truth who recognise that their first duty, their highest devotion, is to the splendor of their own innate Divinity,

and through their realization of That which is the Higher Self in each one of us, to the Great Teachers of the human race who watch and wait. Such true men and women, by the power of their own innate spirituality evoke the love, the confidence and the trust of any individual whom they may be called upon to serve under. They will not have to pause and think before every action as to whether what they are about to do would be agreeable to their immediate superior, because they would have learned the beauty and the peace of loyalty to an Idea — an idea and an ideal the grandest, the highest, the most noble that the mind of man has ever conceived of.

There is nothing ignoble in the spontaneous hero-worship which sometimes comes about in the devotion that is evoked in the heart of a younger for an older student, when the latter seems for the time being to be the splendid embodiment of the ideal to which the younger is striving to attain. The devotion of a trusting heart is a holy thing, because it springs from love — that holy and immortal feeling that opens the heart to the perception of Truth, and strips the veils away from the eyes of the seer. But most emphatically such devotion cannot be commanded. Its very essence and life is in its spontaneity, and we cannot command love any more than we can control the sea. The origin of devotion in the human heart is a mystery. It is evoked by a true Teacher in his pupil almost inevitably as the pupil finds reason for gratitude for the help and enlightenment that the Teacher has brought him. It is also intimately concerned with the past Karma of the respective individuals.

One of the most beautiful things in the Theosophic life is the love and mutual trust that springs up between an older and a younger student as a result of the service rendered by the younger in the larger work of his superior, and the help, understanding and sympathy extended by the elder, when the neophyte is assailed in

moments of darkness, doubt and uncertainty. Many are the trials that assail the minds of those who set forth on the voyage across the mighty ocean of Theosophy and occultism; and there is nothing that so evokes the love and gratitude of the neophyte as the finding of a friend more advanced than he is himself whom he can trust — to whom he may safely reveal the mental doubts and the unsuspected weaknesses that he discovers in his own lower nature.

No sane man can quarrel with the attitude of truly impersonal devotion, confidence and trust to a Teacher or Leader when it arises from the recognition that Light has been transmitted and received. On the contrary, to such as these who embody Wisdom and Compassion, unswerving loyalty is a virtue as well as a duty and the necessary pre-requisite to the receiving of further Light.

But the world alas! is full of false teachers who beguile the unwary with their siren songs, thus poisoning the well-springs of true devotion and setting up Idolatry instead of Leadership. The Guru who is not worthy of the name is the one that diverts the attention and devotion of his followers to himself, and places their personal regard as higher and of more importance than their unswerving fidelity to the Truth enshrined in the age-old teachings, and to the Great Teachers who made those teachings available to us in modern times.

Our Immediate Work

I am very happy to be amongst you all again after an absence from England of rather more than two months, and I would like to take this opportunity to speak to you on several important matters in connexion with our Theosophical work. The whole purpose of our work and studies in the Theosophical Movement is to fit ourselves one day to play a part — a conscious part — in the

direction of the forces which govern and guide the human race under Cosmic and Cyclic Law. Nothing less is our future destiny if we want to tread the age-old Pathway that leads to knowledge and to wisdom. Time is one of the factors that the occult student must take into consideration, because in real esoteric work there are times and seasons for everything — for initiating work, and for completing it. Our regular Lodge Meetings must and should begin promptly at the advertised time, whatever that may be. This is an elementary but fundamental principle in the conduct of any work such as ours. It is not only a matter of wholesome discipline for ourselves, but there are larger issues at stake.

There are times when certain things may be done; there are other times when it is not only folly, but it is dangerous, to do the same things. The very opening and closing of a Lodge Meeting according to the scheduled time is only a kind of symbolical exercise wherein we recognise the fundamental harmony of the Universe, and take into consideration that the advertised time is the right time when we have decided to come together, with heart and mind to study the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom; and we have asked Those who stand behind this work to take note of it, and to give us, if we are worthy, of their inspiration, their energy and their guidance. If then we turn up five or ten minutes late for a meeting! — it just shows that we are not sufficiently interested, that's all, and that we do not know what it is all about. It is the business of this exoteric movement to inject into the mind of the Race some elementary knowledge — first ideas — of the Teachings of Occult Science; and on the principle that a little leaven leaveneth the whole loaf, thereby make it possible for those who do play a conscious part in the direction of the destinies of this Race of ours, to come and work amongst us more openly than they can at present.

I am going to try to speak tonight of what it really means to come

into this Theosophical Society and to work in it. You cannot, it would be wrong, to think of it as a body which in all its affairs is directed by some great Initiate or Master of Wisdom. That would be to mislead you and it is not true. But what is true is that these great Beings began the work of the Theosophical Society as a great hope — a great experiment — for the education and enlightenment of the Races now inhabiting this Globe, so that, if it might be successful, they could come into ever closer and closer touch with humanity.

The great masses of the people are for the esotericists, 'the profane' — those who have not reached spiritual birth, who have not commenced to set their feet upon the Path of enlightenment and knowledge. We must remember, however, that one of the Masters once said that Humanity in the mass has always a paramount claim upon them. None the less they have to protect their time and energy from interference by the curious and ignorant. They necessarily must do so; but the important fact for us to bear in mind is that these esoteric circles have, even in the Theosophical Society itself, individuals with whom they have entered into some kind of relationship — individuals who have proved for themselves that they exist. And some of these people live and work and do their best in the ranks of the T. S.; and the fact that they do so means that sooner or later each one of us has the opportunity of coming in contact with somebody who *knows* — thereby coming more closely within the sphere of the Masters' influence. Obviously, as you can see for yourselves, all the individuals with whom Masters have entered into any kind of relationship are themselves points of observation for these Masters; therefore the people that they in turn come in contact with must come under observation of Masters also, at least to that extent.

But we have always to bear in mind that a great Adept has a

vision which is Universal. He can look over the surface of the globe in its most densely populated parts and also in the less populated, and there see, if he so chooses, anyone who has succeeded in lighting his spiritual lamp, even if it be but a feeble glimmer. Such individuals they look for, they watch over, they help to nourish and to tend the flickering flame, and to bring them sooner or later within the sphere of influence of any particular work in the world that one or other of their pupils may be doing. It is folly, in my humble judgment, to look upon the work of the Theosophical Society as the *only* work of this kind going on in the world. I do not believe that idea. We are not a sect, we are not a narrow Church that believe that we are the only ones who will be saved, and that only through us can Light come to humanity. We know, if we think for a minute, that such an idea must be false. I know personally of several groups in different parts of the world that have nothing whatever to do with the Theosophical Society, but the members of which know things — because they are being taught.

The human race is looked after, guided, helped, and opportunities are given for those who want them; but, as Katherine Tingley said, if you want it you have got to work for it, and if you don't work for it you won't get anything. And when I say you "won't get anything" I hope that no one will say to me that he did not think that was the idea — to get something. It is not, but think a little further. What I mean is this. If we start out in this work to try to do our best to serve our fellows, to help others, to share what little light and knowledge we have, immediately we are face to face with the problem of human individuals who are ignorant, suffering, and who need help; and when they come to you in their need what are you going to give them? By what means are you going to do the good that you want to do, if you don't know how? The answer is that you have got to find out. You have to get the

knowledge; and all your effort, all your endeavor to get, is in order that you may *give*; and if that is your purpose your motive is a true one, and you need have no fear. Let us search, therefore, all of us for the truth — within ourselves and without, let us seek for it in order that we may have that with which we may feed those who starve. The Theosophical life is nothing if it is not a fearless, courageous, open-minded search for Truth. And I hope it will never be our lot to hear any member of any of our Lodges talking and acting as if they no longer have to *search* for Truth because, forsooth, they have come into the Theosophical Society and they have found it already within the pages of some book or another. Unfortunately there are such in the Theosophical Movement who take just that position — we do not have to search because we have it. Poor souls! We have none of us got it as a final thing, but we may have started out to find it. Then we have gained something at least. We cannot give what we have not got, and so we must "keep up the aspiration and the search," as Mr. Judge used to say.

I believe that the true attitude is never the one which merely accepts everything without question which is handed to us. Think of the words of the Buddha: "Do not accept anything just because I say it." He, the Blessed One, the Teacher of Gods and men — do not accept it just because he said it, or because some other great Sage said it, or because you find it in one or other of the sacred Scriptures; but rather go in a spirit of humility, in a spirit of eager *questioning*, asking to be taught. Go to those sources of inspiration of the human race, and try to understand what you will find there. See if it is reasonable, logical, whether it brings you illumination, whether it shows you the Pathway before your feet; or whether it sends you to sleep in a kind of self-satisfied smugness. If we do not understand a thing, if it is repugnant to us, if we disagree with it (no matter from what source it comes)

question, and do not be afraid. I personally enjoy to meet a man or a woman who takes another viewpoint in these matters than my own — that is if it is a sincere one and not an affectation or a pose. We do not have to have a dull agreement on everything. I say that we want to encourage the presence amongst us of fearless seekers after truth, along whatever line they may be going. Let us hear what they have to say. We should not permit them to cause us to diverge from our own course, but encourage them to express an honest doubt, to say perhaps: "But your theory, gentlemen, is not reasonable; we do not understand it; we have no sympathy with it, and what good does it do?" and then expound if you can — give them the solution of the riddle if you have it; and if you have not, for the love of the Immortal Gods let us admit it.

Let us thereby learn our lesson — that this (the work of a Theosophical Lodge) is our field of training in the Masters' service. Do you realize that? I believe that each one of us ought to be prepared to accept the conditions of our training if we want it; and it applies to all of us — Presidents of Sections, Presidents of Lodges, Officers of Lodges, Officers of Sections, all the way down the scale. Let us follow this fundamental principle and accept our condition of service. It will be at times uncomfortable, especially if we have a wrong point of view, but do not let our members and the public come here and go away empty-handed, saying "But these people do not understand — they do not grasp my questions; they give me nothing in reply; they do not seem to know." That is wrong. Cherish above almost everything the intellectual integrity and freedom of thought of our Theosophical Lodge, the intellectual honesty of our students; and let our purpose be to go to work; let us go like students to school, and let us study, let us go where we can get instruction, and get the information and make it a part of our being. But it does mean

work.

It does not signify if you have been a member for fifty years of the Theosophical Society, if you have not done any work in those fifty years, and if you do not know your stuff. There may be no harm done except for yourself; but be humble enough to go to work now. *Begin*, because if you do not begin today, well tomorrow you won't be any better off, and you will have nothing to give the other fellows. Oh! how one longs to see the members of our Theosophical Lodges becoming more and more intellectually and spiritually alive, growing and discriminating purposefully in their Theosophical work, day by day learning more of the Ancient Wisdom: learning it, opening up their own inner faculties, so that they are not placed in the position very often of having to say, "I don't know"; but never miss the opportunity of saying you do not, if really and truly you don't. Why? Because it makes for mutual confidence, so that others can think: "At least these people do not pose, they do not pretend to know something that in fact they do not know."

You know that was one of the most marvelous things about our old H. P. B. She was never a deceiver. She made hundreds of mistakes *perhaps* — and I personally have very little use for the people who do not make mistakes. If you are a human being — learning, struggling, engaged in the affairs of this world, you are bound to make mistakes and thereby you learn. And therefore it is never necessary to put on the pose that you never make a mistake. Be honest about it.

And I would like, if the President of this Lodge will permit me, to voice to you a suggestion I have already made to him. I would earnestly suggest this for your consideration, as I always do to all the other Lodges — have your business meetings when they are necessary, but have them at a time other than the regular

meetings of the Lodge — either before or afterwards; but do not interfere with the very life, spirit, and purpose of your Theosophical work in order to discuss how you are going to do something. Set your time, ask the people to come — lay emphasis, appeal to them to come at that time; but your proper Lodge Meeting time is the time for your Masters' work. That is the time that you want some illumination, and you won't get any in business meetings — or very little. But they have their proper place and purpose, and they are good; and I am delighted to hear that your President is taking steps to get more active co-operation from all the members of the Lodge and from the members of Committees, so that they all take their share in the common work. Shoulder the burden and delight in it; that is the right way. But do not let us get things out of proportion. Give business its proper place — but no more than that.

We stand at this moment at one of the most critical periods, I suppose, that the Theosophical Movement has had. I feel myself that if we go the right way about it; if we keep our views and our work broad enough, alive enough, if we are willing to accept Truth where it may be found, during the next few years we shall have an opportunity of an increasing amount of help from what we call Esoteric circles. Remember that every one who succeeds in making himself a fit channel for them to work through is going to do something for this Society, and through it for the human race, and that in time will bring its own result. It is our objective. We ought to work for it.

On Looking for Results

You have just heard it stated that our philosophy teaches us not to look for results, an idea which is very much laid down in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Nevertheless, like all good things, there is sometimes a hidden danger if we don't understand the import of

what is there written. I do think that as Theosophists we have the duty to recognise that whilst we are not looking for results or fruit of a personal kind, or for personal advantage, or good results to our own karma; nevertheless, as agents, unconscious, semi-conscious, or fully conscious, of that great Brotherhood of holy men who stand behind the work of the Theosophical Society, we have to recognise that if we want to achieve the objective which is set before us as workers in the great Theosophical field, we must learn how to calculate and use the forces, the instruments, and our tools of work, in such a way that we get the results that we are striving for. No mere philosophical reasoning to the effect that "we are not looking for results," will compensate for our lack of choosing those methods which will *get* results.

One of the great Masters once wrote these words:

. . . The degree of success or failure are the landmarks we shall have to follow, as they will constitute the barriers placed with your own hands between yourselves and those whom you have asked to be your teachers. The nearer you approach to the goal contemplated, the shorter the distance between the student and the Master.

— in other words they judge by results.

Whilst there is truth in the other statement, let us not have it in the back of our minds as a justification to ourselves that after all, we have done what we could, and if nothing has come of it, well, we must not "look for results." I don't believe that is the highest Theosophical philosophy; it is rather to take the view that if we have not got results, we must accept the responsibility for it ourselves, and recognise that there must be something that we have not learned, perhaps don't know how to do; and remember that the last and final key, and the first key to any successful work, is something in our own hearts and minds. If we are not

successful, anyone of us individually, in presenting Theosophy to the public in such a way that it attracts them, holds their interest, and leads them in their turn to go to work to dig in the mines of the Archaic Teaching so that they can win the treasure that therein lies, win it and incorporate it into the very fabric of their being, and then give it out to others — we have done nothing, indeed less than nothing! It is not just coming to listen to a speaker or a lecturer which is the beginning and end-all of being a member of the Theosophical Society. No. To quote the Leader's own words, 'Everyone of us militant Theosophists has got to become a Leader himself,' in the sense that we must find the key within our own hearts that will literally make us leaders of the thought-life of our age.

I have often thought of the illustration of the man who was compelled by a peculiar will of a deceased relative to go down on to the Thames Embankment in London, without a penny in his pocket, and not having eaten anything for a long number of hours. He was struck with his total inability to relieve the dire distress and misery that he found on that river-bank. Any individual who wants to labor in the illimitably vast field of the Theosophical Movement to bring spiritual light to men is in the position of that man, if he has not himself made a certain amount at least of the Theosophical truths and principles a part of his life and a part of his being; for that is the spiritual gold with which alone he can relieve the suffering of others.

Therefore it is our first job, and not our last, to go into the workshop of our own Nature, and take up the tools which belong to our craft. You know what they are: the material in which we have to labor is the sevenfold constitution of man and of nature of which he is a part, and the tools of his craft are placed in his hands by the Great Teachers of the human race. They are the sublime teachings of the archaic Wisdom-Religion of mankind,

the rules of life and conduct. It is these things that we have to take up, and not merely gaze on them from afar like a famished man gazing upon a spread banquet which he dare not eat. But we must walk to the feast that is laid upon the Masters' table and ourselves partake of it; go to work on the battlefield of our own being, like Arjuna, on the field of Kurukshetra. First, we must slay the armies and hosts of those lower forces that course through our own lower nature; for each of us has to learn to vanquish himself, however many times we ourselves may be vanquished in the process.

But the Theosophist takes as his shield and buckler the saying of the great Buddha: "Greater than the conqueror of armies is the disciple (the man, the student, the neophyte), the aspirant, in every age, who learns to conquer himself." After all, that is the entrance door, into the Theosophical life. The Theosophical Movement, Brothers and Friends, means nothing at all if it has not the power to awaken the divine fire in our own hearts, and in the hearts of all who come into the Movement. Why is it that the Theosophical Movement right down the ages has had and does have today the power to change men's lives? Have you ever reflected upon it? Why is it? It is a fundamental that lies right at the basis of the whole of our work, and it is something that, alas, is very little understood even among the ranks of Theosophists. Many people believe that a mere concourse of students, all more or less of the same level of development, makes a Theosophical Society, and the truth is that it does not. Why? This is the reason, as I understand it: The Theosophical Society itself is the outer court of the inner circles, the esoteric circles, of the human race; the outer court-way, through which we may enter into direct touch and communion with the Great Teachers. And the point that I want to make at this moment is that in order for us to leave the ranks of what in old times they called "the profane," the living

dead, the spiritually unawakened portion of humanity, we need the help of *conscious* beings. I mean fully conscious in comparison with us ordinary men and women who are most of the time semi-conscious or unconscious, because of the mechanical way in which our consciousness works. It is nothing but that spiritual stream of conscious energy that flows into the world through the Theosophical Movement itself, through individual envoys, agents, and messengers, conscious envoys who are capable of becoming the channels of that spiritual power, which has the capacity to awaken the sleeping germ in the hearts of those who have it only potentially. As H. P. B. once herself said or wrote —

"If Sun thou canst not be, then be the humble Planet," says the *Book of the Golden Precepts*. And if even that is beyond our reach, then let us at least endeavour to keep within the ray of some lesser star, so that its silvery light may penetrate the murky darkness, through which the stony path of life trends onward; for without this divine radiance we risk losing more than we imagines.

And she meant just that, that if you enter into a Fellowship in which the very life-blood flows in a stream from the *asramas* of the holy Masters, then you will have something which if you yourselves work in the right way will help you to change your whole nature from the ground up, and make you leaders of men in your turn.

On Fraternization

In regard now to our relationship with other Theosophical organizations, we are glad to be able to record that the work of breaking down inter-organizational hatred, suspicion and prejudice continues to go forward. We are not working so much

for unification of *organizations*, but towards a unification of thought and life based upon a genuine and brotherly sympathy and tolerance for all who in their different ways are earnestly and sincerely seeking for the light of *Theosophia*. There is no virtue or holiness in isolating ourselves behind the high walls of the particular Theosophical organization to which we may choose individually to belong. As a matter of fact, there are few experiences so satisfying to the mind and heart of a militant Theosophist as to be able to compare notes in regard to methods, objectives and teaching; in other words to share his Theosophic experience impersonally with friendly groups of members of other organizations and affiliations. It is well worth the effort occasionally to go out of one's way to meet some Theosophist whose views, as expressed in his writings, one may cordially detest or disagree with, because so frequently one finds deep down the same aspiration towards truth, and a desire to give what he has in service to those willing to receive it; and all this not because we, any of us, have any ax to grind, but simply because we like to meet our Brother Theosophists and see whether perchance we may render a service, and on occasion receive one in return. All without exception who sincerely strive to make Theosophy a living spiritual force in their lives, must discover much that is beautiful and true within themselves which they long to share with others that they too may benefit. Truth has no earmark or label; the same light lighteth all men into the world. Organizations are of value just in so far as they serve to lead men individually towards the truth. No one of them probably is indispensable to mankind as a whole, but all are useful in proportion to the truth that is in them. It should be recognised that in this coming together of members of different affiliations there must and should be reciprocity: a certain open-minded generosity of spirit, and that straight-forwardness of purpose which in itself evokes confidence and commands respect. We

desire to see it recognised by members of all Theosophical affiliations that it is first and foremost *un-Theosophical* to treat Brother Theosophists with less decency and gentlemanly courtesy than the standard set among civilized communities in general. We do not hesitate to say that unless the spirit of narrow, sectarian fanaticism and exclusiveness is uprooted once and for all in the different units which so largely compose the modern Theosophical movement, then Those who stand behind the veil and watch, will write *Finis* to all present Theosophical efforts, as an experiment which had noble beginnings, but which ended in spiritual bankruptcy and failure.

And now may all our F. T. S. everywhere look within their own hearts to the light they will inevitably find there, and resolve in this first month of the New Year that each member will make of himself an energetic center for our Masters' work, so that he may come to recognise and feel their holy presence within himself, and thus be the means of spreading everywhere the Spirit of Wisdom, Nobility and Peace.

Further Notes on Fraternization

Broaden instead of narrowing your sympathies; try to identify yourself with your fellows, rather than to contract your circle of affinity. — *Mahatma K. H.*

The great and all-important aim in any effort for fraternization is to bring about mutual confidence, and we do not hesitate to declare that this can never be brought about if either party seeks under the cover of fraternization to secure a material advantage — and by "material advantage" we mean specifically an endeavor to increase our respective memberships by capturing the members of the other Society, or by any other kind of political jerrymandering. Any kind of jockeying for position is

untheosophical, and therefore obviously contrary to the spirit of fraternization, which after all is only the militant aspect of Brotherhood. Having said this much let us go further, and state exactly how we have been able to do successful fraternization work with our brothers of the Phoenix Lodge.

First of all we have the same aim and a common purpose, viz: to unite in true fellowship in order to give to the world — if possible in a more vital way — the Great Message of our Masters through H. P. B. Thus we had the requisites laid down by William Q. Judge as a basis for union amongst Theosophists wherever they may be found: *similarity of aim, of aspiration, of purpose, of teaching, of ethics*. Our respective Lodges follow somewhat different methods in their regular work, but we recognise in these differences of organization, nothing more important than the cut of the particular style of waistcoat that happens to suit our fancy. On fundamentals we always have been, and we hope always will be in the future united. There has never been even a suspicion of friction; but we have not sought that negative kind of quietude in our joint work which is usually described as being undisturbed by even a ripple! On the contrary we venture to think that our meetings together have been productive of waves of thought, of philosophical and spiritual thinking, so powerful and so strong that we hope and believe they will have the necessary force to permeate the entire thought atmosphere not only of all Theosophists in England but of all men without distinction of religion, race or creed.

What in the name of our Masters would be the use or purpose of trying to do Theosophical fraternization work upon a basis of theft and duplicity? We do not admit that we ever have done so, and we pledge ourselves to all and sundry that we will never do so in the future. When Lodges of the Point Loma T. S. approach Lodges of other Societies in order to hold joint meetings in

celebration of White Lotus Day, or some other impersonal effort or occasion, they should be given credit for the integrity and sincerity of their purpose. Their sole aim is to demonstrate to the world, that Theosophists not only can but do meet together in spiritual Fellowship to forward the Cause of the Masters they serve. Let there be no mistake — successful fraternization work rests upon the basis of mutual confidence because rooted in Mutual integrity. There should be complete understanding: there must be no cause for apprehension; there must be agreement by the respective officials concerned beforehand, not only as to the details of the program of a meeting, but as to the speakers, and exactly how the meeting is to be conducted. The membership of both Lodges must know exactly where they stand, certain that they not only have nothing to fear but everything to gain by sharing the inspiration, which other workers in other spheres have brought to the problem of how to learn, of how to live and of how to *give* Theosophy to the world.

We repeat that on our side we seek no material advantage; we hold out the hand of friendship, of fellowship, of devotion to our Masters' Cause. We are willing to share what we have, and all that we have the right to share with all men everywhere, whether Theosophists or not. We believe that in a right understanding of the message of Theosophy lies hope for mankind. The healing power of that Message can never be given to the world with the force that it should have, if the public cannot help being made aware of constant internecine warfare within and between the Theosophical organizations. Only when such destructive forces are changed by fraternization, i. e., Fellowship, shall we be able to carry the flame of inspiration through the thought-life of every class and section of this great nation. We do not purpose to lay down the task until the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky are known and read and loved (as they already are, so we are credibly

informed, by members of the Royal family) by all sections of the aristocracy; by members of the business community; and by the great toiling masses of the people — from the unemployed miner in South Wales and Durham to all who are seeking the Bread of Life. That is our program and such is our Faith.

Rising above Desire

What does the occultist mean when he says we should endeavor to kill out desire? He does not mean that we should do away with the driving power in life. Desire is the motive force that sends the Universe along.

Unfortunately it has been my experience in the Theosophical Movement to see some very worthy people reduced to complete inertia thinking they were really striving along the Path and had killed out desire — and the poor things had! But you cannot perform any duty in life without the principle of desire energizing your being. It is a vehicle for your will. So, in considering this question, there must be a particular sense in which desires have to be killed out. It is only those desires that intensify your material and transitory nature that have to be killed out. We have to change or transmute finite desires into aspiration. If you are a Christian you call it prayer, and true prayer, which is aspiration towards the spiritual part of your being, to the Supreme itself, doing all actions without a selfish desire for the fruit of those actions — this is the state towards which we aspire, difficult enough, but true. That is the use of desire.

But there is another way of looking at this question. The highest philosophical and metaphysical concepts that we study in a Theosophical Lodge take the mind into a region that is really beyond the region of desire, and that is why we study them. It is

to purify the desire nature and free the mind from identification therewith, that we study philosophy and metaphysics. To quote a lovely phrase of Gautama, Buddha: We try to teach the mind to walk in the way of Truth; we try to instruct our mental part, our true individuality, to recognise its essential oneness, unity, identity with the one Mind, the one Being which is the Universe, for it is the greatest mistake in the world if you think of the planet and the solar system, and the marvelous Universe of which it is a part, as something outside of you. You are part, an essential spark of its own life; part of its great river of being. So that we think of this Universe as a conscious living entity, we playing our little roles and parts in its gigantic term of life; and the purpose of the whole thing is to realize that there is not a moment of life when the atoms of the material part of us cannot be transcended and conquered by rising above desire into unity with the one mind, the Universal Soul, which incidentally is without bounds. Is that an idea that inspires you? If you have never thought of it before, dwell upon it, and think, for one of these days it will give you the greatest lift that it is possible for a philosophical idea to do, for then you will realize that you are not your weak and erring and sinful mind, but that if you are willing to rise above these things, to let them go out of your life, you have the power of the One Mind; you have the Life and the Knowledge and the Wisdom and the Truth of the Universal one Self, which is the same in you and in me.

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[Trevor Barker was, as he himself declared, a dyed in the wool H. P. B. Theosophist, that is, he looked to H. P. Blavatsky as the criterion of the teachings of Theosophy. He recognised in her the chosen Messenger of the Masters of Wisdom for that most difficult period of history, the end of the nineteenth century, marking the beginning of the breaking up of materialism and the first faint dawn of renewed spiritual light for the western world.

Without H. P. B. it is difficult to imagine what Theosophy would be. She was its great champion, its great interpreter to the west. She labored for it until death unremittingly. She died for her beloved Theosophical Society. She poured her very heart's blood into it and gave it dynamic life. No wonder that those who are students of the teachings she brought hold her in reverence, for her message was for the spiritual regeneration of the human race. It was nobly begun. It has continued to this day; and each one who studies the teachings of Theosophy and endeavors to practise them and pass them on to others aids in that spiritual march begun again in 1875,

with the blessing of Masters, and the guiding hand of H. P. B.

In this chapter Trevor Barker pays tribute to the grand soul we knew as H. P. B. Included also is a valuable article on W. Q. Judge, H. P. B.'s loyal sustainer and esoteric successor.]

Invitation to the H. P. B. Centennial Conference

[The connexion with the historic occasion of the H. P. B. Centennial Conference in London in June 1931, the following invitation was sent to outstanding members and executive officers of the different Theosophical Societies in Europe.]

Dear ---, As you know, 1931 is the Centenary of the birth of H. P. B., and we are endeavoring to make the year a memorable one in the history of the Theosophical Movement by inviting representative members of all the different Theosophical Societies to come together in friendly conference — not only to pay a tribute in words to the memory of H. P. B., but to realize practically the great ideal of a "real living fraternity" for which she labored and gave her life.

We feel sure that you will have constructive ideas which would be of value to the whole Movement, just as we hope and believe that we may have ideas which would be of similar benefit. For these reasons we are confident that nothing but good can result if some of the active members of the different societies come together on this occasion for a fair, free and friendly exchange of views in the true spirit of Theosophical comradeship. The time is surely ripe for us all to realize that the ideal of Universal Brotherhood must be given a wider application than mere harmony amongst the individual associates of one particular society — absolutely necessary as that may be.

Owing to the practical impossibility for many European

Theosophists of undertaking the long and expensive journey to Point Loma for the Centennial Conference which will take place there on August 11th, we are holding a similar gathering here in London on June 24th, which should be more convenient for the majority. Therefore on behalf of the Leader of the Society, Dr. de Purucker, who intends to be in London himself, it is with very great pleasure that I extend to you his invitation to take part with us in what should prove a truly memorable gathering. The meeting will begin probably at 11 a.m. at this address. Admission will be by card only, and this will be sent to you in due course.

It is not proposed, and I would emphasize this, that our Conference should take the form of a business meeting at which definite undertakings would be entered into. On the contrary the procedure will be as informal as possible, and there will be no voting. All those taking part will meet on equal terms, and everyone will be invited to state his views without fear or favor, so that by mutual understanding and good-will we may learn to know each other better.

May we ask you to be so good as to reply at an early date to this invitation, which we trust, in the interest of the Movement, you will see your way to accept.

Believe me, Very sincerely and fraternally yours,

A. TREVOR BARKER,

President English Section.

Unity through H. P. B.'s Teachings

— Remarks of A. Trevor Barker as Chairman of the H. P. B. Centennial Conference held in London, June 24, 1931.

Fellow Theosophists and Brothers: We are assembled here

together today to pay a tribute to the work and memory of H. P. Blavatsky who founded the Theosophical Society in 1875 as the agent and messenger of that holy Brotherhood of living men whom we call the Masters of Wisdom, Compassion, and Peace. In Their name she performed her great work for humanity through toil and sacrifice and suffering which is only paralleled in the lives of the Great Teachers and Saviors of the Human Race. She lived and worked to make possible a real living Fraternity among men — and with the same high end in view we have come here at the invitation of Dr. de Purucker.

Brothers, there is no higher tribute we can pay to the memory of the Great Teacher than to honor the Truths she taught, to demonstrate them practically in our own lives and make them part of the very fabric of our being.

I venture to say that in coming here today, many from long distances by land and by sea, and accepting the hand of friendship so sincerely held out to you, you have by that act alone paid a genuine tribute to H. P. B., and have proved before the world that Theosophists are capable of practising the Brotherhood they preach. Just as you have trusted us in coming here today, so do we trust you not to break the sacred law of Brotherhood in anything you may say from this platform. We want to use this magnificent opportunity to get to know and understand each other better and to discuss in an entirely impersonal and constructive way how as members of different Theosophical organizations we can best co-operate to present H. P. B.'s message to the world. It is a great opportunity, Brothers, and we must all feel called in this hour to rise above limited personal views into the pure air of Eternal Ideas. Let us disabuse our minds here and now of any intention in our speeches to criticize any brother Theosophist, present or absent, and that applies equally to the policy pursued by any Society. This

conference is not merely to listen to the views of the Point Loma Society or its Leader, not at all; on the contrary, we are sincerely desirous of hearing from you an expression of the ideals for which you stand, of the hopes and aspirations towards which you are looking in the sacred cause which we all hold dear. The Society to which belong stands simply and truly for what is known as the Blavatsky tradition in Theosophical work. We are proud to wear the uniform of H. P. B., and to uphold her teaching in any and every circumstance. We believe that in remaining true to the lines she laid down as the direct agent of the Masters who sent her forth, lies the road of Salvation for the Theosophical Movement today.

* * * * *

Brothers, I want you to allow me to express what I feel, as nominal chairman of this Conference today. I want to thank you for the very fair spirit which everybody has shown in speaking here today, because I do think that all must agree that they have played the game in the spirit in which the meeting was convened; and it must mean for us that in the future we shall not have the same hesitation in joining together in an impersonal way for our common purposes; and that is, after all, the thing to be achieved.

Several remarks have been made about practical proposals. May I say, just speaking for myself as a Blavatsky Theosophist, that I believe one of the most practical things that we can do, while still remaining as members of our own different organizations, is to come together every so often, not in a semi-formal affair of this kind, but just in an informal friendly way, for joint study; because we can give to each other such a tremendous amount of help. We none of us know the whole philosophy, and only comparatively little of any part of it; and to hear Brother-Theosophists of other Societies expounding H. P. B.'s teachings is something that warms

the heart and brings our minds together as nothing else in the world can.

I confess to you that I am a dyed-in-the-wool H. P. B. Theosophist. For me her writings will always be the criterion of Theosophy, and I try in my own studies to empty my mind of whatever preconceptions I may have, and, as it were, to go with as clean a slate as I can to those great teachings, and there to hear and to listen and to study and to read and to try to fill my mind with the great truths that she brought to us. Ultimately I believe that it is on the basis of H. P. B.'s teachings that all the different Theosophical Sections will come together. That is my own belief.

H. P. B. and the Masters of Wisdom

One speaks about such a subject as we have in tonight's lecture with a good deal of diffidence, because it is very difficult for ordinary mortals to do justice in any way to all that lies enshrined for Theosophists in the name of H. P. B. and those Great Teachers who sent her forth into the world.

As her name implies she was a Russian, and she was born in the year 1831, on the 31st of July. She came of aristocratic parents, and she married, very much against her will, the elderly Russian general Blavatsky when she was but seventeen years of age. The story goes that she ran away from him after the first few hours of this purely nominal marriage. She was now entirely dependent upon her father, a Colonel in the army, and she proceeded to travel extensively, not only in the West but also (and mainly) in the Near and Far East, seeking always for those centers of occult learning which she had always felt to exist, hidden from the sight of men. She believed in the existence of an Occult Brotherhood in whose hands were the keys of many, if not all, of the problems and mysteries that perplex men and women in the world —

scientific, religious and philosophic — and in seeking she found.

The reason, I suggest, why she was admitted into the sanctuaries in Eastern lands, was because the real entity within H. P. Blavatsky, within the outer form of the woman of Western blood, was actually one of the Great Brotherhood of Adepts or Initiates who guard these occult centers, and thus she had an "Open Sesame" to every one of them. You will find in Theosophical literature the statement that there are two or three main centers of this Occult Brotherhood, and the first one that she visited was in Egypt. That center, of course, still exists today, and the agents of the Egyptian Section of the Great Lodge are particularly active in that ancient and mysterious land.

Then she traveled through Persia and the Near East, going through Afghanistan, I believe, also visiting various parts of India; and eventually spending many years in Tibet, from which country she had actually been sent to the Western world. These are all details of the inner or private life of one that we knew, or that history speaks of, as H. P. Blavatsky.

Many, I dare say, will wonder as to the nature of those mysterious beings who have the power to send such a person as H. P. B. into the world.

The teachers of H. P. B. were men, but saintly men — men of vast Wisdom and Knowledge and Compassion: men who had mastered the occult secrets of nature by perfecting their own spiritual, intellectual, psychical and physical natures to the utmost possible degree. Therefore not alone with spirit entities did she commune but with living men, who were able to show her how to unlock the mysteries of nature, and thus regain the knowledge that had been hers in former incarnations.

She had been exiled from the physical presence of her Teachers

for many years, and however much she might have lived with them spiritually and psychically during every hour of the day and every hour of the night, her actual life was naturally an exiled one and in a very true sense a crucifixion. So you can understand what a tremendous thing it meant to her when she received an order one day to go to Sikkim and there to spend at least a few hours with the two Teachers to whom she owed all that she had of spiritual value in her life; those two to whom she owed all the occult knowledge that she possessed; and, as she said in one part of her writings, with whose help and by whose hands her very soul was brought to birth in that incarnation. It is in this atmosphere that we read her own words about the journey.

The fact is that had I not left Bombay in the greatest secrecy—even some Theosophists who visit us believing me at home but busy and invisible as usual — had I not gone *incognito* so to say till I reached the hills and turned off the railway to enter Sikkim I would *have never been allowed to enter it* unmolested, and would not have seen M. and K. H. in *their bodies* both. Lord, I would have been dead by this time. Oh the blessed blessed two days! It was like the old times when the bear paid me a visit. The same kind of wooden hut, a box divided into three compartments for rooms, and standing in a jungle on four pelican's legs; the same yellow chelas gliding noiselessly; the same eternal "gul-gul-gul" sound of my Boss's inextinguishable chelum pipe; the old familiar sweet voice of your K. H. (whose voice is still sweeter and face still thinner and more transparent) the same *entourage* for furniture — skins, and yak-tail stuffed pillows and dishes for salt tea, etc. Well when I went to Darjeeling sent away by them — "out of reach of the chelas, who might fall in love with my beauty" said my polite boss — on the following day already I

received the note I enclose from the Deputy Commissioner warning me *not* to go to Tibet! ! He locked the stable door after the horse had been already out. Very luckily; because when the infernal six or seven babus who stuck to me like parasites went to ask passes for Sikkim they were refused point blank and the Theos. Society abused and jeered at. But I had my revenge. I wrote to the Deputy Commissioner and told him I had permission from Government — the fact of Government not answering for my safety being of little importance since I would be safer in Tibet than in London; that after all I *did* go twenty or thirty miles beyond Sikkim territory and remained there two days and *nothing happened* bad to me and there I was. Several ladies and gentlemen anxious to see "the remarkable woman," pester me to death with their visits, but I have refused persistently to see any of them. Let them be offended. What the d---- do I care. *I won't see anyone.* I came here for our Brothers and Chelas and the rest may go and be hanged. Thanks for your offer. I do mean to pay you a visit but I cannot leave Darjeeling until my Boss is hovering near by. He goes away in a week or ten days and then I will leave D. and if you permit me to wait for you at your house I will do so with real pleasure. But I cannot be there much before the 20th so if you write to tell them it will be all right.

That is just one little cameo from her own writings. You will find that letter on page 38 in the volume called *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett* and many such incidents which throw a side-light upon the esotericism of the Great Lodge.

One has to remember that H. P. Blavatsky's life was necessarily a very strange one, and there is a great difference between her life after 1875, when she founded the Theosophical Society, and the period up to that time.

One of the things that was hardest for her to bear was the fact that when the enemies of the Theosophical Movement, of which she raised a perfect legion, could not sink her philosophy; when they found that she was capable of tearing to pieces their materialistic and dogmatic arguments, and confounding them with logic and titanic intellectual power that simply staggered them; when they found that she gave them a philosophy that for completeness the world has never had anything to equal, one which literally embraced the Universe; then they fell back upon trying to pick holes in some detail, some incident, that might besmirch the early days of her life before she became a public character — the old, old trick. This is what she says on page 145 of the same book before quoted:

The whole of my life except the weeks and months I passed with the Masters, in Egypt or in Tibet, is so inextricably full of events with whose secrets and real actuality the dead and the living are concerned, and I made only responsible for their outward appearance, that to vindicate myself, I would have to step on a hecatomb of the dead and cover with dirt the living. *I will not do so.* For, *firstly*, it will do me no good except adding to the other epithets I am graced with, that of a slanderer of *post mortem* reputation, and accused, perhaps, of *chantage* and blackmail; and secondly I am an Occultist, as I told you. You speak of my "susceptibilities" with regard to my relatives, I say it is *occultism*, not susceptibilities. I KNOW the effect it would have on the dead, and want to forget the living. This is my last and final decision: I WILL NOT TOUCH THEM.

Now I could, but I do not want to, omit mention altogether of the gross attack that was made on H. P. B. It is very difficult, in attempting to deal with this extraordinary and outstanding figure

of the latter part of the last century, to know how to present to those who know nothing about the subject the essential facts: what to say; what to leave out. It is certain that no uninitiated psychologist could ever solve the mystery of H. P. B., for he would be dealing with problems of the mysteries of occult development, mysteries of the sanctuary and the mind of an Initiated Adept — all incarnated in a woman's body.

She was accused of fraud; she was accused, like some common or garden medium, of descending to trickery in the production of what are known as "The Mahatma Letters," and the agents for this conspiracy — for such it was — were a certain Monsieur and Madame Coulomb, whom she befriended when they were starving. She picked them up in Egypt; took them with her, if I am not mistaken, or they followed her, to Bombay, where they deliberately set about to collect bits and snippets of letters and communications in her own hand-writing, and even went so far as to take odd sentences from them. Then Coulomb, who was capable of copying perfectly the writing of the Mahatma, proceeded to make up letters based upon these odd sentences, which produced the most fiendish indictment of the whole of H. P. B.'s work and mission, and needless to say, her private character.

This is what she says about it on pages 110 and 111:

But those secrets were "open letters" for years. Why should I complain? Has not Master left it to my choice, to either follow the dictates of Lord Buddha, who enjoins us not to fail to feed *even a starving serpent*, scorning all fear lest it should turn round and bite the hand that feeds it — or to face *Karma* which is sure to punish him, who turns away from the sight of sin and misery, or fails to relieve the sinner and the sufferer. I knew her and tried my best not to

hate her, and since I always failed in the latter, I tried to make it up by sheltering and feeding the vile snake. I have what I deserve, not for the sins *I am charged with* but for those which *no one* — save Master and myself know of. Am I greater, or in any way better, than were St. Germain, and Cagliostro, Giordano Bruno and Paracelsus, and so many many other martyrs whose names appear in the Encyclopedias of the 19th cent. over the meritorious titles of *charlatans* and *impostors*? It shall be the *Karma* of the blind and wicked judges — not mine. In Rome, Darbargiri Nath went to the prison of Cagliostro at the Fort *Sant Angelo*, and remained in the terrible hole for more than an hour. What he did there, would give Mr. Hodgson the ground work for another *scientific* Report if he could only investigate the fact.

No; it is not "the Brothers' policy of covering up such evidence . . . of their existence" — but that of the MAHA CHOHAN, and it is Mahatma K. H.'s *Karma*. If you have never given a thought to what may be His suffering during the human intervals of His Mahatmaship — then you have something yet to learn. "You were warned" — says his Chohan — and He answers — "I was." Still He says He is glad He is yet no Mejnoor, no dried up plant, and that had He to suffer over and over again — He would still do the same for He knows that real good for humanity has come out from all this suffering, and that such books as "Esoteric Buddhism" and "Karma" would not have been written for years to come had He not communicated with you, and had not orders been given to me to do what I have done — stupidly sometimes as I may have carried them out.

These are Mahatma K. H.'s own words. No; He is not "right away in Nirvana" — except during the hours of His

Mahatmaship. His "devachan" is far off yet, and people may hear of Him when they expect it the least. I never see or hear of Him, lately — D. N. *does*. But I know what I say, though I have no orders to tell it to anyone. Remember only that He suffers more, perhaps, than any one of us. And you do not know how right you are in saying that "Well as He loved, He will love me truly — Yea, even better than I love Him" — for even you can never love Him as well as He loves you — *that particle of Humanity which did its best to help on and benefit Humanity* — "the great orphan" He speaks of in one of His letters.

If we use our minds rightly when we read or hear these sacred things, we shall necessarily gain a deeper understanding of what the great Masters really are, the nature of their work, and what they are trying to bring about in the Movement which They founded.

Theosophical Slackness

"I pledge myself to support before the world the Theosophical Movement, its Leaders and its Members. . . .

". . . A brave declaration of principles, and a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked. . . ." — M.

All active workers in the Theosophical Movement are under an obligation to act always in terms of the above quotations, and probably most of them are under the impression that they do give effect to the principles involved at least sufficiently to keep their conscience quiet. There is an all too prevalent attitude of apathy among Theosophists in regard to the whole question of the support of H. P. Blavatsky before the world, and the defence of her reputation and literary integrity whenever these are attacked. There are those who have accepted her Teaching, but have not for

a moment considered that in doing so they have incurred a debt and an obligation to her memory which they could not adequately repay, even if they did all that lies in their power to support her before the world in every situation in which such support is called for. More than one of this kind of Theosophist has stated: "H. P. B. does not need any defence as far as I am concerned; therefore I do not need to bother my head about it." It does not seem to have occurred to them that the following words of the Master K. H. on this subject were not uttered for amusement, but on the contrary as a warning, and indeed almost as a command. In *The Mahatma Letters* we find these passages:

p. 362. Let the eyes of the most intellectual among the public be opened to the foul conspiracy against Theosophy that is going on in missionary circles and in one year's time you will have regained your footing. In India it is: "either Christ or the *Founders* (!!)" Let us stone them to death!" They have nearly finished killing one — they are now attacking the other victim — Olcott. The padris are as busy as bees. The P. R. S. has given them an excellent opportunity of making capital of their ambassador. — Mr. Hodgson fell quite easily a victim to false evidence; . . . but there is no doubt that if the Society collapses it will be due to him.

p. 257. I say again what you like me not to say, namely that *no regular* instruction, no regular communication is possible between us before our mutual path is cleared of its many impediments. The greatest being the public misconception about the Founders.

p. 365. Could but your London Lodge understand, or so much as suspect, that the present crisis that is shaking the T. S. to its foundations is a question of perdition or salvation to thousands; a question of the progress of the

human race or its retrogression, of its glory or dishonour, and for the majority of this race — of *being or not being*, of annihilation, in fact-perchance many of you would look into the very root of evil, and instead of being — guided by false appearances and scientific decisions, you would set to work and save the situation by disclosing the dishonourable doings of your missionary world.

p. 251. On the other hand we claim to know more of the secret cause of events than you men of the world do. I say then that it is the vilification and abuse of the Founders, the general misconception of the aims and objects of the Society that paralyses its progress — nothing else.

Words could not be more clear, and herein lies the root cause of the lack of wide public support of the modern Theosophical Movement that we all of us deplore and for which many of us are seeking the right means to overcome. The plain truth is that the reputation of the Founders down to the present moment has never been rehabilitated in the public mind in a thoroughly radical fashion. This is partly due to the fact that the data to be found scattered over the early Theosophical literature has never up to the present time been available in published documents. But today that situation is changed. Most if not all of the necessary information is now available for those who seek it.

Probably many of our readers are unaware of these words of H. P. B. to William Q. Judge, which we quote from a private letter written about 1887, and referred to occasionally in Theosophical periodicals: "I am the Mother and the Creator of the Society; it has my magnetic fluid. . . . Therefore I alone, and to a degree Olcott, can serve as a lightning conductor of Karma for it. I was asked whether I was willing when at the point of dying — and I said Yes — for it was the only means to save it. Therefore I consented to

live — which in my case means to suffer physically during 12 hours of the day — mentally 12 hours of the night when I get rid of the physical shell. . . ."

In Occultism ingratitude is a crime which inevitably brings its own nemesis by the withdrawal of at least some of the influence and inspiration of the Higher Self. Can we take the waters of life from a spiritual Teacher and at the same time by our supine passivity and neglect insult the memory of that Teacher without paying for it? Should we not do well to reflect on the deep meaning of that little known incident which occurred during H. P. B.'s lifetime at her house in Lansdowne Road? Six or eight of her pupils were gathered together one evening in one of the upper rooms. Bertram Keightley was there, and also Mrs. Cleather, who recorded the incident on page 17 of her book *H. P. Blavatsky as I knew her*. They had been discussing a scurrilous attack on H. P. B. that had just appeared in the *Westminster Gazette*, but it had never occurred to any of them that they should do anything about it, or make any reply. We quote:

Suddenly H. P. B.'s bell rang somewhat violently, and Mr. Keightley jumped up with some semi-jocular remark and ran downstairs to her room. . . . While Mr. Keightley was downstairs we just went on with our desultory talk; after a few minutes he returned with a very long face and serious manner. He said we were under severe reproof *by the Master*, who (unseen, of course) had been in the room while we were so light-heartedly discussing the newspaper attack on our "Outer Head." He had descended immediately to H. P. B. in great displeasure, telling her to inform us that if *this* was our conception of keeping our newly-taken pledge we had better all resign at once. We — at least I can speak for myself — were terribly ashamed, and all with one accord sat down at once and wrote as

good a defence and indignant protest as in us lay. I do not remember the sequel, but certainly one, if not more, of those letters were inserted.

Surely this is sufficient evidence for those who are in need of it, of what must be the opinion of the Teachers of H. P. B. today whenever they look over the record of the activities of the members of the different Theosophical organizations. Need we doubt for a moment that they will not hold us guiltless for failing to seize the glorious opportunity that is now presented to us of establishing H. P. B. in the public mind in that place which was rightfully hers even during her lifetime? The thing that made H. P. B. suffer almost more than anything else was the weakness and slackness in her defence on the part of those for whom she had given her lifeblood to teach. It is not suggested that individual Theosophists should rush into print, for at the moment of writing these words there is no immediate necessity, but what we believe they are called upon to do is to instruct themselves as to the evidence which is now available, which proves conclusively to any interested person that H. P. B. was neither a fraud nor a charlatan; that she was never a deceiver, but a transmitter from The Great Lodge to the Western World of that priceless body of Occult doctrine which is at once the spiritual heritage of our race, and our hope for the future.

WHITE LOTUS DAY MEETINGS

H. P. B. as a Symbol of the Masters' Work

— From a Report of a White Lotus Day Meeting, held in London, May, 1932. At this gathering were members of various Theosophical Societies as well as friends from other Groups who came to join in tribute to H. P. Blavatsky.

Fellow Theosophists, Friends, Brothers: May I welcome you here

tonight in the name of Dr. de Purucker and the Point Loma Theosophical Society? There are present members of at least six different organizations. Let us each realize our unity with each other in this short hour that we will be together in the memory of our beloved H. P. B. Let us first together enter into two minutes of silence in memory of H. P. B. and those who have passed on since 1891, and let us strive together to enter into the consciousness of that Brotherhood whose Messenger she was.

* * * * *

It is almost a year since some of us met together (on June 24th it was) to celebrate the Centennial Conference. That occasion was one of which afterwards quite a number of people said, "Well, it did not accomplish very much," but we of Point Loma felt that far more had been accomplished than actually appeared on the surface. And, Brothers, you see actually what was accomplished, in this wonderful meeting here tonight. Do you realize that had it not been for the fact that we came together for the first time, I believe, in some thirty years, as members of different Theosophical organizations, this meeting here tonight would not have been possible?

Many prematurely are looking for concrete, tangible agreements between Theosophists of different organizations; but we must not try to run before we can walk. I believe that the greatest tribute that we, as individual Theosophists, can pay to H. P. B., is to demonstrate to each other and to the world the fact that we have made Theosophy a living power in our lives to the extent that at least we practice the brotherhood that we preach.

Now I want to say just one thing in this same connexion. It is this: the most that we can hope for at the present time is that by coming together occasionally on such occasions as this, and I hope by the interchange of speakers and lecturers among

different Theosophical organizations, we shall learn to trust each other — and do not think that by that I mean any empty platitude — I do not; because too long has it been the unfortunate circumstance that to approach a fellow Theosophist of another organization means suspicion and distrust. Brothers, I believe that era has gone for ever, and believe me we do far more for the cause of Theosophy than we imagine if we have succeeded in just laying that one basis in our hearts and in our minds; the knowledge nay, the certainty that if one organization approaches another they know that their confidence will not be misplaced; that there will be nothing said by speakers of that other organization which would betray their trust and betray their confidence; and if we hold to just that one fact progressively in the coming months, you will be astonished, I believe, at the progress that we make toward the unification of the Theosophical movement.

H. P. B. stands as a symbol. What of? Is it her personality that we worship? Brothers and friends, let no one run away with such a misapprehension. All who love the memory of H. P. B. do so because she stands as a symbol of Masters' work — nothing else; and if we are going to do more than pay lip-tributes to the memory of H. P. B., as I see it, we have got to do two things; we have got to acquire a knowledge of what she has written, we have to study it and apply it in our own lives; and then we have got to take that knowledge, not only to the public, but on the basis of H. P. B.'s teachings we have got to find the basis for unity amongst the different Theosophical Societies. Let there be no mistake about it as to what H. P. B.'s position really was and is for the Theosophical movement. I am going to quote you these few words from one who remained true to her to the end of his life:

'The plain unvarnished truth, which hurts no one save the man who denies it, is that H. P. Blavatsky was the head, front, bottom,

top, outskirts, past and future of the Theosophical Society. We were all but pawns on the chess-board, but however the facts may come out it remains a fact that the Theosophical Society stands or falls by H. P. Blavatsky. Give her up as an idea, withdraw from the Path traced by her under orders, belittle her, and the organization will rot; but remember her and what she represented and we triumph.'

Brothers, that is the position today. You demonstrate here tonight that the cause of H. P. B. is going to *triumph*; and the cause of H. P. B. is that of Universal Brotherhood; it is the cause of Theosophy, and in the lifetime of most of us the success of that cause is assured.

Brother Theosophists, before we part tonight may I appeal to those who are Theosophists at heart to take back with them to their Lodge-rooms the memory of the fact that it was the force of the spirit of H. P. B. that had the drawing power to bring us together tonight; and remember that the power of her message will fill your Lodge-rooms in just the same way in the years that are coming. Let us remember this meeting by *welcoming* to our individual Lodges the members of all other Theosophical organizations.

The Brotherhood H. P. B. Came to Found

— From a Report of a joint Meeting of the London Lodge of the Point Loma T. S. with the Phoenix Lodge of the Adyar T. S., May 8, 1934.

Fellow Theosophists, Brothers and Friends: We meet together here on the 8th of May as we love to do, to do honor to the memory of H. P. B., and I would like first of all, just to give a warm welcome to our guests, the members of the Phoenix Lodge, and any members of other Societies who are present with us

tonight. We believe that on this day of the year there is probably no more fitting tribute to H. P. B.'s memory than that we should do something to demonstrate, as it were, that the idea of a real spiritual fraternity or fellowship is gradually coming to birth in this Western world of ours; that members of different organizations can come together upon a common basis in their realization of their unity with one and all, their common search for Truth, and their devotion to the Ancient Wisdom teachings that she brought to us. The main work of H. P. B. was the giving of the teachings which the Theosophical Society was created as an instrument to disseminate; but during her lifetime, unfortunately, the knowledge was brought home to her that her efforts were largely frustrated: the soil in which the teachings could alone germinate and fructify, the indispensable pre-requisite, was the existence of real brotherhood amongst the Theosophists and those who study her teachings.

I believe the time is very close at hand now when the work of the modern Theosophical Movement will really become a living fire; not only amongst the members of the different Theosophical Societies, but it will arouse the attention of the highest minds all over the world because they will discover that Theosophists, of whatever affiliation, can meet and work together in the common cause that they all love, and which she came to serve.

* * * * *

It needs very few words of mine to conclude what is to me always one of the most beautiful meetings of the year. I would just like to say how at one I feel with the remarks of Brother Hamilton-Jones [President, Phoenix Lodge], where he emphasizes that part of the message of H. P. B., which insisted upon the necessity of our rising out of our ordinary everyday consciousness into a realization of the higher one. I would like to add this thought. Can we not, as

our tribute to H. P. B. today, with the Fellowship that we have with each other now, begin to recognise that Universal Brotherhood need no longer be for us a mere hope and an ideal, but that it is possible for us to realize it in the true way. We cannot do the brotherly things that we would unless we follow her teaching, to the extent that we are able to rise into that higher self-consciousness which Brother Hamilton-Jones spoke about. It is in that common experience — a realization of the Divinity within us — that we can, actually do, create amongst ourselves, the Brotherhood that H. P. B. came to found; and I would like to see, in the not too distant future, the respective Lodges that are met together here tonight find some basis upon which they could work more closely than they do even in spirit today. May I just say this: that there is a Lodge already founded in Canada which has a charter from Adyar, a Charter from Point Loma, and yet another from the United Lodge of Theosophists. What the result of it will be I do not know, but at least it seems a move in the right direction.

Shall we close with a minute or two of silence in memory of H. P. B. and the Wisdom that she brought us.

H. P. B.: A 'Holding Center' of Spiritual Energy

Wherever H. P. B. was, there appeared signs of new vitality in every direction; she was the center of energy.

It was said by many that her knowledge was ill-digested, that she arranged her materials badly, that she was misty, muddled and self-contradictory, and that she was hasty, that she "shut up" inquirers, that she repelled would-be disciples. Little wonder that she wrote to W. Q. J. that the T. S. was a "fiend" and that it needed a soul if not a spirit to incarnate into it to save it from destruction. But we must never forget that H. P. B. varied with the people who

approached her. To the honest inquirer she was gentle and patient; she was abrupt, sharp and repellent to the merely curious, even if disguised under polite forms and fake courtesy. She was the test of the members, whatever substance was present was precipitated by the test. Do we not pledge ourselves to carry on this Work of which Humanity stands in as much need today as it did in H. P. B.'s time? This is really all one must care about. Being chosen by the Great Ones means that, whatever his personal oscillations, he has evolved "a holding center" to Them. Let us therefore try to aim at this ideal, of having a "holding center" to Those responsible for the Society, and remembering at the same time that others may have that "holding center" as well, and that we must fix our minds on that and not on the imperfections of their human frailty.

Was H. P. B. an Anomaly?

QUESTION: We are all well aware of the fact that Mme. Blavatsky was an unusually intellectual woman and most helpful to the Masters; but why did the Masters single out a personality irritable at the slightest provocation and one with so little self-control? How is it that a more Christ-like figure was not chosen than H. P. B. for the Theosophical work? Her personal life does not encourage one to accept all she says.

ANSWER: Well, I am sorry in a way that somebody has picked on the personal life of H. P. B.! I would suggest that the questioner make himself or herself familiar with records of what was the life of H. P. B. I would suggest that he read *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*. I would suggest that he read what the Masters of Wisdom have said about H. P. B.

"That her life was not Christ-like"! Are you sure? What basis do you judge from? How can you judge? You never knew her and

have only got mere stories of various people, and most of them uncharitable, destructive critics. How many people agree upon the report of the simplest incident of human life, and how much can you expect of those whose whole being was challenged by that titanic force that was imbodyed in H. P. B.? Don't you see that she took the Western world in a grip of the lion's paw, and simply shook their beliefs and their prejudices and their preconceptions, based upon the materialistic scientific thought of the age, their religious conceptions? She was out to smash the molds of men's minds; she was out to draw them from those ideas that enslave men's minds. From every point of view she simply created a furor, and in the middle of it she gave us a philosophy which is second to none that the world has ever known or seen, and, moreover, that has never once been successfully challenged. There is not one of you that can knock a hole in the bottom of H. P. B.'s philosophy. I ask you to try it. You cannot do it; and what does this mean? It means that her opponents are driven to do — what? To traduce her moral character. You see it is the old, old trick.

H. P. B. in the records of our own Theosophical literature was outwardly a sick, rickety old personality. She was extremely ill; but remember that she was working here sixteen or eighteen hours a day chained to a desk. Look at her writings; look what she produced. Do you know that her works will run to fourteen or fifteen volumes when they are all put together? Think of it! And then see the innumerable records of that kindly, compassionate heart. Do you think that the kind of wisdom that you find in H. P. B.'s works could come from other than a member of the Brotherhood that sent her forth? The very keynote of her is compassion, which is something that flows forth from the Christ-like nature; and I am afraid I take very little account of her nervous excitability, which came about as much as anything from

her ill-health and from the psychic maelstrom of which she was the focus by reason of the iconoclastic work that she did. Do you not see the picture? If I were you I should hesitate to judge one of the titan intellects of the age. I should indeed!

I will just give you one suggestion as to a possible reason why she was imbodied in such a — shades of H. P. B.! she probably wouldn't mind my saying it — such a clumsy old female body. Do you know what they did to Jesus? Worshiped the external form, and made a personal God of it. It looks to me as if the Masters of Wisdom had no intention of permitting their Messenger in this cycle to be made into any kind of personal God. Human nature instinctively worships external beauty. She had not, perhaps, a beautiful external form; and the very nature of her mission was such that I do not think there was any danger of the later generations of human beings being permitted to make a personal God of her. The Masters were determined that her Message should be judged upon its merits and nothing else.

William Quan Judge

Friends: We are met together here tonight to do honor to the memory of William Q. Judge, to whom we owe it that we have the privilege of meeting together here week after week. It was owing to William Quan Judge that the American Section of the Society remained in being; and it has been said, and said very truly, that the present state of the Theosophical Movement cannot be understood correctly unless one understands the significance and place of Judge's work. For a few minutes we want to go over the facts of his life as they are recorded for us, to see why he holds such a high place in our hearts.

Judge was born in 1851 in Ireland, and he died in 1896, so that he was still in his forties — he was a young man; and it was as a

young man of only twenty-one years of age that he came into contact with H. P. B. He met her in New York just before 1875 and he was associated with her at the founding of the Society.

There is one wonderful thing that each of us, individually, as students of the great philosophy, ought to think of, and that is the amazing difficulties and personal struggles that Judge had to overcome in his own life. We are apt to remember only the splendor of the achievement of his later years, forgetting perhaps that, although it is on record that he took up his work in the body of William Quan Judge with a long history and record of devoted service to his credit, in spite of that and his great innate inherent knowledge, he passed through trials and tribulations and suffered in the Cause to which he was pledged more than any other with the exception of H. P. B.

H. P. B. herself said that Judge suffered more than any other chela at that time — and still he asked the least. That is one of the many things that she said about him; and there are on record many of his letters that go to show that, although H. P. B.'s great mission was brought home to him personally, by daily contact, throughout those early years before she left for India in 1878, the Masters, through her, became a reality to him, and as a result one might expect to find that Judge had that wonderful sense, that inner sense of contact with the blessed Masters throughout the whole of his Theosophical career. But Brothers, it was not so.

In spite of the fact that in 1888 we find H. P. B. writing of Judge that he was an accepted chela of thirteen years' standing, which meant that his past service had entitled him to become a chela from the very commencement of his contact with H. P. B.; in spite of that, he has placed it on record that after H. P. B. left for India he felt almost completely isolated, almost completely alone. He complains bitterly in his letters to Colonel Olcott — writing to H.

P. B. begging for some news, some word through H. P. B. that he was not altogether forgotten. He was left to fight out his battle and conquer himself and he had to win that battle alone, and yet we know that during those years when he seemed even to himself to be left very much alone, the Masters themselves gave him the name of the "Resuscitator of Theosophy in America," during those years in which he slowly built the foundation of the Movement in that country.

Because he was a married man and had a child, we realize that he passed through all the experiences of humanity; and it must be that fact — added to his struggles against poverty and all the difficulties that we know that every aspirant to Theosophical knowledge has to pass through — it was those facts undoubtedly that gave him his tremendous breadth, his great sympathy, and his wonderful understanding and compassion.

Finally the clouds lifted in 1886, the hour of Judge's mission struck, and then he started that wonderful beacon of light — *The Path*. H. P. B. herself, then the editor of *Lucifer* said: "Judge, your magazine is pure Buddhi, and poor old *Lucifer* is nothing but the fighting, combating Manas." That is what she said of her pupil and his work, and there is no more delightful task for a student of Theosophy than to turn over the early pages of this magazine, in fact all the volumes of *The Path*, and see the inspiration that was in the articles that Mr. Judge put there. They are an absolute revelation to those in this day who are not familiar with his writings.

To anyone who would understand Theosophy I would earnestly recommend the study of those magazine-writings, because in them Theosophy is simplified, expounded and applied, made comprehensible to us. He was the first to bring it to the understanding, so to speak, of the man in the street.

Judge always did that. They said that he was not a good speaker. He had hardly any gifts of 'personality,' and yet, so those who heard him have told me, there was something in Judge's talks that always appealed to the very hearts of his listeners — because he had that profound knowledge and that profound understanding, he was able to strike fire into the hearts of all that heard him. It was a very wonderful quality; and more than once, to those of his pupils who complained to him personally that the clouds were coming and the light was blotted out he said: "I know, I know that place. *Sit down* till the clouds roll by, because certainly they will," and that is what he did himself.

The place of Judge in the Theosophical Movement, his important place, is that which he held after H. P. B. died, for he it was alone who maintained the esoteric tradition in the Theosophical Movement. By that I mean something very definite. Judge, throughout all his writings, throughout everything that he ever said, never wavered once in his loyalty to his first teacher, H. P. B. There was never any evidence that he wrote even a fraction off the line that she laid down. In that I suppose he gives us one of the most wonderful examples of constancy that any Theosophical student could possibly wish to have, and I draw your attention to it for this reason — that Judge died a martyr, and he died accused of having tampered with various communications from the Masters of whom he was the agent. If there were any truth in those accusations, there is not the slightest doubt that they would have found a reflexion in his public writings. At least, if there were a fraction of truth in them, he would have reacted by condemning his accusers, but he did not do it.

Judge, throughout the whole of those last two bitter years of his life, when he stood accused by those whom he had helped the most, and by some who should have known him best, simply bent his head. He denied the truth of the accusations. He could not

offer any complete explanation, for the simple reason that he was bound by the esoteric rule of silence under which he was forced to work, and under which H. P. B. was also forced to work.

To try to understand the apparent inconsistencies in the life of H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge demands a far greater knowledge, a far greater understanding of the laws of the occult universe than most of us have; but you will find the explanation of many of those apparent inconsistencies in the first letter of the section called 'Probation and Chelaship' in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. It deals with H. P. B. and there is a statement there that no messenger of the great Lodge is allowed to go out into the world "in his integral whole" unless he be an initiate of the fifth circle.

H. P. B., who taught William Quan Judge, had not passed that point, and therefore she was actually a psychological cripple in a peculiar way, because a certain portion of the constitution of the Messenger is actually missing, as the phrase in that letter goes. It is something which has never been publicly explained; but nevertheless the Master says that many apparent inconsistencies of conduct were due to the fact that the Messengers had not the power to fight and defend themselves. They had become, friends, literally in many respects, as regards their consciousness, as little children, and they had no more power either to offend or defend themselves in many ways than little children; and therefore those of us who can look over the history of the last fifty years, if we have not already as students, become convinced of the integrity of William Quan Judge, let us pause, let us hesitate before in our remotest thought we condemn one of the great Messengers that have come to us from the Lodge of Masters. It is a dangerous thing at any time to condemn others, but it is still more dangerous in the case of those who have come to bring us the light and the teachings that the great Messengers do bring.

I am irresistibly reminded of something that the present Leader of this Society, Dr. G. de Purucker, said recently at Point Loma in connexion with another great and misunderstood Messenger of the Great Lodge, Cagliostro. He was explaining something about the life of that individual; and having shown that the different names that he bore could all be explained esoterically and rendered in a particularly interesting manner, he goes on to say how strange it is that Cagliostro was called "an orphan, the unhappy child of nature." Friends, I just want to say that I am reading this to you because it does throw light on this question of William Quan Judge:

. . . every initiate is in 'orphan' without father, without mother, because mystically speaking every initiate is *self-born*. How strange it is that other names under which Cagliostro is stated to have lived at various times have in each instance a singular esoteric signification! Study these names. They are very interesting.

Perhaps I might go one shade of thought farther: to every Cagliostro who appears there is always a Balsamo. Closely accompanying and indeed inseparable from every Messenger there is his 'Shadow.' With every Christ appears a Judas. And as regards what you, my brothers, have so admirably set forth this evening concerning the reason, as given by our beloved H. P. Blavatsky, of Cagliostro's 'failure,' let me point this out: that Cagliostro's failure was not one of merely vulgar human passion, nor was it one of vulgar human ambition, as ordinary men understand these terms. When Julian the Apostate — called 'apostate' because he refused to be an apostate from the ancient religion of his forefathers — led his army against Shapur, King of Persia, he did so well knowing that he was acting

against the esoteric Law; and yet in one sense he could not do otherwise, for his individual karman compelled him to the act. I tell you that there are at times more tragedies in the life of a Messenger than you could easily understand, for a Messenger is sworn to obedience in both directions — obedience to the general law of his karman from which he may not turn aside a single step, and obedience equally strict to the Law of those who sent him forth. There are in such cases problems to solve sometimes which break the heart, but which nevertheless must be solved.

Be, therefore, charitable in your judgment of that great and unhappy man, Cagliostro! — *Lucifer: the Light-Bringer*, January-February, 1931, pp. 21-2

That is what Dr. de Purucker said about him, and it is something that I think we would do well to reflect upon, because with every Messenger, I do not care who he is, there will be inexplicable acts, but, friends, there will never be criminal acts. There will be things we do not understand, and they spring from that childlikeness (not childishness) of mind and heart that make them appear as nothing in the eyes of men — and that all the great Teachers have while they live and work among us.

Now the results of that campaign against Judge were very successful. They split the Society, and it has resulted in — i. e. the Karma of the whole thing is — the many different Theosophical Societies that exist today. But its main result was to blind the great majority of Theosophists by blackening the memory of Judge, and to blind modern students to the great light that lies enshrined in his writing and teaching. It had another effect in that many Theosophical students are unaware that it was Judge who fulfilled H. P. B.'s last hope, which was to keep the link unbroken with the blessed Lodge of Masters.

Friends, he did this, and he died a broken man; but he died with complete forgiveness in his heart, and it was a wonderful thing that was placed on record by his own students: that throughout those last two years of his life, when those who still worked with him outwardly were constantly plotting against him, he worked with them *well knowing it*. He 'carried on,' and his last message to the sections of his own Society, and to the thousands of his own students who remained true to him and the work he did, was to "Hold fast, go slow"; and he said: "Whatever you do, stand ready for the time when the great injustice and the great wrong that has been done will be recognised by those members of other Societies. Then be ready to hold out the hand of friendship, to hold out the hand of brotherly co-operation, that the wounds of the past may be healed."

It is not too much to say that those who honor the memory of William Quan Judge by living and practising the truths that he taught are actually walking in the footsteps of their predecessors, the footsteps of those predecessors who have gone before them in the age-old path that leads to the feet of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace.

Let us close our meeting tonight by invoking the aid of those same Masters through the divinity that exists in the heart of each one of us:

Oh my Divinity! thou dost blend with the earth and fashion
for Thyself temples of mighty power.

Oh my Divinity! thou livest in the heart life of all things,
and dost radiate a golden light that shineth for ever and
doth illumine even the darkest corners of the earth.

Oh my Divinity! blend thou with me that from the
corruptible I may become incorruptible; that from

imperfection I may become perfection; that from darkness
I may go forth in Light.

[Part 4](#)

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4. Studies in "The Mahatma Letters"

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The Writing of the Mahatma Letters

[As the compiler of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, Trevor Barker's name is unique in the Theosophical Movement. One often wonders and ponders deeply over the circumstances which finally brought those inspiring Letters to light and accessibility. Perhaps we shall never know, but must remain content to place it to the workings of the Law of Karma which has thus beneficently blessed the destiny of the T. S.; for there is little question that since the publication of *The Mahatma Letters* a new stream of spiritual energy has flowed through the world, and students of Theosophy and lovers of truth and justice everywhere remain in debt to Trevor Barker for the karmic part he played in this act of spiritual drama.

Dr. Barker himself, naturally, was a persistent and deep student of these mahatmic letters, and it is a pity there is not more on record as a result of his studies. In this chapter is included, however, all that is obtainable in this line; but it is sufficient in itself to inspire theosophists everywhere to give deep and earnest study to this particular book which conveys the Masters' own words.

Those who cast a discriminative eye over the wide and varied range of teaching in the Theosophical Movement today, will

consider as most significant the following words of Trevor Barker, in the Appendix to *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*:

"The publication of these letters gives to the student an opportunity to examine the whole range of Theosophic teaching in their light — while adding thereto the faculty of criticism — the highest and most discriminative of which he is capable. That faculty is an impersonal one; it is neither critic nor respecter of *persons* — for to it persons are *without significance*. But with ideas — with doctrines, it has everything to do, and if it is inevitable that the use of that faculty by students the world over will reveal many discrepancies in the accepted Theosophical doctrines of the day, it is equally certain that a large part of that teaching will receive a confirmation which cannot be gainsaid."]

Teachings on Life After Death

We take up the third of our Studies in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and this particular branch of study we are going to do is a part of the teachings on life after death — than which, as we Theosophists think, there is nothing more important for humanity to gain an insight into, at a time when the world is over-ridden by the activity of probably more than twenty-five million Spiritualists: viz., those who are concerned to a greater or lesser degree with what the Mahatmas have called "the cult of the Worship of the Dead."

I think that we may take it that we are not wrong in attributing so much importance to this branch of our teaching, in so far as we find that such a vast amount of space in the early teachings was devoted to this particular subject; and nowhere else in the whole range of occult literature will you find so complete an

explanation of man's progress and what happens to him after he casts aside this temporary physical body. It tells us the nature of man; what he is in his inner composite being, made up of many entities held together by one dominating individuality.

The Theosophist looks at this vast problem — the mystery of death — from a viewpoint entirely different naturally from the orthodox Church conception, which is unenlightened by these Ancient Teachings. Right at the beginning we have a statement made by one of the writers of these letters which strikes a note which is clean out of reach of ordinary thought upon such subjects. Here it is:

Those who *know* they are dead in their physical bodies (we quote from page 128) — can only be either adepts or — sorcerers; and these two are the exceptions to the *general rule*.

Many people think, having their preconceptions and their ideas colored by the notions of modern spiritualism, that a man when he dies simply steps aside from his body and enters into a wider, freer range of life: stronger and freer for the loss of the dead weight of the material body. But this is not the teaching of Theosophy, and never has been. Here is this challenging statement: that average human beings, normal human beings who have led ordinary sorts of lives, are not aware that they are dead when they pass into the great sphere of effects that in the Roman Catholic teaching they speak of as "the purgatorial regions," and which in Sanskrit terminology is called the *Kama-loka*, the region of desire. When the entity enters there he is already bereft not only of his body, but also of the magnetic framework of astral matter upon which his body was built — the substance that the Spiritualist refers to as ectoplasm; and he loses also the life principle which animates these two lower principles;

all three of them together fade away after the destruction of the physical body.

And now you have left a fourfold entity that enters into this region of *Kama-loka* — this sphere of desire; and the Master tells us that they are not conscious there to begin with, and that only those who have progressed far upon the Path of Occultism whether white or black — retain their sense of identity and continuity of consciousness when they enter into this sphere, and where they still remember themselves in their ego, so to say as "I am I." Now this is a strange statement, and I shall have again to return to it because one of the aspects of the problem of immortality is bound up with this conception.

And now the writer goes on to elaborate this idea a little:

Both [i. e., the adept and the sorcerer] having been "co-workers with nature," the former for *good*, the latter — for *bad*, in her work of creation and in that of destruction, they are the only ones who may be called *immortal* in the Kabalistic and the esoteric sense of course.

I wonder how you would define immortality to yourself if you were to sit down and think about it? Here again the Theosophist regards immortality in quite a different way from the ordinary person. We believe in and affirm the immortality of the higher, divine part of man's nature — declare in fact that it is an immortal entity; but that which in the real sense of the word may truly be called Man — *Manas*, the thinker — is this immortal? It is only, in Theosophical parlance, *conditionally* immortal. In other words that you and I on our pathway through earth life are called upon so to run the race of human life and destiny that we shall succeed in merging our human, thinking soul — our Human Ego — with that immortal, divine counterpart whose ray lightens and inspires us during earth life. When we shall succeed in doing that,

then during life here on earth we become in the Esoteric and Kabalistic sense immortal entities. Here is the Master's definition: "Complete or true immortality — which means an unlimited sentient existence, can have no breaks and stoppages, no arrest of Self-consciousness." This means that every moment of the night and day, waking or sleeping, the Adept is fully aware of his identity — his consciousness to his own reflective self is awake. When he lays his body down to sleep at night he steps aside from it, and leaves it there like a garment you put on a chair before getting into bed. But he retains his self-consciousness, steps aside as a conscious being, and because he has won this power during life (and remember it is only during life that we can win these powers) so he has it after death; so he is able when the hour comes, the moment of destiny when an incarnation closes, to enter with just the same confidence into that region of *Kama-loka* and to transcend it and go beyond it, because he has won his immortality during life. Such a being was H. P. B. — she to whom we owe the teachings that have inspired the modern Theosophical movement since its inception in 1875. She has a very telling and very interesting phrase on p. 38 of her *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett* where she hopes that a certain Mrs. Gordon

will not dishonour by *evoking* me with some medium. Let her rest assured that it will never be my spirit nor anything of me — not even *my shell* since this is gone long ago.

The "shell" is of course the cast-off vessel of psychic emanations or remains, which is the chief inspirer of the majority of mediums in the spiritualistic seances. On that subject we shall have more to say in our next study on "Spiritualism and Psychic Phenomena." But I wanted to refer to this statement that *her shell had gone long ago*. This can but open our minds and enlarge our vision in certain respects as to what we have to do if we are ever going to

begin to tread the same path that she and the Mahatmas behind her have trodden. It means that this lower personality of ours has got to be transcended to the point when this *Kama-rupa*, this gross form, this element of passion and desire, is burnt up in the fire of Spiritual Wisdom that comes from the Higher Self; burnt up to the point that it disappears. And then, clothed in that vesture through which the Adept works in the inner spheres when the personality is gone, shall we be free indeed — "walkers of the sky" as those who reach this state of consciousness are called in *The Voice of the Silence*.

Now what happens in the region of *Kama-loka* when the entity enters there? I would like to give you these short extracts from the book itself, because the Master's own words are so much more illuminating. I will read a paragraph here from page 103:

Every one but that ego which, attracted by its gross magnetism, falls into the current that will draw it into the "planet of Death" — the mental as well as physical satellite of our earth — *is* fitted to pass into a relative "spiritual" condition adjusted to his previous condition in life and mode of thought. To my knowledge and recollection H. P. B. explained to Mr. Hume that man's sixth principle, as something purely spiritual could not exist, or have *conscious* being in the Deva-Chan, unless it assimilated some of the more abstract and pure of the mental attributes of the fifth principle or animal Soul: its *manas* (mind) and memory.

You see now there is the statement of the conditioned immortality of the soul. The intermediate real thinking principle in us, if it would persist and survive in the after life, has got to have that in it which is worthy of immortality. It has got to have that element of eternal thinking and living and high aspiration and purpose

that, by the very force of the attraction it sets up in the higher worlds, will draw the disembodied entity up as it were and give it birth, to use the language of Theosophy — to give it birth in the Devachan or Heaven-world. You know that a man is born in the after life just as a little child. Nature repeats itself by analogy all the time. Birth — human birth into the earth world — is a very real death to the Divine being that descends and incarnates. And Death when we understand it aright is the birth in the divine regions of a God.

Just think of the analogy of an entity being born as a little child on earth, with its parents and home life, surrounded by those that care for and love it, and then, because this is an event here which we cannot doubt since we have all experienced it, therefore will it have its reflective analogy — in that which will take place after death; and we as entities, if we have lived decently, ordinarily decently, will be reborn as little children in this after state, having therein full memory of all that took place during earth life that was good and pure and had in it the elements of immortality. I will return to that in a little while. That was by way of explanation of the phrase "the more abstract and pure of the mental attributes of the fifth principle."

When man dies his second and third principles die with him; the lower triad disappears, and the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh principles form the surviving *Quaternary*.

Now to this *Kama-loka* question:

Thenceforth it is a "death" struggle between the Upper and Lower dualities.

meaning that the entity is now bereft of his body and has entered the sphere of *Kama-loka*. He has lost his three lower principles; four are left, and henceforward it is a death struggle between the

Higher duad and the Lower. We know what are these Higher and Lower duads. The higher is purely spiritual; the lower consists of the thinking apparatus and the desires and passions. Emotions, higher and lower, are comprised in the lower duad. And now a struggle takes place.

If the upper wins, the sixth, having attracted to itself the quintessence of Good from the fifth — its nobler affections, its saintly (though they be *earthly*) aspirations, and the most Spiritualized portions of its mind — follows its divine *elder* (the 7th) into the "Gestation" State; and the fifth and fourth remain in association as an empty *shell* — (the expression is quite correct) to roam in the earth's atmosphere, with half the personal memory gone, and the more brutal instincts fully alive for a certain period — an "Elementary" in short. This is the "angel guide" of the average medium.

We have got something very interesting there. The entity falls asleep — immediately or within a few days after death in normal cases (and for the moment we are talking about average human beings, not Adepts, not Theosophists or students of Occultism necessarily, but just men and women who lead ordinary, average decent lives). The entity has a complete review of every incident of the past life that passes through the brain before the Spiritual eye of the Ego — immediately following the moment when the body is declared to be dead. In this connexion the Master says (we quote from p. 171):

Speak in whispers, ye, who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy

work of the Past casting on its reflection upon the Veil of the Future.

We are told moreover that it is this Divine hour of reflexion and revelation that will actually determine the whole course of its future incarnation. Then the entity falls asleep. Within a quicker or shorter time it enters a state in which it is relatively unconscious — unconscious entirely from the point of view that it can neither perceive anything nor can it perform actions. It has no will to do. It is in a region of effects, and it is at the mercy entirely of its own destiny as created by the man during life. If he was upward aspiring, if he had noble thoughts and desires, if he loved a little — not even greatly — there will be enough in the higher spiritual portion of him to create that upward attraction of the higher principles that will gradually cause them to separate from the lower. The man is unconscious; but if there was a very material, egotistical, or even criminal life, then there is such an attraction — force of gravity — in the lower principles, that the lower man yields no meed of spiritual essence to the higher.

Still pursuing the course, then, of this entity, the average mortal who falls asleep: this immediate precipitation of all the different elements of his being takes place, and is referred to symbolically as the struggle in the *Kama-loka* — not dissimilar to the struggle and ordeal of the passing from the physical body. It is a drawing apart of that which has been held together for a whole incarnation. Now, assuming that there is enough in the higher part of the human, thinking principle, enough of higher emotion and higher thoughts, when the drawing apart is completed, the lower part immediately crystallizes into an elementary — a shell — which pursues its own course ultimately to disintegration and falling apart of the elements that made up this entity. But the Higher part, what happens to it? Does it become conscious immediately? No. It goes into that state which is exactly

analogous to the pre-natal state of a child of human parents — into a gestation state — see how nature repeats itself. And there after resting asleep, growing and preparing, the entity finally at the end of this period of gestation, awakes and becomes conscious. But it becomes conscious at the period of its first conscious memories of its child state at the beginning of the last incarnation. And so it begins life over again in a kind of ideal Paradise, surrounded with its parents, with its brothers and sisters, and those that loved it on earth; it lives there, and grows from infancy, through youth, adulthood, old age, going through all the spiritual experiences and working them out in absolute and complete bliss, resting in the bosom, as it were, of its own Christ principle — its own Lord of Splendor and Light — its own Inner God.

Necessarily there is a term — there comes an end to this experience of the Ego in the Heaven-world. There will come a time when the spiritual store of energies which have given it birth there and kept it there during all this time, become completely assimilated — just as there comes a period when you completely assimilate the meal you took a few hours ago; and then the entity immediately begins to descend — mind you it is a gradual process: as the birth and awaking to consciousness there was gradual, so is the re-descent gradual. Nevertheless the store of karmic energies on the opposite side of the scale, i. e. the evil tendencies, thoughts, desires, wrong actions, and their consequences which everyone creates to a greater or less degree during his passage through earth life — we have not referred to this so far. What do you think happens to these? Very important for us, for the Theosophic teaching is that there is no hell, no punishment in the ordinary religious understanding of the term, for the entity after death, i. e., for the average people; but this bundle of tendencies awaits the redescending ego after its

experience in the Heaven world, awaits it, according to the occult teaching "at the threshold of Devachan"; and then, as the entity descends, putting down the ray of its energy into the lower planes, it then by attraction, magnetic affinity, re-collects the very matter — yes, the material substance — of which its lower vehicles were composed in the past life. It also gradually re-clothes itself with those old tendencies, the effects of which it will have to work out in the succeeding earth life. So that the hell the Theosophist believes in is veritably here. Here we have to work out all karmic retribution, all those things that we did that were contrary to that Law of Unity and Harmony of the Universe.

There are only two immortal feelings, love and hatred — and that is a strange statement, is it not? You can be immortal in love, and you can also be relatively immortal in hatred. You can ally yourselves with the forces that make for regeneration: wisdom, understanding, life and progress; or you can identify yourselves with the forces of death and destruction and hatred and evil. These are the world's eternal ways. Verily, "he who holds the keys to the secrets of Death is possessed of the keys of life." Yes indeed, if we understand these teachings correctly, we have the key that will enable us to realize how to live now that we may enter on to the Path of Light, not only here during this life, but enter into those regions of bliss in the higher worlds, that will enable us to be merged in that Universal Over-Soul in which we know that we live and move and have our being. These are a few of the ideas that you will find worked out in very great detail in *The Mahatma Letters*.

Spiritualism and Psychic Phenomena

Our subject tonight: "Spiritualism and Psychic Phenomena," is one of a good deal of complexity, and we shall have to see whether, with the help of those who are met together here, and

their interaction with the thought of the lecturer, we may gain some illumination and understanding of this very difficult and rather thorny problem. I have been greatly perplexed, as I was trying to prepare what I had to say to you, to know how best to tackle the subject, for the amount of teaching in *The Mahatma Letters* upon this subject is vast, and in a short hour we can only select a few passages and try to elucidate them.

The whole of the Theosophical philosophy rests on a few axiomatic propositions, and we will always be going astray and losing the very essence of the subject that we are trying to understand if we do not approach every branch and department of our Teachings by seeking the appropriate key in the shape of one of the Fundamental axioms, in order that in the light that this particular key gives us we can understand more clearly the whole problem. These Fundamental Propositions are a kind of frame of reference to which we relate every idea and teaching of the philosophy; and once you have made the effort to acquire at least some understanding of that framework, you will have a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction and far more profit in your studies.

I am going to read you those propositions, which seem to me an appropriate and essential part of our subject this evening. If you turn to the twelfth chapter of *Isis Unveiled*, Volume 11, page 588, you will find there the following:

6th. Mediumship is the opposite of adeptship; the medium is the passive instrument of foreign influences, the adept actively controls himself and all inferior potencies.

This Proposition goes right to the root of the problem of spiritualism and mediumship.

7th. All things that ever were, that are, or that will be,

having their record upon the astral light, or tablet of the unseen universe, the initiated adept, by using the vision of his own spirit, can know all that has been known or can be known.

You see the significance of that: if everything and every event that has occurred in the world's history, has its record in the memory of nature itself, and that the unveiled spiritual perception of an Adept Seer can penetrate to it and read it, why you have the explanation of a large part also of the phenomena of spiritualism; for in the lower levels of this memory of nature — the Astral Light as it is called — it is possible for the uninitiated medium, by the extraordinary powers and perceptions that are inherent in the astral body of these people, to reflect — it is true in a distorted way, but nevertheless to reflect — a great deal that is stored in the Astral Light. Furthermore the astral body of the medium is capable of reading, or reflecting, the record that each man carries about in himself. Every one of us has an invisible magnetic sphere or aura, in which is recorded the whole of every incident and event through which we have passed during this earth-life. An ordinary clairvoyant can read, more or less accurately, most of the things that people go to spiritualistic seances to obtain some knowledge of.

8th. Races of men differ in spiritual gifts as in color, stature, or any other external quality; among some peoples seership naturally prevails, among others mediumship. Some are addicted to sorcery, and transmit its secret rules of practice from generation to generation, with a range of psychical phenomena, more or less wide, as the result.

Those are the Fundamental Propositions that I would ask you just to bear in mind as we proceed.

Note the distinction. The Theosophist is interested in spiritual

Seership, or Mediatorship, which can only be evolved from above below, within without. The powers of the medium are developed from below, but these faculties of mediumship deleterious as they are, can be developed by almost anybody who is willing to pay the penalty of exchanging the spiritual, intellectual, and moral, for the psychic and material.

Is the Theosophical Movement absolutely opposed to the Spiritualistic Movement, or are there points of contact? What was the situation at the time the "Mahatma Letters" were written? You will find that there was to some extent a sympathetic "rapport" between at least the beginning of the work of H. P. B. and the Spiritualistic Movement, and the reason for that will perhaps be found in the following sentence taken from p. 35:

The only problem to solve is the practical one of how best to promote the necessary study, and give to the spiritualist movement a needed upward impulse.

There is no antagonism there. There is a recognition that the vast numbers and millions of human beings who make up what is called the Spiritualistic Movement are those at least who are not primarily interested in materialism as it is ordinarily understood. On the contrary they believe in forces and powers beyond the comprehension and the activity of the outward physical, objective, thinking man. They seek to explain the various phenomena which take place through mediums and Spiritualistic seances, in terms of the supposed communication between such mediums and those who have passed beyond physical life and entered the realm of the Beyond. They are our allies to the extent that they recognise survival as a fact in Nature. We on the other hand can philosophically and logically bring forward far more convincing evidence — and indeed proof — that survival is a fact, than any medium in any seance.

Where the Theosophist joins issue with the great majority of these psychic, and therefore materialistic, phenomena of the Spiritualistic Movement is in the enormous amount of harm that is done not only to those who produce them here, but to the far greater harm that it does to those entities who have left earth life and who are — thousands of them — drawn back into the vortex of the Spiritualistic seance when they should be left in peace to pursue their way according to the plan that Nature has evolved and laid down for their protection. It is in this fact that must be understood the real and powerful opposition of the Theosophical Movement to all those practices which may be called "The Worship of the Dead." This evocation of the phantoms of the departed is an evil practice. In the East they speak of it as "Bhuta worship" or Devil worship. Why? Simply because it is impossible, owing to the way the Inner Worlds are constructed, for anything other than the *Kama-rupic* shell to communicate through a medium with those it has left behind on earth. Because there is nothing spiritual in such an ex-human entity the practice is referred to as Bhuta-worship. No purely Spiritual entity is able to descend and communicate with the earth through a medium, because the spheres they inhabit are too far apart.

In other words the Inner worlds that we are dealing with in relation to this physical objective plane may be symbolized as an elliptical orbit of existence separated by two foci, as every ellipse is, and these two foci do not approach each other, and they are represented by Spirit on the one hand and physical matter on the other, and the intermediate connecting conscious link is missing.

Now you will say to me "But all this sounds rather too sweeping in view of the undoubtedly genuine communications that are received from Spiritualistic sources every day of the week. Does the Theosophist deny the truth of every communication that comes through Spiritualistic sources? Well, let me say at once we

do not. We deal with facts — or try to — as they are. To show you what our attitude on this subject is, I am going to read you one or two passages that throw light on it. Listen to this, it comes from page 101 of *The Mahatma Letters*:

It is in this, during *such* a condition of complete *Maya* that the Souls or astral Egos of pure, loving sensitives, labouring under the same illusion, think their loved ones come down to them on earth, while it is their own Spirits that are raised towards those in the Deva-Chan. Many of the *subjective* spiritual communications — most of them when the sensitives are pure minded — are real; but it is most difficult for the *uninitiated* medium to fix in his mind the true and correct pictures of what he sees and hears.

Again on page 255 you will find the statement that "no self-tutored seer or clairaudient ever saw or heard *quite* correctly." Continuing:

Some of the phenomena called psychography (though more rarely) are also real. The spirit of the sensitive getting odylised, so to say, by the aura of the Spirit in the Deva-Chan, becomes for a few minutes *that departed personality*, and writes in the hand writing of the latter, in his language and in his thoughts, as they were during his life time. The two spirits become blended in one; and, the preponderance of one over the other during such phenomena determines the preponderance of *personality* in the characteristics exhibited in such writings, and "trance speaking." What you call "rapport" is in plain fact an identity of molecular vibration between the astral part of the incarnate medium and the astral part of the disincarnate personality.

There you have two passages showing that communication is possible under certain conditions, and you will note what those

conditions are, viz., a pure, loving sensitive (not a paid medium). In another part there is a statement that the bond of love between the sensitive and the one that he seeks to communicate with is that which makes the communication possible, and more accurate and true; and so the consciousness of the sensitive has to be raised until it contacts the entity in its dream of bliss in the Devachan, and there he is in contact with the being that he loved in life, as distinct from the lower psychic and phenomenal contact with the spook of that departed entity which any medium in any kind of a Spiritualistic seance can evoke.

What are we coming to now? We are coming to the fact that the vehicles of consciousness through which a man expresses his lower thoughts, passions and desires are finally cast off by the ego in very much the same way as the body is thrown aside at death. These remains appear as a form bearing the exact shape of the man that you knew in life, and the medium, the clairvoyant, can see this kama-rupic shell. The more materialistic was the man, the more dense and perfect will be the form of the shell — a strange fact, but it is true. Just as any person who has the faculty of psychometry can take a piece of stone from some ancient monument and can tell you incidents that took place around that monument — in exactly the same way the medium can, by the peculiar faculty of the mediumistic temperament, galvanize into activity, just like an electric battery, the cells of memory inherent in the shell. Then, just like a phonograph record, it can be made to play, generally in terms of the personal recollections of his last life or existing in the mind of the sitters in the Spiritualistic seance, repeating the stories and incidents and so on that the personality had passed through. This, if you accept it, will explain the majority of the phenomena of Spiritualism in one shape or form or another.

Let me read you another passage (pp. 113-14), that will show you

what our attitude to Spiritualism is on the sympathetic or favorable side:

Anyhow it may show her that it is not against trite Spiritualism that we set ourselves, but only against indiscriminate mediumship and — physical manifestations, — materializations and trance-*possessions* especially. Could the Spiritualists be only made to understand the difference between *individuality* and *personality*, between individual and personal immortality and some other truths, they would be more easily persuaded that Occultists may be fully convinced of the *monad's* immortality, and yet deny that of the soul — the vehicle of the *personal Ego*; that they can firmly believe in, and themselves practice spiritual communications and intercourse with the *disembodied* Egos of the *Rupa-Loka*, and yet laugh at the insane idea of "shaking hands" with a "Spirit"!; that finally, that as the matter stands, it is the Occultists and the Theosophists who are true Spiritualists, while the modern sect of that name is composed simply of *materialistic* phenomenalists.

That again clears the ground as to what our attitude in this matter is.

Now I want to turn to an aspect of the problem that we have so far left out in the last lecture that was given on the life after death, and that is in connexion with the exceptions to the general rule. So far we have been considering the difficulty that the Spiritualistic phenomenalist will have in reaching to the real entity. There is no point whatsoever in communicating with the spook. You can do it if you want to, but what interest is there in speaking to an empty shell, a phonographic record? — nothing. It is only the indwelling Spiritual flame of love and intelligence, and

all the beautiful human qualities that you love in a man or woman. That is what we love, and it is that which is entirely lacking in the shell or spook, so why worry about it?

Are all entities necessarily so difficult to reach? Unfortunately not — and I say that advisedly — unfortunately not. There are two classes of entities that are relatively easy to reach, and those are the victims of suicide and accidental or violent death. This matter is dealt with in a particularly illuminating way on pp. 109-110 as follows:

. . . we have lost sight of: the *suicides* and those *killed by accident*. Both kinds can communicate, and both have to pay dearly for such visits. And now I have again to explain what I mean. Well, this class is the one that the French Spiritists call — "*les Esprits Souffrants*." They are an exception to the rule, as they have to remain within the earth's attraction, and in its atmosphere — the *Kama-Loka* — till the very last moment of what would have been the natural duration of their lives. In other words, that particular wave of life-evolution must run on to its shore. But it is a sin and cruelty to revive their memory and intensify their suffering by giving them a chance of living an artificial life; a chance to *overload their Karma*, by tempting them into open doors, viz., mediums and sensitives, for they will have to pay roundly for every such pleasure. I will explain. The *suicides*, who, foolishly hoping to escape life, found themselves still alive, — have suffering enough in store for them from that very life. Their punishment is in the intensity of the latter. Having lost by the rash act their seventh and sixth principles, though not forever, as they can regain both — instead of accepting their punishment, and taking their chances of redemption, they are often made *to regret life* and tempted to regain a

hold upon it by sinful means. In the *Kama-Loka*, the land of intense desires, they can gratify their earthly yearnings but through a *living* proxy; and by so doing, at the expiration of the natural term, they generally lose their *monad* for ever. As to the victims of accident — these fare still worse. Unless they were so good and pure, as to be drawn immediately within the Akasic *Samadhi*, i. e., to fall into a state of quiet slumber, a sleep full of rosy dreams, during which, they have no recollection of the accident, but move and live among their familiar friends and scenes, until their natural life-term is finished, when they find themselves born in the Deva-Chan — a gloomy fate is theirs. Unhappy shades, if sinful and sensual they wander about — (not *shells*, for their connection with their two higher principles is not quite broken) — until their death hour comes. Cut off in the full flush of earthly passions which bind them to familiar scenes, they are enticed by the opportunities which mediums afford, to gratify them vicariously. They are the *Pisachas*, the *Incubi*, and *Succubi* of mediaeval times. The demons of thirst, gluttony, lust, and avarice, — elementaries of intensified craft, wickedness and cruelty; provoking their victims to horrid crimes, and revelling in their commission! They not only ruin their victims, but these psychic vampires, borne along by the torrent of their hellish impulses, at last, at the fixed close of their natural period of life — they are carried out of the earth's aura into regions where for ages they endure exquisite suffering and end with entire destruction.

And on page 113:

And woe to those whose *Trishna* will attract them to mediums, and woe to the latter, who tempt them with such an easy *Upadana*. For in grasping them, and satisfying their

thirst for life, the medium helps to develop in them — is in fact the cause of — a new set of *Skandhas*, a new body, with far worse tendencies and passions than was the one they lost. All the future of this new body will be determined thus, not only by the *Karma* of demerit of the previous set or group but also by that of the new set of the future being. Were the mediums and Spiritualists but to know, as I said, that with every new "angel guide" they welcome with rapture, they entice the latter into an *Upadana* which will be productive of a series of untold evils for the new Ego that will be born under its nefarious shadow, and that with every seance — especially for materialization — they multiply the causes for misery, causes that will make the unfortunate Ego fail in his spiritual birth, or be reborn into a worse existence than ever — they would, perhaps, be less lavishing their hospitality.

And now, you may understand why we oppose so strongly Spiritualism and mediumship.

There you have the essence of the subject. We have to remember that Theosophic teaching is not an arbitrary system of thought based upon any one person's say-so, or the imagination of one or two clairvoyants, but on the contrary is the fruit of literally the experiences of thousands of generations of initiated Adept Seers — not mediums — and the truths that we have been discussing tonight, however imperfectly expounded to you, nevertheless are an attempt to explain the actual laws, the actual facts that underlie the whole vast question of psychic phenomena.

It would take days and weeks, I suggest, to endeavor to classify the innumerable classes and the extent of psychic phenomena. It is just endless. The general laws that have been stated are more than sufficient to cover the different categories, and I can truly

say that I never yet heard of an example of Spiritualistic or psychic phenomena which could not be explained by one or other of the laws that we find in Theosophical teaching. Although these teachings were given round about 1880-1884, nevertheless they are just as true today as they were then. We do not have to retreat from our position. The only thing that we may like to do is to use more modern examples of what happens in the Spiritualist Movement, because that Movement is changing. The Theosophical Movement does not — it only grows — the genuine Theosophical Movement extends its membership and so on, but it does not alter its position. Why? Because it is rooted in the very laws of nature, and if it were not so rooted it would be a sham and a fraud and a farce, and that is a fact. If Theosophic truth is not more permanent than the findings of orthodox science it is useless. The latter constantly has to change its position, not only from century to century, but from decade to decade and less, as further researches prove that what they thought true yesterday is no longer true today. But note this: no living person (or dead one either) has ever been successfully able to challenge a single statement of H. P. B.'s Teaching; and when you think of the voluminous nature of her writings, it says something for the titanic intellect that she possessed, and it says something for the sublime system of thought that was able to be so consistent with all the guns of materialistic trained upon her work; with all the opposition of the vested interests of the orthodox religions when they came up against the living and dynamic truths of the Esoteric philosophy, not one of them has ever been able to prove her wrong in a single essential particular. Try to do it with an open mind; try to sink Blavatsky's philosophy; try to knock a hole in the bottom of it. I hope you will try, because it must end in your being won over, convinced by your own efforts of the truth of what she taught. There is no compromise possible in the attitude of genuine Theosophists, who are seeking to spread wider and

wider the knowledge of these truths. At most we can say, "Here is the teaching that has brought us light and inspiration and an ever-growing knowledge; and those who want it can take it from us if they will accept it, free, gratis and for nothing; and for those who oppose it, who will not take it, who will do everything they can to show these teachings in a wrong light, I would ask them to listen to these few closing words, where Master K. H. shows what Their attitude is to the world as a whole in their Centennial effort to enlighten the Western races. He says, pages 50-1:

If, for generations we have "shut out the world from the Knowledge of our Knowledge," it is on account of its absolute unfitness; and if, notwithstanding proofs given, it still refuses yielding to evidence, then will we at the End of this cycle retire into solitude and our kingdom of silence once more. . . . We have offered to exhume the primeval strata of man's being, his basic nature, and lay bare the wonderful complications of his inner Self — something never to be achieved by physiology or even psychology in its ultimate expression — and demonstrate it scientifically. It matters not to them, if the excavations be so deep, the rocks so rough and sharp, that in diving into that, to them, fathomless ocean, most of us perish in the dangerous exploration; for it is we who were the divers and the pioneers and the men of science have but to reap where we have sown. It is our mission to plunge and bring the pearls of Truth to the surface; theirs — to clean and set them into scientific jewels. And, if they refuse to touch the ill-shapen, oyster-shell, insisting that there is, nor *cannot* be any precious pearl inside it, then shall we once more wash our hands of my responsibility before human-kind. For countless generations hath the adept builded a fane of imperishable rocks, a giant's Tower of INFINITE THOUGHT,

wherein the Titan dwelt, and will yet, if need be, dwell alone, emerging from it, but at the end of every cycle, to invite the elect of mankind to co-operate with him and help in his turn enlighten superstitious man. And we will go on in that periodical work of ours; we will not allow ourselves to be baffled in our philanthropic attempts until that day when the foundations of a new continent of thought are so firmly built that no amount of opposition and ignorant malice guided by the Brethren of the Shadow will be found to prevail.

On Accidents and Suicides

QUESTION: The teachings in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in regard to accidents and violent deaths, as published in the July *English Theosophical Forum* seem to me to be like some of the "hard sayings" of the New Testament, and very difficult to understand. (a) Are we to understand that the victims of great wars, earthquakes, cataclysms, etc., are to be included in the category of accidents and violent deaths? Surely the great warrior who suffers a violent death through the purest motives, thus giving his life for his country or kindred, would not come under this awful doom after bodily death.

(b) Again, Is the word "accident" in such cases perhaps a misnomer, and that really there are no accidents, all being the result of karmic law and past incarnations

(c) How does one explain or account for the suicide of the Roman soldiers who fell on their swords (as an honorable way out) when the battle went against them?

ANSWER: (a and b) Undoubtedly those who suffer death prematurely as the result of wars, earthquakes and cataclysms

must be considered, from the point of view of the teaching in *The Mahatma Letters*, as coming in the category of "accidents." This, of course, does not mean that the unfortunate event was in any way contrary to the karma of the individual, but simply to the fact that death was not self-inflicted. The questioner is rightly appalled at the responsibility of the human race for the loss of life inflicted by one nation on another in war; but we can each of us take some comfort from the fact that it is impossible for anyone to suffer death by violence unless such is included in his own karmic destiny, even when that destiny is over-shadowed or dominated by a calamity coming under the category of "national karma." Furthermore, in the instance quoted in this question of a soldier who gives his life for his country with the purest of motives, the merciful and compassionate side of the law inevitably operates for his protection, and, other things being equal, the element of self-sacrifice involved will ensure that he lives out the unexpired term of what would have been his normal expectation of life in the higher regions of the Kama-loka, in a state of quiet slumber, full of pleasant dreams, with no recollection of the circumstances that brought about his death, until he finds himself reborn in the Devachan.

There is nothing hard or terrible about such a fate; but obviously the situation is not so satisfactory for those who die in battle full of hatred and enmity, and in the full tide of earthly passions. The teaching of *The Mahatma Letters* in this connexion serves not only as a warning, but a wholesome corrective and inspiration to right living whilst we still have the opportunity.

(c) This question is not quite so simple, as the answer must necessarily depend largely upon circumstances, and the customs and traditions of the particular nation. For example, in the Great War of 1914-1918 there was no moral stigma upon the soldiers of any nation who found themselves taken prisoner, and it would

seem that such individuals would be going against karmic law if they were to take their own lives to avoid the penalties of defeat.

The Psychology of Chelaship

Friends: I am sure you will bear with me tonight if I seem not very intelligent. I have been rather "under the weather" all the week, and I really have not been able — I doubt whether I shall be able, to do tonight what I really set out to do. At any rate I have tried to find you some of the passages that may perhaps not be familiar to all of you in the book called *The Mahatma Letters*, as showing some of the psychological aspects of that mysterious "path" called the path of Chelaship, by which is meant the state of being that a student of these ancient mystery Teachings enters into when he reaches the point in his own inner development where, having transcended at least to a certain required degree the limitations of the lower personality, he reaches that condition of inner illumination that fits him in his inner egoic entity to enter into direct communication with those higher instructors of the Esoteric circles who are called the Mahatmas, or the Masters of Wisdom.

As you will see as these readings unfold tonight — at least I hope you will, if I have chosen the right ones — the Masters are concerned not really with the external personalities of those who become their agents, either publicly, or in secret dwelling with them in their own retreats; but, as they told A. P. Sinnett, and even Hume, they are concerned with the actions of the exterior man only when those actions affect beneficially, or, as sometimes happens, for evil, the interior man, the Real Ego, the Real Entity. When this latter becomes affected, then, once such an individual has entered into the relationship of an accepted Chela of the Masters, they are bound to take-note of those particular actions. Where the Real Ego is not affected by outer action, they say: Do

what you like, think what you like; act what you like in your exterior personality.

Now I will read from page 259, and I think I will read the greater part of this, which covers so many of the particular aspects of Chelaship that I want to call to your attention:

You must thoroughly put aside the personal element if you would get on with occult study and — for a certain time — even with himself [K. H.]. Realize, my friend, that the social affections have little, if any, control over any true adept in the performance of his duty. In proportion as he rises towards perfect adeptship the fancies and antipathies of his former self are weakened: (as K. H. in substance explained to you) he takes all mankind into his heart and regards them in the mass. Your case is an exceptional one. You have *forced* yourself upon him, and stormed the position, by the very violence and intensity of your feeling for him — and once he accepted he has to bear the consequences in the future. Yet it cannot be a question with him what the visible Sinnett may be — what his impulses, his failures or successes in his world, his diminished or undiminished regard for him. With the "visible" one we have nothing to do. He is to us only a veil that hides from profane eyes that other *ego* with whose evolution we are concerned. In the external *rupa* do what you like, think what you like: only when the effects of that voluntary action are seen on the body of our correspondent — is it incumbent upon us to notice it.

One of the great values of a book like *The Mahatma Letters* is that if we study it in the way that we are expected to study it, in direct application to ourselves, we find on almost every page and every line some little photograph, as it were, of some type of event or

incident with which we may be bound up and connected at any moment in our relationship with the Theosophical work; and therefore we are not so much concerned that it was Mr. Sinnett who did certain things, or Hume who did certain things, because we recognise that they are things that every individual to a greater or less degree either falls into doing, or may be tempted to do, or we may come into contact with others who are doing the very identical things that these early students of Theosophy did. It will show to us, by giving us a certain warning, as well as information, how to observe ourselves, and how to try to conduct ourselves in the extraordinary circumstances that any would-be Chela of the Masters is bound to find himself in directly he takes up serious work in this world of Theosophy. We simply cannot escape it; and if we study the book in that way, well then it simply becomes a perfect mine of information.

Here is a passage that throws a tremendous lot of light on just the little day to day incidents, and the attitude we ought to take towards them:

We are neither pleased nor displeased because you did not attend the Bombay meeting. If you *had* gone, it would have been better for your "merit": as you did not go you lost that little point. I could and had no right to influence you any way — precisely because you are no *chela*. It was a trial, a very little one, tho' it seemed important enough to you to make you think of "wife and child's interests." You will have many such; for though you should never be a *chela*, still we do not give confidences even to correspondents and "*proteges*" whose discretion and moral pluck have not been well tested. You are the victim of *maya*. It will be a long struggle for you to tear away the "cataracts" and see things as they are. Hume Sahib is a *maya* to you as great as any. You see only his mounds of flesh and bones, his official

personality, his intellect and influences. What are these, pray, to his true self that you *cannot* see, do what you may? What has his ability to shine in a *Durbar* or as the leader of a scientific society to do with his fitness for occult research, or his trustworthiness to keep our secrets? If we wanted anything about our lives and work to be known is not the *Theosophist* columns open to us? Why should we dribble facts thro' him, to be dressed for the public meal with a currie of nauseous doubts and biting sarcasm fit to throw the public stomach into confusion. To him there is nothing sacred, either within, or without occultism. . . . No Sahib; the *outside* Hume is as different (and superior) from the inside Hume, as the outside Sinnett is different (and inferior) to the nascent inside "protege." Learn that and sit the latter to watching the editor, least — he play him a bad trick some day. Our greatest trouble is to teach pupils not to be befooled by appearances.

As you have already been notified by Damodar thro' the D--, I did not call you a chela — examine your letter to assure yourself of it — I but jokingly asked O. the question whether he recognised in you the stuff of which chelas are made. You saw only that Bennett had unwashed hands, uncleaned nails and used coarse language and had — to you — a generally unsavoury aspect. But if *that* sort of thing is your criterion of moral excellence or potential power, how many adepts or wonder producing *lamas* would pass your muster? This is part of your blindness. Were he to die this minute — and I'll use a Christian phraseology to make you comprehend me the better — few hotter tears would drop from the eye of the recording Angel of Death over other such ill-used men, as the tear Bennett would receive for his share. Few men have

suffered — and unjustly suffered — as he has; and as few have a more kind, unselfish and truthful a heart. That's all: and the unwashed Bennett is *morally* as far superior to the gentlemanly Hume as you are superior to your *Bearer*.

On another page Master K. H. says that Bennett is, unknown to himself "one of our Agents." That again gives us a clue: that it is possible to be an instrument of these conscious beings and really be unaware of it. Such an agent has to be one who is self-sacrificing, unselfish, engaged upon some humanitarian work, or at least some work in which the Masters themselves are for the time being taking a hand.

What H. P. B. repeated to you is correct: "the natives do not see Bennett's coarseness and K. H. is also a native." What did I mean? Why simply that our Buddha-like friend *can see thro' the varnish*, the grain of the wood beneath and inside the slimy, stinking oyster — the "priceless pearl within!" B---- is an honest man and of a sincere heart, besides being one of tremendous moral courage and a martyr to hoot. Such our K. H. loves — whereas he would have only scorn for a Chesterfield and a Grandison. I suppose that the stooping of the finished "gentleman" K. H., to the coarse fibred infidel Bennett is no more surprising than the alleged stooping of the "gentleman" Jesus to the prostitute Magdalene: There's a moral smell as well as a physical one good friend. See how well K. H. read your character when he would not send the Lahore youth to talk with you without a change of dress. The sweet pulp of the orange is *inside* the skin — Sahib: try to look inside boxes for jewels and do not trust to those lying in the lid. I say again: the man is an *honest* man and a very earnest one; not exactly an angel — they must be hunted for in fashionable churches, parties at aristocratical mansions,

theatres and clubs and such other *sanctums* — but as angels are outside our cosmogony we are glad of the help of even honest and plucky tho' dirty men.

All this I say to you without any malice or bitterness, as you erroneously imagine. You have made progress during the past year — and therefore nearer to us — hence I talk with you as with a friend, whom I hope of finally converting to some of our ways of thinking. Your enthusiasm for our study has a tinge of selfishness in it; even your feeling for K. H. has a mixed character: still *you are nearer*. Only you trusted Hume too much, and mistrusted him too late, and now his bad karma reacts upon yours, to your detriment. Your friendly indiscretions as to things confided to you alone, by H. P. B. — the cause — produces his rash publicities — the effect. This I am afraid must count against you. Be wiser hereafter. If our rule is to be chary of confidences it is because we are taught from the first that each man is personally responsible to the Law of Compensation for every word of his voluntary production. Mr. Hume would of course call it *jesuitry*.

Also try to break thro' that great maya against which occult students, the world over, have always been warned by their teachers — the hankering after phenomena. Like the thirst for drink and opium, it grows with gratification. The Spiritualists are drunken with it; they are thaumaturgic sots. If you cannot be happy without phenomena you will never learn our philosophy. If you want healthy, philosophic thought, and can be satisfied with such — let us correspond. I tell you a profound truth in saying that if you (like your fabled Shloma) but choose wisdom all other things will be added unto it — in time. It adds no force to our metaphysical truths that our letters are dropped from

space on to your lap or come under your pillow. If our philosophy is wrong a *wonder* will not set it right. Put that conviction into your consciousness and let us talk like sensible men. Why should we play with Jack-in-the-box; are not *our* beards grown.

And now it is time to put a stop to my abominable penmanship and so relieve you from the task. Yes — your "cosmogony"! Well, good friend, your Cosmology is — between the leaves of my *Khuddhaka Patha* — (my family Bible) and making a supreme effort I will try to answer it as soon as I am relieved, for just now I am on duty. It is a life long task you have chosen, and somehow instead of generalizing you manage always to rest upon those details that prove the most difficult to a beginner. Take warning my good Sahib. The task is difficult and K. H. in remembrance of old times, when he loved to quote poetry, asks me to close my letter with the following to your address:

"Does the road wind up-hill all the way?"

"Yes to the very end."

"Will the day's journey take the whole long day?"

"From morn to night, my friend."

Knowledge for the mind, like food for the body, is intended to feed and help to growth, but it requires to be well digested and the more thoroughly and slowly the process is carried out the better both for body and mind.

It is rather an interesting sentence in this last paragraph where the Master M. says that Sinnett always seems to stick on just the particular doctrines that prove the most difficult to beginners. I think we can derive a lesson from that, especially those who may be beginning their studies of Theosophy. I think a student finds

after a certain while, that as he reads and studies, an effect has been made upon his inner nature; he has become really inwardly convinced of the truths of these teachings. He finds knowledge beginning to spring naturally within him and his inner spiritual perceptions beginning to open. This brings definitely what Dr. de Purucker calls "proof — that which convinces."

Well, when you have reached that rather early stage you may still come across ideas and teachings and all sorts of things in the history of the Society, maybe in the human element of Theosophical organizations, that strike you as difficult to understand. I think we might take a word of encouragement from the Master here, and say to ourself "Let me put it to one side for the moment" and keep on going on — do not stop. The great difficulties occur when one stops on these sandbanks of thought, and cannot understand about it and doubts if anybody can. Sinnett got stuck on the doctrine of Cycles. He was only a student of three or four years, and the Master had to tell him that he himself had studied fifteen years before he was taught even the elements of that particular subject.

So do not let us worry if we do not understand some particular thing. Do not swallow it wholesale, and do not refuse to study any more. Put it aside, with faith in the Higher Self: that part of your being that after all is Truth itself, which has access to all the knowledge of the Universe. It knows; while the confusion is simply caused by the limitations of one's brain that is unable for the time being to make the effort of will, to rise into union with the Higher Self sufficiently to clarify the spiritual and intellectual vision.

I am choosing passages that will show the psychology of Chelaship rather than other aspects, because it is the psychology of ourselves that we have to deal with in our first steps. This was

written by K. H., one of the last letters that Sinnett received, I believe: (from page 351)

My poor, blind friend — you are entirely unfit for practical occultism! Its laws are immutable; and no one can go back on an order once given. She can send on no letters to me, and *the* letter ought to have been given to Mohini.

However, I have read it; and I am determined to make one more effort — (the last that I am permitted) — to open your inner intuition. If my voice, the voice of one who was ever friendly to you in the human principle of his being — fails to reach you as it has often before, then our separation in the present and for all times to come — becomes

unavoidable. It pains me for you, whose heart I read so well — every protest and doubt of your purely intellectual nature, of your cold Western reason — notwithstanding. But my first duty is to my Master. And duty, let me tell you, is for us, stronger than any friendship or even love; as without this abiding principle which is the indestructible cement that has held together for so many millenniums, the scattered custodians of nature's grand secrets — our Brotherhood, nay, our doctrine itself would have crumbled long ago into unrecognisable atoms. Unfortunately, however great your purely *human* intellect, your spiritual intuitions are dim and hazy, having been never developed. Hence, whenever you find yourself confronted by an apparent contradiction, by a difficulty, a kind of *inconsistency* of occult nature, one that is caused by our time honoured laws and regulations — (of which you know nothing, for your time has not yet come) — forthwith your doubts are aroused, your suspicions bud out — and one finds that they have made mock at your better nature, which is finally crushed down by all these deceptive

appearances of outward things! You have not the faith required to allow your Will to arouse itself in defiance and contempt against your purely worldly intellect, and give you a better understanding of things hidden and laws unknown. You are unable I see, to force your better aspirations — fed at the stream of a real devotion to the Maya you have made yourself of me — (a feeling in you, that has always profoundly touched me) — to lift up the head against cold, *spiritually blind* reason; to allow your heart to pronounce loudly and proclaim that, which it has hitherto only been allowed to whisper: "Patience, patience. A great design has never been snatched at once." You were told, however, that the path to Occult Sciences has to be trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; that every new step in it leading to the final goal, is surrounded by pit-falls and cruel thorns; that the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and *conquer* the thousand and one furies who keep watch over its adamantine gates and entrance — furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy and finally Temptation — especially the latter; and that he, who would see *beyond* had to first destroy this living wall; that he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never failing determination and yet be meek and gentle, humble and have shut out from his heart every human passion, that leads to evil. Are you all this? Have you ever begun a course of training which would lead to it? No; you know it as I do. You are not born for it; nor are you in a position, — a family man with wife and child to support, with work to do — fitted in any way for the life of an ascetic, not even of a — Mohini. Then why should you complain that powers are not given you, that even *proof of our own powers* begins to fail you, etc.? True you have offered several times

to give up meat and drink, and I have refused. Since you cannot become a regular *chela* why should you? I thought you had understood all this long ago; that you had resigned yourself, satisfied to wait patiently for future developments and for my personal freedom. You know I was the only one to attempt and persevere in my idea of the necessity of, at least, a small reform, of however slight a relaxation from the extreme rigidity of our regulations if we would see European theosophists increase and work for the enlightenment and good of humanity. I failed in my attempt, as you know. All I could obtain was to be allowed to communicate with a few — you, foremost of all, since I had chosen you as the exponent of our doctrine that we had determined to give out to the world — to some extent at least. . . . Have you ever given a thought, or ever suspected the real reason of my failure? No; for you know nothing of the *ins* and outs of the work of karma — of the "side-blows" of this terrible Law. . . . And you are unable yet to realize, *why* we did this and that? Believe me that you will learn some day when you know better — *that it was all brought on BY YOURSELF.*

Now I wonder if you would like to have some short discussion on some of these matters, ask some questions, or what you like.

QUESTION: An individual might be the instrument through which the Masters might work without knowing it. I suppose no individual could be a definite Chela without knowing it?

ANSWER: I think that he could actually have reached that stage of becoming accepted and not actually know that he had been accepted; but I do think that he would have at least a consciousness of it, if you know what I mean. You see his inner development would have gone forward, and his own aspiration

and study and thought would have gone ahead to the point where he would be aware of certain things; but he might still have a doubt as to whether this particular final stage had been reached or not. I think it is possible. There are so many categories in these things: lay chelas, probationer and accepted and initiated chelas, etc.

QUESTION: You do not think it necessary for everybody to become a Chela? Is not there sufficient information obtainable for anybody to work off his own bat, without extraneous help? Is not that the normal course for humanity?

ANSWER: I am inclined to agree with you really. I think it is obvious that this is a special Path in a sense. The Theosophical Society, for example, has been stated not to be a manufactory for Adepts. It is not intended to be. It is intended to provide certain spiritual nourishment, certain philosophy, certain ethics, which will have a definitely accelerating effect upon those who study; and the main idea is inner soul growth. It is quite obvious that the range or scale that the Masters are working on is infinitely greater than the one we are accustomed to work upon. We have concern with only one life: they are entirely indifferent as to whether it takes one life or twenty to accomplish their ends. Nevertheless they are — what shall I say? — creating the causes which affect the soul of man, and this may not show and come to full fruition in the one life. Nevertheless there is a tremendous benefit that the race will experience as a result, for example, of the Theosophical Movement, when those egos who have taken its Teaching deep into their spiritual nature, come again into earth-life. Then I think we can see something happening!

You see, there is a sort of twofold process that goes on. We come into contact with Theosophy; we derive benefit, inspiration from it. Now what are we going to do about it? We are either grateful

or we are not. If it has really taken hold of us there can be no argument as to what our duty is to do. Then we must take our coats off so to speak, or put on the uniform of Theosophy, and get down to work. There are so many people who could be a splendid influence and example in the Theosophical Movement today, but who prefer not to soil their beautiful clothes and garments by contact with a Society and organization which is not fashionable or popular. And so they study by themselves. They have our books under their pillows at night, but they do not do a hand's turn towards reciprocating, even by a little, for that which has been poured out for them.

What I am concerned with are the tens of thousands of people who have *The Secret Doctrine*, of the thousands who have *The Mahatma Letters*, and who do not *work* for Theosophy. I tell you there are far more Theosophical students outside of the Societies today than inside, and this is a rotten situation.

After all, the works of H. P. B. — any one of the Theosophical books — have been produced by the sweat and labor in every case of members of the Theosophical Society. They have poured out their labor. H. P. B. gave everything she had; the same with Judge and K. T. and others who have passed on. Now if only the people who could help in this Work would come and give their services, and let it be known that they stood for Theosophy, that they believed in Theosophy, and that they were going to make this poor stumbling instrument really a success, our Cause would go forward. But so many of them think it entails some sort of sacrifice, in social and other matters, to be known as a Theosophist — that is what I mean!

QUESTION: Would Theosophy, correctly applied to the teachings of the New Testament, fully endorse and explain the teachings of Christ and the New Testament, and enable the

Ministers of the Church, for example, to stand up and refute the questioners who doubt the possibility of the miracles he performed, and so on?

ANSWER: I would say this: that a knowledge of Theosophy applied to the New Testament will confirm all that there is therein of Theosophy, in other words all that there is therein of the Teachings of the Avatara Jesus, which is by no means to say necessarily that everything in the New Testament owes its origin to the Ancient Wisdom. With a certain amount we would be prepared to agree, but a certain amount owes its origin to later interpretations, as has happened to every one of the Great Religions. They have all at some time had someone monkeying with the text. But there is not a great deal to grumble at in the teachings of the New Testament. There is some extremely high and pure Esoteric Theosophy too, because it is not written so that he who runs may read. It needs the key of Theosophy.

I imagine that the point of your comment was somewhat to the effect: Could we not do something to appeal to a Christian-minded world by showing this illumination of Theosophy in explanation of their own teachings? You see, H. P. B. frequently said that the day of Christianity was doomed, and there seems to have been hardly enough of the Teachings of the Master given to stand the demands made upon it by the modern world. After all, the very scanty teachings we find in the New Testament were only the product, supposedly, of two or three years' work, and none of them were written down at the time. They were handed on by word of mouth, and there is very little philosophy in it. There is a lot of ethics and practice, which we all need very much, and I think we could study it with a great deal of profit; but when all is said and done I do not think that there is enough there to meet the modern demands; and that is why some two thousand (nearly two thousand) years after the coming of the Avatara Jesus we

have this tremendous flood of Knowledge and Wisdom that was the mission of Blavatsky to bring. You have a new Messenger come to the world, and a new Teaching, a new presentation of Truth, not contradictory of any of the old Teachings, but taking you infinitely further. I do not think, somehow, that the line of effort is going to be along the way of regenerating to any extent the Christian field. I think — I only give my personal opinion — that as is happening today, innumerable Ministers are taking the teachings of Theosophy and proceeding to interpret their own teachings in terms of Theosophy, without acknowledging the source, to the great profit of their Sunday congregations! But I do not think they will make Christianity a success thereby. It is a form that seems to have served its purpose. But I really do think that we, living in a Christian world, should be well instructed in the Teachings of the New Testament.

QUESTION: You said there were thousands who had *The Mahatma Letters* and *The Secret Doctrine* not in the Society. Well, you see, those things give you plenty of knowledge, and don't you think the second step on the Path is not at all liked by the people? It is most unpopular.

ANSWER: I do not know. I have met some of these people, and I am also acquainted with the reasons that keep them out. I do think it is a mighty big problem, because if the convinced Theosophists in the world were to stand up, one and all, and say: "I am a Theosophist first" — and then took for the organization which has kept true to the light of H. P. B. — I tell you it would work a very big thing. We do not know but what that day may come, and personally I want to see it, because every one of us who has anything whatsoever to give to Theosophy — I do not mean to Theosophy, I mean to this Work — ought to be prepared to give it. We ought to be willing to dwell in it, with it, and sink or swim with it — accept the Karma of the group to which we

belong. That is the only criterion of our manhood or womanhood, otherwise it is taking, and giving nothing. Surely it must be so!

QUESTION: What are some of the reasons of those who refuse to become members?

ANSWER: They just do not like organizations; they have seen the tribulations — not of our Society, but another one; and they do not like the happenings. They do not want to be associated with it. Theosophy to that extent has got a bad name. A few things get around as having been done by someone who is a Theosophist, and then the reputation is gone; and that I think is the main trouble. They have become disappointed with organizations, and they have gone away from them.

I think that Theosophists have to realize that to make their Society attractive first means living Theosophy and doing Theosophy; and if we find a way of really making our Brotherhood a true Fellowship, spiritually speaking, the problem is solved, because obviously it is a very attractive thing to belong to; but if people can see that we do not do what we declare we are setting out to do, then they are not interested. I think this is probably the main key.

The Problem of Evil

In one of our recent studies we made an attempt to deal with the Theosophical teachings on the nature of God, and as to whether there existed, according to our philosophy, that which the theologians call a Personal God. You will remember our conclusion was that such a conception as the orthodox theological conception of an extra-cosmic deity was seen to be a philosophical absurdity, and that the Teachers who sent H. P. B. forth were endeavoring to cast their teachings on this vastly important subject in a form that would give a shock to the

preconceptions that we in the Western world have, based upon the dogmatic conceptions that we have been brought up under in our orthodox training. Closely related with the right understanding of the teachings about God, is the great mystery of the origin of evil — one of the most difficult philosophical problems, I suppose, that the mind of man can possibly tackle; one which it is utterly beyond me to understand completely; and I think the majority of Theosophical students would find a similar difficulty in putting into any comprehensible shape the immense amount of material that H. P. B. gave in *The Secret Doctrine* on such questions as Satan, the Curse, the Church doctrine of original sin, and so on.

I personally have never mastered all the infinite complexity of the relationship, for example, of Jehovah, Adam Kadmon, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and their relationship to the Twelve Tribes, and so on and so forth. It is most complicated. Therefore I will not attempt to do more tonight than to stay within the limits of those aspects of the teaching which one can make some kind of attempt to understand. In order to understand this problem of Evil, we shall have to use certain of what they call the Golden Keys, or the Seven jewels — those principal and fundamental doctrines of esotericism which really comprise in their full exposition, you may say, the whole fabric or groundwork of Theosophical teaching.

The particular jewels or Keys that we have to try to use are those of Reincarnation and Karma. These are the keys to an understanding of the problem of Evil. We are particularly concerned with the teaching as it is given in *The Mahatma Letters*. There is not a great deal of space devoted there to this subject; but what there is is pretty powerful. I am going to begin by reading you probably one of the most controversial letters that was ever given in the early days of the Movement. It is known as the letter

to the Theosophists of Prayag, and it gives us a number of very arresting statements on this subject of Evil, God, and a few other things.

First of all, I must say that this particular letter is signed by H. P. Blavatsky, addressed to the Prayag Theosophists, and purports to be a message or a resume of teaching given by Master M. to H. P. B. on this subject, to hand on to the Theosophists of that time. In the quotation, all remarks in parentheses are H. P. B.'s comments on the Master's words. He says (and this is his attitude to almost all orthodoxy):

What have we, the disciples of the true *Arhats*, of esoteric Buddhism and of Sang-gyas to do with the *Shasters* and Orthodox Brahmanism? There are 100 of thousands of Fakirs, Sannyasis and Saddhus leading the most pure lives, and yet being as they are, on the path of *error*, never having had an opportunity to meet, see or even hear of us. Their forefathers have driven away the followers of the only true philosophy upon earth away from India and now, it is not for the latter to come to them but to them to come to us if they want us.

The reference there is to the Hindus driving Gautama Buddha out of India.

Which of them is ready to become a Buddhist, a *Nastika* as they call us? None. Those who have believed and followed us have had their reward. Mr. Sinnett and Hume are exceptions. Their beliefs are no barrier to us for they have *none*.

This is interesting, showing that blind belief is not a necessary or a right approach to the study of the Divine Wisdom. An open mind, yes; purity of heart and motive, also yes; but blind credulity

or belief or slavish dependence upon external authority? No!

They may have had influences around them, bad magnetic emanations the result of drink, Society and promiscuous physical associations (resulting even from shaking hands with impure men) but all this is physical and material impediments which with a little effort we could counteract and even clear away without much detriment to ourselves.

You may think it is irrelevant, but note the comparison that he is immediately going to draw from that:

Not so with the magnetism and invisible results proceeding from erroneous and sincere beliefs. Faith in the Gods and God, and other superstitions attracts millions of foreign influences, living entities and powerful agents around them, with which we would have to use more than ordinary exercise of power to drive them away. We do not choose to do so. We do not find it either necessary or profitable to lose our time waging war to the unprogressed *Planetaries* who delight in personating gods and sometimes well known characters who have lived on earth.

I think one of the most striking phrases is this: "erroneous and sincere." If we put this together with another passage in which he says "There is no more potent barrier to arriving at the Truth than a sincere and erroneous belief," it is a thing that rather shocks us. Sincerity by itself is nothing, carries us nowhere. It is, of course, an indispensable necessity, a *sine qua non* to any progress; because obviously its opposite, hypocrisy, is something which will be a barrier to anybody who seeks Truth; but the mere fact that a person holds certain ideas with sincerity is no excuse if, for example, those ideas are destructive. This is something that we need, I think, to pay a certain amount of attention to.

There are Dhyan-Chohans and "Chohans of Darkness," not what they term *devils* but imperfect "Intelligences" who have never been born on this or any other earth or sphere no more than the "Dhyan Chohans" have and who will never belong to the "builders of the Universe," the pure Planetary Intelligences, who preside at every *Manvantara* while the Dark Chohans preside at the *Pralayas*. Explain this to Mr. Sinnett (I CAN'T) — tell him to read over what I said to them in the few things I have explained to Mr. Hume; and let him remember that as all in this universe is contrast (I cannot translate it better) so the light of the Dhyan Chohans and their pure intelligence is contrasted by the "*Ma-Mo* Chohans" — and their destructive intelligence. These are the gods the Hindus and Christians and Mahomed and all others of bigoted religions and sects worship; and so long as *their* influence is upon their devotees we would no more think of associating with or counteracting them in their work than we do the Red-Caps on earth whose evil results we try to palliate but whose work we have no right to meddle with so long as they do not cross *our* path. (You will not understand this, I suppose. But think well over it and you will. M. means here, that they have no right or even power to go against the natural or that work which is prescribed to each class of beings or existing things by the law of nature.

In other words, it is perfectly all right for the tiger to kill and the bird of prey to seek its food. Nature does not hold them in any way criminally responsible. The Law of Retribution or Nemesis does not overtake them for exercising their natural function.

The Brothers, for instance could *prolong* life but they could not *destroy* death, not even for themselves. They can to a degree palliate evil and relieve suffering; they could not

destroy evil.

The Masters themselves, for instance, we are told, live an inconceivably long time, even centuries; but they cannot conquer death — that is, for their physical bodies. Death is not regarded as an evil at all, but merely as a liberator, opening a door into a further progression and to a return to earth. Actually, they conquer death by achieving their immortality, but as far as the body is concerned, they can do no more than prolong its life. Similarly, they can to a degree palliate suffering, but they could not destroy evil.

No more can the Dhyan Chohans impede the work of the Mamo Chohans, for *their* Law is *darkness, ignorance, destruction* etc., as that of the former is Light, knowledge and creation. The Dhyan Chohans answer to *Buddh*, Divine Wisdom and Life in blissful knowledge, and the Ma-mos are the personification in nature of Shiva, Jehovah and other invented monsters with Ignorance at their tail.

Now we have to make some kind of effort to understand this point of view about the psychic and spiritual harm that dependence upon what he describes as God and Gods does to the human individual. Remember first of all that he is writing to Easterners — to Hindus, whose whole outlook has become degenerate by belief in the crores of gods in the Hindu Pantheon, gods propitiated, according to the instruction of the priesthood, by all kinds of ceremonial rites, and by the liberal handing over of large sums of money to the priests, and so on. It is from this point of view, I think, that the Master is writing: the dependence upon ceremonial rites as a means of purification, the dependence upon any other human being — be he priest or any other — to intercede for you that you may be saved from the result of your own transgressions. The essence of it is that in looking outside

yourself to an external deity or to the lesser beings, called the gods in this sense of the term, the individual attracts around him hosts of unprogressed planetary beings of one sort or another (and they can be very much below the level of human beings) who thus masquerade with all kinds of high-sounding names and titles, leading their victims to do all sorts of rather ridiculous things, as the history of the Spiritualist Movement has shown.

There is a passage in *The Secret Doctrine*, it is only a few lines on page 389 of Vol. 2, where H. P. B. says:

There is no Devil, no Evil, outside mankind to produce a Devil. Evil is a necessity in, and one of the supporters of the manifested universe. It is a necessity for progress and evolution, as night is necessary for the production of Day, and Death for that of Life -- that man may live for ever.

Elsewhere she gives an illustration of a flower or a plant that is bathed during the daytime in the scorching heat of the sun, but the night-time is an absolute necessity for the life of the plant. Under cyclic law night follows day, death follows birth, darkness follows light, and light follows darkness, for ever and ceaselessly.

Let us try to look at this problem of evil for a moment from the Cosmic point of view. The believers in a personal God must necessarily believe in a personal Devil — they call it Satan, the Adversary, the Evil One — an entity which I suppose every sincere Christian or Roman Catholic would believe in quite definitely. The Theosophical teaching simply has no place for either of these two entities at all. It proceeds to show that Light or Spirit fructifies matter and brings forth the Universe. All beings come into existence, not at the same level, but at whatever level they left off at the close of their last existence. Even at the commencement of the Universe the germs or seeds of these entities that existed in past Manvantaras come over with their

potentialities at this, that or the other stage of unfoldment and development. Now the Manifested Universe, which is a material phenomenon — that is to say it is built of substance or matter — is obviously composed of a graded series of beings from the lowest forms of life such as those you find, for example, in the mineral Kingdom, up to the highest God or Dhyan-Chohan or Planetary Spirit that you can conceive of. Now the point, as I see it, that we have to grasp in order to understand something of the problem of Evil, is that the higher Spiritual beings are the motivators, as it were, those who supply the energy, the direction and in certain rungs of the Hierarchy of Being even supply the Government — the external government — of the Planet. But all the spiritual beings have to work through lower beings, and the lower beings through lower beings still, in exactly the same way as the Spirit in us has to manifest through the vehicles of matter of the personality.

Now then, Evil can be understood as the shadow of Light. Our personalities, what are these but the shadows of the Light within? We have to have personalities in order to express ourselves through and contact the sphere of matter in this world! Evil comes about as the sum total of the strivings of all the personalities in the Cosmos: beings whose consciousness is embodied in *personas*, masks, and more or less buried there — not aware of the Light. It is only by entering on the Path of Light which leads to Knowledge and Wisdom and union with the Light, that they cease to be in conflict with other beings. Then they cease to recognise Evil at all. Evil simply is the result of not understanding the Law. Human beings who do not practice the first law of the Universe, which is that of harmony in their relationship with their fellows, are generating Evil from the point of view of this philosophy. Then Karma steps in — Karma-Nemesis in fact — and brings them suffering as inevitably as the

wheel of the ox-cart follows the hoofs of the ox that draws it, to use the words of the Buddha. This suffering does not come as a punishment, but simply as the natural result of the performance of the deed which upsets the balance and harmony in that particular sphere of life.

I want to read you some passages from *The Secret Doctrine* about this, because they are intimately connected with a doctrine so very important to the Theosophical Movement: the doctrine or the principle of Brotherhood. In a little while I shall read you a passage from *The Mahatma Letters* which states that the origin of Evil, or two-thirds of the causes of evil that beset humanity, is to be found in various existing forms of orthodox religions, and the Sacerdotal castes, the Priesthood of the Churches, in the sense — I can only give you my understanding, as I tried to explain just now — in the sense that it *kills man's own self-reliance*. This is the main point.

Now let us turn to page 642, Vol. I of *The Secret Doctrine*:

KARMA-NEMESIS is the creator of nations and mortals, but once created, it is they who make of her either a fury or a rewarding Angel.

What exactly is the connexion between that and the other statement I am going to read you in a little while, that two-thirds of the evils are caused by the Sacerdotal caste of the priesthood of the Churches? If you put the two together, remembering Katherine Tingley's statement that unbrotherliness is the insanity of the age, I think we have got the key to our problem. The whole purpose of the Theosophical Movement is thrown into confusion, in fact it fails of its purpose, if we do not understand what is meant by harmony in this sense. See what the Master says here — or H. P. B. it is writing:

This state will last till man's spiritual intuitions are fully opened, which will not happen before we fairly cast off our thick coats of matter; until we begin acting from *within*, instead of ever following impulses from *without*; namely, those produced by our physical senses and gross selfish body. Until then the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony — a Brotherhood IN ACTU, and *altruism* not simply in name. The suppression of one single bad *cause* will suppress not one, but a variety of bad effects. And if a Brotherhood or even a number of Brotherhoods may not be able to prevent nations from occasionally cutting each other's throats — still unity in thought and action, and philosophical research into the mysteries of being, will always prevent some, while trying to comprehend that which has hitherto remained to them a riddle, from creating additional causes in a world already so full of woe and evil. (p. 644)

If evil comes from human action, and the human action comes from an identification of man's consciousness with his vehicles, the matter of which he is composed, we understand Katherine Tingley's further injunction — I think it is an amazingly significant statement: "If you want to conquer yourselves you have to unite in brotherhood. You cannot do it by yourselves." I believe that to be true. There is no success in the study of occult science except in a spiritual brotherhood, where men and women act together in true spiritual solidarity. It is the meaning, the basis, of our Theosophic work.

Shall I take time to tell you something about what is called the Curse and the doctrine of Original Sin, which when I was a boy I was taught began with the actions of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden — and that was supposed to be four or five thousand years ago? According to the Esoteric teaching, the Curse was not

some feat of Deity, a rigid Deity; it did not come about because of the exercise of the procreative and natural powers given to man; but it did come about as a result of the abuse of the same powers.

I am going to read you a page (56) in *The Mahatma Letters* that deals with the origin of evil, and you will find one or two references there which will take us to *The Secret Doctrine*, I think:

Evil has no existence *per se* and is but the absence of good and exists but for him who is made its victim. It proceeds from two causes, and no more than good is it an independent cause in nature. Nature is destitute of goodness or malice she follows only immutable laws when she either gives life and joy, or sends suffering [and] death, and destroys what she has created. Nature has an antidote for every poison and her laws a reward for every suffering. The butterfly devoured by a bird becomes that bird, and the little bird killed by an animal goes into a higher form. It is the blind law of necessity and the eternal fitness of things, and hence cannot be called Evil in Nature. The real evil proceeds from human intelligence and its origin rests entirely with reasoning man who dissociates himself from Nature. Humanity then alone is the true source of evil. Evil is the exaggeration of good, the progeny of human selfishness and greediness. Think profoundly and you will find that save death — which is no evil but a necessary law, and accidents which will always find their reward in a future life — the *origin* of every evil whether small or great is in human action, in man whose intelligence makes him the one free agent in Nature. It is not nature that creates diseases, but man. The latter's mission and destiny in the economy of nature is to die his natural death brought by old age; save accident, neither a savage nor a wild (free) animal die of disease. Food, sexual relations, drink, are all

natural necessities of life; yet excess in them brings on disease, misery, suffering, mental and physical, and the latter are transmitted as the greatest evils to future generations, the progeny of the culprits.

In connexion with certain passages in the above, study what is said in *The Secret Doctrine*, in that part which deals with the myth of Prometheus, and the abuse of the procreative powers, the creative functions, in man by the races in the fourth Root-Race, "when," says H. P. B., "the spiritual part of man's being was still the master," or had still got the upper hand, or could have had it. It was at this time, when man had full intelligent consciousness, and therefore responsibility, that the intelligence was used simply to degrade the temple of man's divinity by the most wholesale animal indulgences in every way, beyond our conception today; and it was also at this time that the so-called Curse was pronounced. That curse, as Master K. H. says in this passage here, resulted in man's being, instead of the healthy king of animal creation, the wealthiest heir on the Globe to every scrofulous and hereditary disease. It all goes back to that period; and we, the present humanity, are those who were the Egos incarnated at that time. That is why, presumably, we live in the kind of civilization that we do today. You can see where evil has come in just on that one score alone.

H. P. B. points out (I think it should be drawn attention to) that the creative force, for example, in the animal kingdom is not abused at all. They have their annual seasons, and they use them correctly; but man uses intelligence, and degrades the Divine power. There is nothing — what shall I say? — wrong or incurring retribution in the rightful use of the creative powers, but in their wrong use, in their abuse. Then Nature steps in and humanity pays the price. There is no evil or devil outside of conscious, self-conscious, thinking man.

Ambition, the desire of securing happiness and comfort for those we love, by obtaining honours and riches, are praiseworthy natural feelings but when they transform man into an ambitious cruel tyrant, a miser, a selfish egotist they bring untold misery on those around him; on nations as well as on individuals. All this then — food, wealth, ambition, and a thousand other things we have to leave unmentioned, becomes the source and cause of evil whether in its abundance or through its absence. Become a glutton, a debauchee, a tyrant, and you become the originator of diseases, of human suffering and misery. Lack all this and you starve, you are despised as a *nobody* and the majority of the herd, your fellow men, make of you a sufferer your whole life. Therefore it is neither nature nor an imaginary Deity that has to be blamed, but human nature made vile by *selfishness*. Think well over these few words; work out every cause of evil you can think of and trace it to its origin and you will have solved *one-third* of the problem of evil. And now, after making due allowance for evils that are natural and cannot be avoided, — and so few are they that I challenge the whole host of Western metaphysicians to call them evils or to trace them directly to an independent cause — I will point out the greatest, the chief cause of nearly two thirds of the evils that pursue humanity ever since that cause became a power. It is religion under whatever form and in whatsoever nation. It is the sacerdotal caste, the priesthood and the churches; it is in those illusions that man looks upon as sacred, that he has to search out the source of that multitude of evils which is the great curse of humanity and that almost overwhelms mankind. Ignorance created Gods and cunning took advantage of the opportunity. Look at India

and look at Christendom and Islam, at Judaism and Fetichism. It is priestly imposture that rendered these Gods so terrible to man; it is religion that makes of him the selfish bigot, the fanatic that hates all mankind out of his own sect without rendering him any better or more moral for it. It is belief in God and Gods that makes two-thirds of humanity the slaves of a handful of those who deceive them under the false pretence of saving them. Is not man ever ready to commit any kind of evil if told that his God or Gods demand the crime?; voluntary victim of an illusionary God, the abject slave of his crafty ministers. The Irish, Italian and Slavonian peasant will starve himself and see his family starving and naked to feed and clothe his padre and pope. For two thousand years India groaned under the weight of caste, Brahmins alone feeding on the fat of the land, and to-day the followers of Christ and those of Mahomet are cutting each other's throats in the names of and for the greater glory of their respective myths.

It is a terrible indictment, but it is also terribly true.

Remember the sum of human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of Truth, morality, and universal charity, the altars of their false gods.

The letter concludes with the Master saying: Well now, after writing all this, you will say to us, who claim to be judges, "What about you? You have your priesthood; you have your *Bhikkus*; you have your Buddhist monks"; and he says: Yes, but they do not teach dependence upon an external Savior nor upon an external God. He says: Moreover, although they are supported by the people, they never accept money; our *Bhikkus* accept only food, and spend their lives in the service of the people; and then he

ends up by saying that the ethical teaching of Gautama Buddha is the surest way to overcome misery, evil, and suffering.

It is the very essence of these ethics that we have in the Theosophical philosophy.

The Writing of the Mahatma Letters

I have received a number of requests to publish a reply to two questions that are asked by students over and over again, and these questions may be formulated as follows:

In your Introduction to *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* you refer to the letters as having been signed by the Masters with their own hands. You may or may not have intended this to be taken literally, but a careful study of the letters in the opinion of many intelligent people reveals that some of the letters seem to drop below the standard that one would attribute to a supra-mundane or Mahatmic intelligence. What is the explanation for this if the Mahatmas M. and K. H. were actually responsible for them?

The only satisfactory way of answering these very important questions is to see what H. P. B. and the Masters themselves had to say upon the subject. As a matter of fact the Mahatmas M. and K. H. did not use their high intelligence to supervise the whole process of transmitting quite a number of these letters. This H. P. B. states quite clearly on page 480 of *The Mahatma Letters* in these words:

Has Master K. H. written Himself all *His* letters? How many chelas have been precipitating and writing them — heaven only knows.

The Master himself writes on page 232:

In noticing M's opinion of yourself expressed in some of his letters — (you must not feel altogether so sure that because they are in his handwriting, they are written by him, though of course every word is sanctioned by him to serve certain ends).

To understand the problem properly the whole of Letter CXL (pp. 478-81) should be read carefully, and in addition pp. 470-1 and 422-6. In order to save space we only print the more important passages, and draw the reader's attention particularly to the following on page 422:

The letter in question was framed by me while on a journey and on horse-back. It was dictated mentally, in the direction of, and 'precipitated' by, a young chela not yet expert at this branch of Psychic chemistry, and who had to transcribe it from the hardly visible imprint. Half of it, therefore, was omitted and the other half more or less distorted by the "artist." When asked by him at the time, whether I would look it over and correct I answered, imprudently, I confess — "anyhow will do, my boy — it is of no great importance if you skip a few words." I was physically very tired by a ride of 48 hours consecutively, and (physically again) — half asleep. Besides this I had very important business to attend to *psychically* and therefore little remained of me to devote to that letter. It was doomed, I suppose. When I woke I found it had already been sent on, and, as I was not then anticipating its publication, I never gave it from that time a thought.

Then on page 423:

Two factors are needed to produce a perfect and instantaneous mental telegraphy — close concentration in the operator, and complete receptive passivity in the

"reader" — subject. Given a disturbance of either condition, and the result is proportionately imperfect. The "reader" does not see the image as in the "telegrapher's" brain, but as arising in his own. When the latter's thought wanders, the psychic current becomes broken, the communication disjointed and incoherent. In a case such as mine, the chela had, as it were, to pick up what he could from the current I was sending him and, as above remarked, patch the broken bits together as best he might.

Page 424. Well, as soon as I heard of the charge — the commotion among my *defenders* having reached me across the eternal snows — I ordered an investigation into the original scraps of the impression. At the first glance I saw that it was I, the only and most guilty party, — the poor little boy having done but that which he was told. . . .

and later on the same page:

I transcribe them with my own hand this once, whereas the letter in your possession was written by the chela. I ask you also to compare this handwriting with that of some of the *earlier letters* you received from me. Bear in mind, also the "O. L.'s" emphatic denial at Simla that my *first* letter had ever been written *by myself*. I felt annoyed at her gossip and remarks *then*; it may serve a good purpose *now*.

These passages from *The Mahatma Letters* prove and confirm H. P. B.'s statement in the letter quoted above from page 480. In a letter to me on this subject Dr. de Purucker expressed himself as follows:

H. P. B. stated specifically, and more than once, that it was the rarest thing in the world for any one of the Mahatmans, or even for a high chela, *personally to write* a letter, i. e.

indite any communication with his own hand. There are very, very few, very rare exceptions, such as one or two, it may be three cases of direct precipitation from the Master or from a high chela, and possibly one or two brief notes, maybe a telegram or two, written by the Master's own hand. H. P. B. states positively that not only was such writing in the Master's own hand the rarest thing, but that practically in every case, with the few exceptions named, the Master *impressed* mentally his chela or amanuensis, or chelas or amanuenses, to write thus or so, to such or another person. Then the chela, if the receptivity was good, would get the message clearly from the Master's mind along the etheric currents, and in writing it down, *if* the receptivity was perfect the resulting production would be practically the Master's own words, and actually his own handwriting, real or adopted — whichever Master it might be who was the source, K. H. or M. or some other. If receptivity on the part of the chela or amanuensis was less perfect, there would be the immediate entrance into the psychology of the receiving chela of more or less, usually less, of the chela's own mental idiosyncrasies, ways of phrasing, what Hodgson and the Hare brothers call Americanisms or Gallicisms, etc., etc.

The writing of these letters was a mystery and must remain so for all but the initiates. The last passage we quote however could hardly be more definite.

Page 296. Another of our customs, when corresponding with the outside world, is to entrust a chela with the task of delivering the letter or any other message; and if not absolutely necessary — to never give it a thought. Very often our very letters — unless something very important and secret — are written in our handwritings by our

chelas. Thus, last year, some of my letters to you were *precipitated*, and when sweet and easy precipitation was stopped — well I had but to compose my mind, assume an easy position, and — think, and my faithful "Disinherited" had but to copy my thoughts, making only occasionally a blunder.

In conclusion, if it is contended that it would have been better if I had not stated in the Introduction that the letters were written by the Masters in their own hands, I agree. When I wrote that sentence I had not had time to assimilate fully the whole content of the letters, and therefore this particular aspect of the matter had not clearly taken shape in my consciousness. One of these days, when a new issue is being printed, it can be corrected.

The above explanation should be sufficient to clear up this problem, for any serious student who will take the trouble to read carefully the page references given to *The Mahatma Letters*.

[Part 5](#)

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5a. Technical Teachings and their Practical Application

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[Theosophy has been spoken of as a synthesis of religion, philosophy, and science, as the formulated truth regarding the nature, constitution and destiny of man and the Universes. Theosophy therefore covers indeed what is an overwhelming range of thought comprising all possible human knowledge. Yet against this enormous cosmic back-drop certain fundamental teachings stand out clearly, and if these can be grasped by the student he then has certain keys which act as touchstones to truth. Any superstructure that is erected can thus wisely be tested.

We find in this chapter that these fundamentals are emphasized so that the picture of the Theosophical philosophy becomes more clearly defined. The teachings remain not vague impracticable theories or postulates — something to dream about only — but are made extremely practical. They become for us that vital teaching of the Wisdom of the Gods which we can live and should desire to live. It is this downright refusal to divorce practical application from what may be spoken of as technical or theoretical teaching that is perhaps Trevor Barker's most outstanding contribution to Theosophical thought and is the chiefest charm of his writing.]

Why Study Theosophy?

Before we can answer this question at all satisfactorily and present reasons as to why we should study Theosophy, we naturally ask ourselves, 'What is Theosophy?'

Theosophy is not something new; it is not the invention of one or two men or women, either modern or ancient; it is not a progressive system which is subject to change from day to day, following upon experiments in the realm of science, where any morning we may wake up to find that that which we had thought to be Truth has actually had to be changed, modified, or altered. This is the difference between the Ancient Wisdom and scientific methods.

A passage from our teachings will show you in language much better than I could employ, just where Theosophy comes from:

Theosophy is the Primeval One Truth taught Humanity in the infancy of its Races by every First Messenger — the Planetary Spirit whose remembrance lingers in the memory of man as Elu of the Chaldees, Osiris the Egyptian, Vishnu and the first Buddhas — for there was a primeval revelation and it still exists; nor will it ever be lost to the world but will reappear. The Wisdom religion has been Esoteric in all ages: it was ever One and the same and being the last word of possible human knowledge was therefore carefully preserved. It is the substratum and basis of all the world-religions and philosophies — but its doctrines are the exclusive possession of none of them. They are the birthright of every human soul and pertain exclusively to man's knowledge of his own nature and the higher life of the soul. It was the universally diffused religion of the Ancient and prehistoric world. Proof of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of

documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teaching of its great Adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts and libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity.

This Ancient Wisdom which was preserved by the elect of mankind literally from the birth of humanity on this planet, has been restated for us by one of that Brotherhood who was sent to the Western world, and whom we know as H. P. Blavatsky. It was she who founded the Theosophical Society and gave Theosophy to us. Now this does not mean that Theosophy is limited to the writings of Blavatsky. That is not true. You will find the literary records of Theosophy spread everywhere. For example, you will find traces of Theosophy amongst the writings of the early Christian Fathers; you will find it in the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament; you will find it in the Egyptian 'Book of the Dead,' and in the teachings, literally, of all the great Sages and Seers that the world has ever known. Take the teachings of Gautama-Buddha, for example. From our point of view as Theosophists, there is no difference between the teachings of the Buddha and the teachings of Theosophy, though I must enter one little word of warning in case the record of what the Buddha taught may not be exactly as he gave it in all respects, any more than the record of the teachings of Christ is exactly as he gave them. Nevertheless, whatever we have of the real teachings of these great Masters of Life and Wisdom is Theosophy.

You will find Theosophy in the *Upanishads* of ancient India; you will find it in the *Bhagavad-Gita*; and in the writings of Confucius and Lao-tse. So it is no narrow, sectarian idea of some kind of religious philosophy, but it is literally the essence, both ethical and philosophical, of all the world-religions.

And yet, strange as they may appear, the writings of Blavatsky

were not the mere synthesis, if you understand me, of what those different religions contained — and this is a very important point. If that were so, then you or I, if we had had the brains, could have merely gone through these different records and books, and put them together in some kind of fashion, and said: "There, that is your Theosophy!" It would have contained possibly a great deal of Theosophy, but it nevertheless would not be the real thing; and that is why I say that Theosophy is the mother-root, the essence, of all these great religions. It is the mother-root from which these great teachings originally came. I want to emphasize this because Theosophy is the Esoteric Doctrine, the real truth about man and the universe; the real truth about the human soul and its pilgrimage, and what we are here for, and what the whole universe is about. These Truths are preserved by a living Brotherhood of Holy Men, and it was that Brotherhood from whom came the Great Teachers. It is that Brotherhood which is the root from which all the great religions sprang — a root imbedded in the consciousness of living man.

What is the great need of man today? It is not, mind you, something that is exclusively a need of our own times, but it is particularly emphasized in this moment of the world's history. Every man sooner or later asks himself the question as to the nature of the universe. He comes in conflict with his environment, and he seeks an explanation — as a rule outside of himself first of all, because we seem to be built that way. If we suffer, we tend to think that it must be the world around us which is wrong, and therefore when faced with problems which to us are unfair, or which seem at a given moment insoluble, we start to ask ourselves about the universe!

Therefore the first great reason why we study Theosophy is because it gives us an explanation of the universe around us — an explanation that you will find nowhere else in modern literature.

It gives us an explanation of the origin not only of our planet, but of the solar system of which the planet is a part — aye, and the universe, which is full of solar systems. And by extending, as it does inevitably, our vision of the universe in which we live and move and have our being, we come as it were out of the little tight box in which — we recognise after the event — we were confined, all our life, up to that moment. That is why honestly I can sincerely envy the man or woman to whom at my moment — perhaps the present — Theosophy comes for the first time; because I remember what it meant for me when as a very sick man during the Great War I was in the situation where, suffering very much in all sorts of ways, I sought an answer to the problems of my own life. Sooner or later I believe we all get into this position. Life drives us until we come up against some great enigma, then, if our longing is sincere and true enough, we find Theosophy. It comes as a revelation to the mind, as if one's whole soul were opened to the sunlight for the first time. The effect of this upon me was to get me in touch with the nearest Theosophical library, and no power on earth could have stopped me from taking an armful of books away, and then reading till I had dragged the inside out of them, and absorbed them. That is a wonderful experience, and any one of us can have it. It is part of the work of the Theosophical Society — in fact, the main part of our work — to bring to others these truths which have meant so much to us, and to ask them to take them in their turn to still others.

It is quite obvious that we cannot pass on these truths unless we know something about them ourselves. But one of the beautiful things about Theosophy is that one who hears its teachings for the first time reflects upon what he has heard; and then he starts to read for himself a few relatively simple manuals or books, and immediately the mind becomes quickened; the hunger for truth is

aroused. The next step is that the longing which is bound to be present in a man or woman who is ready for these teachings must be satisfied: the longing to help all those around him who also are perplexed with the enigma of life, who suffer.

This is the background of experience, therefore, which every server in the Theosophic Cause goes through; because the way for the individual and the race to acquire this knowledge opens only when the human soul has been brought by suffering to the point where the teaching is received as a trust, as something more precious than earthly gold or jewels, something which is to him literally the breath of life. Every one of us has received these teachings from the work and efforts of others, and as we receive them we make of ourselves a chalice into which gradually the out-pouring of the Life of the Spirit flows. But our life obviously has to be cleansed of its material propensities; we have to empty ourselves; the vessel in which we would hold the waters of life and give them to others must be made a clean vessel — otherwise, we cannot give clean water to those who seek it.

One of the great reasons for the study of Theosophy is that in the process, in the effort — and it demands an effort — the psychomental, emotional, passionate part of man's organization and being begins to be purified. You cannot study this philosophy unless in the process the mind becomes gradually purified of its dross; and then, like a bird, it begins to soar: rising out of the mire of the lower personal life, often indeed to sink down again into the mud, but nevertheless feeling its wings, rising with aspiration and devotion and hope. Little by little the doors of the soul are opened; and as the student acquires a grasp of the whole religious, philosophic, and scientific range of thought that this wonderful teaching reveals to his vision, he finds that he no longer is dependent to the same degree upon the books from which he first started his studies. At a certain stage, if the

metaphysical and ethical truths are allowed to enter his heart as well as his head, he will begin to find that he has a perpetual fountain of truth welling up from within, that literally enables him to give something unusual, if it is only an illuminated thought, to everyone that he contacts.

It is stated — and here is another reason for the study of Theosophy — that even one who is confined in a prison-cell could be a worker for Theosophy if he had the knowledge; for one of its great teachings is that the mind of man is linked by the dynamic quality of thought with every part of the boundless universe itself. And so we are united one with another. We see evidence of it around us today, brought to our attention by the great discoveries of modern science: how the universe or the planet on which we live daily becomes smaller, from the point of view of the speed with which we can travel through the air, or hear through the spaces by means of telephones and wireless operations, and so on. So that we realize today in a much easier fashion than was possible in the dark Middle Ages, that the peoples of other nations are very little different from our own people; that, for example, the so-called 'barbarian' is not so essentially different from ourselves — shocking as the thought may appear to some stiff-necked Europeans! They are human souls; they are here to make the same pilgrimage as we are. Therefore are we indissolubly united into one living, breathing whole. This is the main principle of the structure upon which the whole Theosophical Movement is based. We have to come to an understanding, a realization, of what is meant by Universal Brotherhood. It is the sole prerequisite to becoming an Associate of the Theosophical Society. You do not have to accept any other principle; but it is a principle that is pregnant and significant.

It is a perfectly true thing to say that there is only one real Brotherhood on earth. We all know that the human family is one

great Brotherhood; and linked to it are all the kingdoms of nature, higher and lower. But do we realize it? Obviously not. Otherwise we would act brotherly. But what prevents such action by us? Simply this: there is a tremendous duality existing in nature, and particularly in man. When he comes into contact with the life-giving waters of Theosophy, if he is serious, sooner or later he will find that within him there is a beneficent force which is seeking entrance into his life, in the light of which he can love and serve his fellows; and there is also a maleficent force, its direct antithesis. Man is really crucified between these two forces. If he follows the light, if he follows the higher dictates of his own soul and conscience, if he follows the way the ancient Teachings show, he will be the recipient of no other force in the universe than the one that flows from the Supreme Itself. But man does not. It is not that he *cannot*, but that he *does not* live on the heights all the time; and when he stumbles and falls, then is the moment that the teachings of Theosophy are needed to explain his psychological and intellectual, his physical and spiritual, constitution.

We are very complex beings, and often what we feel and believe sincerely to be the reason why we behave in any given way, is not the reason that is hidden deep in some interior part of our psychological nature. Deep and mysterious is the nature of man, and nothing other than a study of the teachings of Theosophy will show you what this nature is. Actually Theosophical teaching tells you that the nature of man is sevenfold. That will show you that already you have seven great divisions or parts of your nature — not divided into boxes, but rather interblending, interpenetrating, the different parts of your being. The simplest division of this sevenfold nature is the threefold one that St. Paul uses in the New Testament. He described it as spirit, soul, and body. You are the soul man, the Thinker, who has to win his

immortality. It would be equally true to say that he is a divine, immortal entity, and that he always was, and that he is rooted in the great Universal Soul as an integral part of it.

Thus we get another of the great reasons why we study Theosophy: at first we seek the explanation of the universe; second, we seek a knowledge of our own being, because very soon we discover that knowing about the universe is not quite enough. No; it is not the universe that is wrong: we find that it is we ourselves who are wrong, and only a knowledge of our own being enables us little by little to adjust ourselves to the Universal Harmony. In the process of discovering ourselves we necessarily discover that at the root of our being is a Divinity, a God. The source from which flow those things in our lives which are sweet and beautiful, those thoughts and dreams of a higher life, the love which we bear to our fellows, all aspirations that encourage one to lead a different kind of life, all deeds that are helpful in character and of a truly spiritual and divine nature: all that is eternal in our being — these qualities flow from this Divine part of us. But, having discovered the existence of this spiritual pole of our being, we want to know how we are going to strengthen the Divine and vanquish the lower. That gives us another reason for the study of Theosophy: to find the way of life — the ethics of conduct in our daily lives. We know in a vague sort of way what we ought to do. We have heard from our childhood the golden rule of not doing to others what we would not have them do to us — a summing-up of the ethics of all the great Teachers; but still we need something further.

Let me put it to you from another angle: what are you going to study if you do not study Theosophy? For example, you have the Christian Churches. There are some 320 varieties of Christian sects and what not. Why do so many people find that they still have an unsatisfied need and hunger? One of the reasons is that

although the New Testament has sublime ethics — you cannot find a better ethical standard anywhere than in the 'Sermon on the Mount' — what it lacks is philosophy. Men and women in these days want a reason why they should be better and do better. They are no longer satisfied with being told "Be good and you will be happy," even if you have a dull time of it! No, they want to know why they are here, where they came from, where they are going, and what it feels like to be in that state that all men must come to when their earthly life is finished. Have we not all asked ourselves these questions? And was there any orthodox religion in the world, with the noble exception of Buddhism, and to some extent Hinduism, that could answer you? I do not believe so.

You will find in the teachings of Theosophy, once you understand them correctly, food of a religious nature for the spiritual part of your being; philosophy for your aspiring intellect; and a code of ethics for living your daily life.

QUESTION: You mentioned in your article 'Why Study Theosophy?' that Theosophy was the basis of many religions. The majority of these believe in the existence of a personal God. Can you suggest the origin of the idea?

ANSWER: The origin of the idea of a personal God is a long story. It is stated in Theosophical teachings that this idea is not an innate one. The real origin of the personal-God idea is found in the tendency of ignorant man to build a conception of Deity in terms of his own personal self, which is all he knows, and which is necessarily limited; and so he merely builds a big idea of himself and calls that 'God.' The personal God means, according to our European conceptions, an extra-cosmic Deity — that is to say, a being somehow outside of his universe (that is this universe), because he is said to be infinite, boundless, omnipresent, and at

the same time somebody who can be prayed to, supplicated to save us from the effects of all the silly things that we have done in our lives.

I have always thought that the translation of the Latin word 'persona,' meaning a mask, is something that helps us particularly to understand our own — what we call — personality, the lower part of ourselves, that which hides the light. It is the external part which is the personality according to the Theosophical teaching, not the higher part, which is real; this lower, material part is the *mayavic*, the illusory part; and it may be helpful to some to look upon the personal-God idea as essentially an illusory concept.

This personal-God idea is one that the Theosophist does not countenance at all; and I should make it clear that it is the limited, dogmatic concept, which gives such a very false idea of Deity, and which exhorts men and women to look outside of themselves for the source of their salvation. But the Theosophist comes in and directs men's attention to the Divinity within him, which in very truth is a personal divinity for each man; and whilst he takes away with one hand, he gives you something which is really far more sublime; for Theosophy teaches self-dependence; it follows the teaching of the Christian Avatara: that the Kingdom of Heaven is within you. It is to that Deity that we appeal in every man. But this 'personal' God that we aspire towards, and whose light radiates in the heart of every man, this Immortal entity, collectively the aggregate of all the Divinities in our Solar System or our Universal Cosmos together, makes up what is called the Universal World-Soul, and all men are rooted in That, have their being in That, and sooner or later can consciously raise themselves by their unity with that which It represents.

Obstacles to Meditation

One of the most valuable and practical books in Theosophical literature is the interpretation by William Q. Judge of *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*. It is well recognised by all students of Theosophy that the attainment of abstract meditation has to be achieved by one means or another by all who intend to make Theosophy a living power in their lives.

In Book I, verse 20, of the *Yoga Aphorisms*, Patanjali lays it down that in the case of those who are able to discriminate as to pure spirit "their meditation is preceded by Faith, Energy, Intention (upon a single point) and Discernment"; but recognising that the majority of men find difficulty in attaining to this state of meditation he shows how devotion may be used as a means to the end in view and analyses the obstacles that have to be overcome by the devotee.

Verse 23: The state of abstract meditation may be attained by profound devotedness toward the Supreme Spirit considered in its incomprehensible manifestation as *Iswara*.

It is said that this profound devotedness is a pre-eminent means of attaining abstract meditation and its fruits. "*Iswara*" is The Spirit in the body.

Verse 24: *Iswara* is a spirit, untouched by troubles, works, fruits of works, or desires.

Verse 25: In *Iswara* becomes infinite that omniscience which in man exists but as a germ.

Verse 26: *Iswara* is the preceptor of all, even of the earliest of created beings, for He is not limited by time.

Verse 27: His name is OM.

Verse 28: The repetition of this name should be made with reflection upon its signification. . . .

Verse 29: From this repetition and reflection on its significance, there comes a knowledge of the Spirit and the absence of obstacles to the attainment of the end in view.

In the verses above quoted there is hope and encouragement for every Arjuna who stands upon the battlefield of his being. During those periods when the mind of the student becomes darkened by doubt and uncertainty Patanjali shows clearly just where the cause of the trouble lies, and in a most practical way provides the remedy for those who can see it and are willing to use the means suggested.

In Verse 30 he states that

The obstacles in the way of him who desires to attain concentration are Sickness, Langour, Doubt, Carelessness, Laziness, Addiction to objects of sense, Erroneous Perception, Failure to attain my stage of abstraction, and Instability in any state when attained.

Verse 31: These obstacles are accompanied by grief, distress, trembling and sighing.

All students who are doing their best to take themselves in hand, striving to live in the light of the Higher Self, will at some time show forth one or other of the symptoms of that searching diagnosis. These are the "enshrining veils of the lower selfhood," and the fact that Patanjali mentions them in this ancient scripture shows that they have application to all men and all races; and therefore those who discover these obstacles in themselves at once realize that they are not alone in having to face such difficulties, but on the contrary they are simply proving for themselves the universal experience of all aspirants. When the mind is unstable, and for the time being is unable to reflect the calm power of the guiding spirit within, it is always because

one or all of the obstacles to meditation as defined by Patanjali are active. For the prevention of them he recommends that one truth should be dwelt upon, and there is the added comment that by this he means "any accepted truth of which one approves."

In the periods of the greatest spiritual darkness we can always find something in our spiritual experience which we really believe in because we have proved the truth of it. When such a truth is dwelt upon to the exclusion of concepts about which there is uncertainty, the mind immediately becomes steady. The particular truth dwelt upon will vary according to the nature of the student. With one it may be the profound conviction of the reality of the Higher Self; with another it may be the knowledge of the existence of the great Masters of Wisdom, or the essential truth of the Theosophical teaching as a whole, or of some particular sacred scripture or book or part of a book. Then the cure is completed, and the mind becomes purified "through the practising of Benevolence, Tenderness, Complacency, and Disregard for objects of happiness, grief, virtue, and vice. . . ." (Verse 33)

If these things are practised with aspiration and faith in their efficacy, combined with some regular daily study of some of the classics of Theosophical literature, the student will find the greatest possible inspiration and help coming to him.

The Occult Law of Correspondence and Analogy

What is the whole Theosophical conception of the doctrine of Correspondence and Analogy based upon? It must have a basis, and one of the most ancient axioms upon which it is founded is the Hermetic one, which goes something like this: True without error, certain most true: that which is above is as that which is below, and that which is below is as that which is above, for

performing the marvels of the Cosmos. "For performing the marvels of the Cosmos" — that is a strange phrase, is it not? The key to it you will find in that very remarkable twelfth chapter of *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 635, where H. P. B. states that "*The trinity of nature is the lock of magic and the trinity in man is the key that fits it.*" It is because this threefold nature of man, or if you like to call it sevenfold nature of man, fits the threefold, sevenfold, or tenfold lock of magic of Nature and the Universe, that it is possible by a knowledge of these principles of correspondence to perform the marvels that are recorded as achieved by all the Great Sages and Magicians of past ages. They all use the same method: the sovereign will of the illuminated Adept acts through his unified sevenfold nature upon the corresponding part of that aspect of matter or *Prakriti* wherein he desires to produce his phenomenal results. In other words every one of our sevenfold principles or vehicles of consciousness is necessarily built of matter; and these principles, or the matter of which they are composed, necessarily relate us to the corresponding plane of matter in the vast Universe. For instance our body relates us to the planet Earth on which we live; our *Linga-sarira*, our astral body, relates us to the corresponding principle of the Globe, and so on, right through all the different planes of Nature and being; and once the Adept is freed so that he can at will mount the stairway of his own inner being, changing the level at which his consciousness at any one time is polarized, either in his material physical brain; in the *mayavi-rupa*; in the thought-world; in the principle of direct knowledge and cognition which we call the intuition, or Buddhic principle — aye, even Atman itself: once he can do that — which is necessarily a very advanced state of being — he is freed of all the planes in the Universe; and by a knowledge of the principles of Nature he can call upon and utilize any of the sevenfold principles, which contain all the forces and energies in the Cosmos, and do literally what he wants, because

he is a self-conscious being. This is one aspect of what is called liberation being free to roam through the spaces of space — outer and inner, on this planet and the other Sacred Planets of our Solar System. Continuing from the twelfth chapter of *Isis Unveiled*, Volume II, pages 587-8:

Nature is triune: there is a visible, objective nature; an invisible, indwelling, energizing nature, the exact model of the other, and its vital principle; and, above these two, *spirit*, source of all forces, alone eternal, and indestructible. The lower two constantly change: the higher third does not.

Immediately now we get an example of correspondence:

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.

and only an Immortal entity is free of the planes of Nature in the sense that I have tried to express to you.

I will try to show by analogy, and by direct reference to parts of the teaching that are well known to you just how this law of correspondence works. If those axiomatic propositions which I have just read to you are true, then you will find that you can understand the first Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* by a knowledge of these principles. You have the threefold principles in operation in the very highest metaphysical triad that you can think of: the Boundless, the Absolute, That upon which no speculation is possible, symbolized in *The Secret Doctrine* under the aspect of Eternal Duration. You also have the abstract idea of Space, and the abstract idea of Motion. Come

down a stage in your thought, and apply the same rule of correspondence, and you find in the manifested Universe the whole of Nature pervaded by duality, corresponding to what? — to motion and to space. You find it reflected in Spirit and Matter, in your own consciousness, and in the elements and principles of which the Cosmos is composed. Where is the third mysterious, connecting link between Spirit and Matter that H. P. B. speaks of in this first Fundamental Proposition? Obviously that mysterious force which unites Spirit and Matter is in the nature of man supplied by the bridge that in *The Voice of the Silence* is called *antahkarana*. It is the power of upward aspiring thought that connects your lower, personal soul or perishable self with the Immortal and indestructible Divine Ego. Note that this mysterious bridge or link on the scale of correspondence that I am now speaking of depends upon upward aspiring thought and nothing else. If it is a low kind of thought, identified with matter, there is no bridge between the lower part of the man and the higher; and such a man in such a state of consciousness is unable to use this threefold key which fits the lock of magic. He can never become a magician; he can never become an Adept or a disciple, let alone a Master of Wisdom.

Space — the seven-skinned Mother — a curious phrase: the seven-skinned Mother. It means the differentiated matter or material or substance of which our Solar system or our Universe is composed. The most usual way of thinking about the planes of being, or the substance of which they are composed, is by reference to the elements and principles. Now, is there any difference between the principles and elements? The elements you are probably familiar with under the names of Aether or *Akasa*, earth, air, fire, water. These may not mean a great deal to you, but the principles which or rather without which these elements would not exist, are possibly more familiar to you, for

they are the sevenfold dynamic, spiritual and Cosmic energies which course through our own consciousness, and which keep the planets in rotation and being. In fact they are an expression of what the Brahmins called the *Tattwas*. What are the *Tattwas* They are the forces that are distributed to us through the Seven Sacred Planets, and to use the Brahminical phraseology they are: Aditattwa, the highest, most spiritual one, Anupapadaka-tattwa, Akasa-tattwa, Vayu-tattwa, Taijasa-tattwa, Apas-tattwa, and Prithivi-tattwa.

Beginning at the bottom the forces come to us: — Prithivi from Mercury, Apas from Venus, Taijasa from Mars (that is why it is red in color), Vayu from Jupiter, Akasa from Saturn. The highest spiritual Tattwas come from the two Sacred Planets connected with the Sun and Moon, and when I say connected with the Sun and Moon I mean that intra-mercurial planet which some modern astronomers christened Vulcan, and that mysterious body which lies behind the Moon — very close to the Moon, but which is actually a planet. There is a planet situated just behind the Moon, and you will say to me "Well, if there is why don't we see it?" If we had the eyes to see it we should see it, but there are many more planets than are ever suspected by astronomers in our Solar system, who now only recognise seven. We cannot see this particular one, simply because it is on a plane of matter which is a little bit higher than our ordinary physical sight will enable us to perceive; but it is the explanation, I believe you will find, as to why the Moon is called one of the Sacred Planets, which otherwise it is not, because it is a dead planet. Nevertheless the Moon is the transmitter to us of some of the highest spiritual energies that we receive, as well as some influences which are distinctly evil.

I will try to elucidate just a little further these tattwic forces. They are not so mysterious as you think, because each one of our

sevenfold principles is directly related to one of these planets, and is the particular vehicle of that planet with which it has a direct correspondence. All these spiritual energies play through all the principles, because every principle is sevenfold in its turn, and seven times seven make up the forty-nine fires spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine*. On page 153, Volume I, *The Secret Doctrine*, the correspondence between the human principles and the seven Globes of the planetary chain is very clearly set out if you refer to the diagram. "These invisible companions" (i. e. the invisible companion Globes of the planet — our Earth, H. P. B. says) "correspond curiously to that which we call 'the principles in Man.'" Rather an odd phrase — "correspond curiously." One might be led to suppose that the seven Globes of the Planetary Chain are actually the higher principles of the planet. Now the question is, are they, or are they not? This word "curiously" seems to suggest there is a snag somewhere, so I just point it out to you.

Here is another passage from *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, pp. 154-5:

It is said that the planetary chains have their "Days" and their "Nights" — i. e., periods of activity or life, and of inertia or death — and behave in heaven as do men on Earth: they generate their likes, get old, and become personally extinct, their spiritual principles only living in their progeny as a survival of themselves.

Do you not see the master-hand in that paragraph?

It reminds one of another statement in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 203-4, in reference to the birth of a comet:

A laya-centre is lighted and awakened into life by the fires of another "pilgrim," after which the new "centre" rushes into space and becomes a comet. It is only after losing its

velocity, and hence its fiery tail, that the "Fiery Dragon" settles down into quiet and steady life as a regular respectable citizen of the sidereal family. . . .

And what is there so impossible that a laya centre — a lump of cosmic protoplasm, homogeneous and latent, when suddenly animated or fired up — should rush from its bed in Space and whirl throughout the abysmal depths in order to strengthen its homogeneous organism by an accumulation and addition of differentiated elements? And why should not such a comet settle in life, live, and become an inhabited globe!

So here we have some analogy and correspondence.

Bearing in mind that other phrase that the invisible Globes of the Planetary Chain "correspond curiously" with the principles in Man, listen to this from p. 159, Vol. I, *The Secret Doctrine*:

Our Earth, as the visible representative of its invisible superior fellow globes, its "lords" or "principles," has to live, as have the others, through seven Rounds.

That looks as if the higher principles of the Planetary Chain are the seven principles. I wonder how we can resolve the difficulty. I suggest a reference to *The Mahatma Letters*. I am going to read to you several passages because they are extraordinarily apropos. Master M. is describing the birth of a Globe. We quote *verbatim* from pp. 70-1, filling in words missing in the original MS.:

Nothing in nature springs into existence suddenly all being subjected to the same law of gradual evolution. Realize but once the process of the *maha* cycle, of one sphere and you have realized them all. One man is born like another man, one race evolves, develops, and declines like another and all other races. Nature follows the same groove from the

"creation" of a universe down to that of a mosquito. In studying esoteric cosmogony, keep a spiritual eye upon the physiological process of human birth; proceed from cause to effect establishing as you go along, analogies between the birth of a man and that of a world. In our doctrine you will find necessary the synthetic method; you will have to embrace the whole universe — that is to say to blend the *macrocosm* and the microcosm together — before you are enabled to study the parts separately or analyze them with profit to your understanding. Cosmology is the physiology of the universe spiritualized, for there is but one law.

You notice we are to "keep a spiritual eye upon the physiological process of human birth." Why? Because it gives the key to what happens in the inner worlds. We have discussed the relation or correspondence between the birth of a little child and its rebirth in the after life in the state of Devachan, and you have here an exactly analogical process. The birth of a child is preceded by a gestation period, in which the child is unconscious, and the birth of a man in the spiritual world after death is preceded by a gestation period in which he is unconscious. Then when he is reborn he begins his spiritual meditation at that point where his first conscious spiritual memories of his last earth life began, and then working them out, corresponding exactly to the course of the man on earth. We all experience this. We know that we are born on this planet; we know that we must die; and we can reason from this, by this occult law of analogy and correspondence that because it happens to man therefore it must happen to planets, and it must happen to solar systems. All wake and sleep, sleep and wake; there is day and night, there are the seasons of the year, the rising and falling all these things reflecting the of the tides, the sun and the moon — a law of analogy and correspondence in themselves — showing the marvelous

interdependence of every part of the Universe and its perfect harmony.

Let us turn to another passage describing the birth of a world (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 94):

Now the life impulse reaches "A" or rather that which is destined to become "A" and which so far is but cosmic dust. A centre is formed in the nebulous matter of the condensation of the solar dust disseminated through space and a series of three evolutions invisible to the eye of flesh occur in succession, viz., three kingdoms of elementals or nature forces are evolved: in other words the animal soul of the future world is formed; or as a Kabbalist will express it, the gnomes, the salamanders, and the undines are created. The correspondence between a mother-globe and her child-man may be thus worked out. Both have their seven principles.

Those seven must necessarily correspond with the seven planetary types. This is important. Please note it because there are in everything in nature, these sevenfold Cosmic energies showing themselves, so that there are seven main types or classes of minerals, or may I put it this way: that every mineral will fall into one of the seven tattvic and therefore planetary groups. The same in the vegetable world. Look how important this is from a physiological point of view, in the cure of disease, for example. The occult therapist of ancient days knew the Cosmic relation and correspondence between planets, minerals, plants, animals and man, and was therefore enabled to select the particular mineral or herb which corresponded to the nature of the patient, and so cured him: this is what we have to rediscover. The homeopaths have got on to this principle, knowingly or unknowingly. Possibly Hahnemann, the originator of the system,

knew. He seems to have been a man with occult knowledge of some kind. In homeopathy it is possible to find for each individual what is called his constitutional remedy, which always seems to benefit that person, and is therefore worth a very great deal to the patient when once it is discovered. I think it will be found that the plant or mineral from which the medicine was made belonged to the same planetary essence as the patient, and thus gives more satisfactory results, being so to speak in harmony with his own nature.

Now to continue the quotation from page 94 of *The Mahatma Letters*:

In the Globe, the elementals (of which there are in all seven species) form (a) a gross body, (b) her fluidic double (*linga sariram*), (c) her life principle (*jiva*); (d) her fourth principle *kama rupa* is formed by her creative impulse working from centre to circumference; (e) her fifth principle (animal soul or *Manas*, physical intelligence) is embodied in the vegetable (in germ) and animal kingdoms; (f) her sixth principle (or spiritual soul, *Buddhi*) is man (g) and her seventh principle (*atma*) is in a film of spiritualized *akasa* that surrounds her.

There we have the basis for understanding what is meant by the seven principles of the Globe. Man is actually the Buddhic principle of the planet on which he lives. Relate that to the occult hierarchy — the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas, the Dhyana-Chohans, the Wondrous Being, and the Silent Watcher — and you can understand something of what is meant by man being the sixth or Buddhic principle of the Globe on which he lives.

TheLost 'Word'

Needless to say the study of this subject of the 'Word,' that is

supposed to have been lost to the Western Races of men during the dark ages which succeeded a few centuries after the death of the great Avatara Jesus, reveals a number of surprising facts which I will endeavor to lay before you for your consideration. There are no doubt many points of view from which we can approach the subject, and to begin with it may be well to mention some of those who have testified to their belief in and search for that mysterious Word that gave Light and Wisdom and Power to the Hierophants, the Mystics, the Initiates of the Past. In ancient India there is a tradition

that long before the days of Ad-am, and his inquisitive wife, He-va, where now are found but salt lakes and desolate barren deserts, there was a vast inland sea, which extended over Middle Asia, north of the proud Himalayan range, and its western prolongation. An island, which for its unparalleled beauty had no rival in the world, was inhabited by the last remnant of the race which preceded ours. . . . This race could live with equal ease in water, air, or fire, for it had an unlimited control over the elements. These were the "Sons of God"; not those who saw the daughters of men, but the real *Elohim*, though in the oriental *Kabala* they have another name. It was they who imparted Nature's most weird secrets to men, and revealed to them the ineffable, and now *lost* "word." . . . This word, which is no word, has travelled once around the globe, and still lingers as a far-off dying echo in the hearts of some privileged men. The hierophants of all the Sacerdotal Colleges were aware of the existence of this island; but the "word" was known only to the *Java Aleim* (Maha Chohan in another tongue), or chief lord of every college, and was passed to his successor only at the moment of death. There were many such colleges, and the old classic authors speak

of them. -- *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 220

As H. P. B. tells us in *Isis Unveiled*, Volume I, page 29, the masons "may 'shed tears at the grave of their respectable Master, Hiram Abiff'; but vainly will they search for the true locality, 'where the sprig of myrtle was placed.' " It is the same with our modern knights of the Sacred Arch. They may descend " 'through the nine arches into the bowels of the earth,' " but " 'they will never discover the sacred Delta of Enoch.' The 'Sir Knights in the South Valley' and those in 'the North Valley' may try to assure themselves that 'enlightenment dawns upon their minds,' and that as they progress in Masonry 'the veil of superstition, despotism, tyranny' and so on, no longer obscures the visions of their minds. But these are all empty words." They have cause to bewail their fate. For "since Phillipe le Bel destroyed the Knights-Templars, not one has appeared to clear up your doubts notwithstanding all claims to the contrary. Truly," she says, "you are 'wanderers from Jerusalem, seeking the lost treasure of the holy place.' Have you found it? Alas, no! for the holy place is profaned; the pillars of wisdom, strength and beauty are destroyed. Henceforth, 'you must wander in darkness,' and 'travel in humility' . . . in search of the 'lost word.' 'Pass on!' — you will never find it . . . because you are 'travelling in darkness,' and this darkness can only be dispelled by the light of the blazing torch of truth which alone the right descendants of Ormasd carry."

The great Northern Seer Swedenborg advises us to search for the Lost Word amongst the hierophants of Tartary, China, and Tibet, for it is only there now. The four *Vedas*, *Books of Hermes*, *Chaldean Book of Numbers*, the *Kabala*, *Sepher Jezira*, the *Book of Wisdom*, the *Brahmanas*, etc., etc., all had the same basis which, when their philosophy is understood, will all be found to reveal the same primeval Secret Doctrine which is the Ultima Thule of true philosophy, and will disclose what is this Lost Word.

The greatest of the Kabalistic works of the Hebrews, the *Zohar*, was compiled by Rabbi Simeon Ben Yo'hai and only completed by his son. On account of the fact that he was known to be in possession of the secret knowledge and of the 'Word,' his life became endangered, and he fled to the wilderness where he lived in a cave for twelve years surrounded by his disciples and finally died there, by signs and wonders. He is said at last to have disappeared from view; the whole cave became filled with heavenly light, and only when it subsided did the disciples perceive that the lamp of Israel was extinguished. He never imparted the most important points of his doctrine except to a few disciples, and then only orally from mouth to ear, and at low breath. Since his death this hidden doctrine has remained an inviolate secret from the outside world. Only a substitute for the Word is now used by modern masonry.

The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* shows that the Egyptians regarded man as not merely soul and body, but spirit also. Moreover they knew of the septenary nature of man as well. If the defunct was a purified soul that had become united with spirit, if it had the gnosis, by the power of the 'Word' it conquered the dragon Apophis, otherwise it could not escape the second death.

This points incidentally to the teachings of the esoteric philosophy as to immortality being conditional. By the neglect of the study of this knowledge of the 'Word' man risks to lose most of what is worth while — unless he wants to remain in the ranks of the living dead of the profane. But a knowledge of the Word can Save. "Its potency lies in the rhythm or the accent. This means simply that even a bad person may, by the study of the Sacred Science, be redeemed and stopped on the path of destruction."

That there are fearful secrets in nature may well be believed when, as we have seen in the case of the Russian

Znachar, the sorcerer *cannot* die until he has passed the word to another, and the hierophants of White Magic rarely do. It seems as if the dread power of the "Word" could only be entrusted to one man of a certain district or body of people at a time. When the Brahmatma was about to lay aside the burden of physical existence, he imparted his secret to his successor, either orally, or by a writing placed in a securely-fastened casket which went into the latter's hands alone. Moses "lays his hands" upon his neophyte, Joshua, in the solitudes of Nebo and passes away forever. Aaron initiates Eleazar on Mount Hor, and dies. Siddhartha-Buddha promises his mendicants before his death to live in him who shall deserve it, embraces his favorite disciple, whispers in his ear, and dies; and as John's head lies upon the bosom of Jesus, he is told that he shall "tarry" until he shall come. Like signal-fires of the olden times, which, lighted and extinguished by turns upon one hill-top after another, conveyed intelligence along a whole stretch of country, so we see a long line of "wise" men from the beginning of history down to our own times communicating the word of wisdom to their direct successors. Passing from seer to seer, the "Word" flashes out like lightning, and while carrying off the initiator from human sight forever, brings the new initiate into view. Meanwhile, whole nations murder each other in the name of another "Word," an empty substitute accepted literally by each, and misinterpreted by all! — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 571

From this the reader will see that it was not Madame Blavatsky who doubted the power of the Word or the fact of succession from one hierophant of the Mysteries to another.

Destiny, Liberation, Annihilation

Before taking up the study and discussion of the subject tonight, which is "Destiny, Liberation, Annihilation," may I just preface my remarks by drawing your attention to the basis upon which we, of the Theosophical Society, endeavor to do our work of spreading a knowledge of the Ancient Teachings, called in this era "Theosophy." You will find that one of the first objects of the Theosophical Society is: "To diffuse among men a knowledge of the laws inherent in the Universe." Now this is rather a complicated way of saying: to try to teach men Theosophy; and so in these public lectures on Sunday nights that is what we are endeavoring to do: to pass on to you a statement, to the extent of our capacity, of the teachings that have come down literally from the dawn of thinking man on this planet, in an unbroken oral tradition. This tradition has been preserved by the elect of the human race, and has percolated down to our present era, when we had a restatement of the ancient Truths by H. P. Blavatsky.

It is very important from our point of view, and I venture to think from yours, that we should do our work in just that way, viz.: try to pass these teachings on to you, as much as possible uncolored by our own psycho-mental apparatus. It is important to you because you want to know what the Great Teachers of the human race have said upon the vast problems of human life and suffering, and man's relation to the universe. It is important from our point of view because we dare not take the responsibility of sowing, in the hearts and minds of men, ideas which are merely the product of our own human, and therefore fallible, imaginations and thinking. Therefore what you hear from this platform should be understood as a sincere endeavor, at least, on the part of the speaker to give you the teachings of Theosophy as he understands them, and, although it is also necessary for him to endeavor to make certain deductions of a practical kind, in order to show that this is not a mere system of high philosophy and

metaphysics without any relation to life, yet you find, for the most part, that the teachers rather leave to the students the task of making the application. Especially in public propaganda work we believe in trying to deduce the practical issues from this grand system of thought. Immensely comprehensive as it is, a single life is by no means enough to gain even a bowing acquaintance with the teachings as a whole; but this does not mean that we cannot very quickly obtain a sufficient amount of knowledge to make an immediate difference in the conduct of our own lives, and enable us, to some extent at least, to be of some service to our fellow men.

Although we strive to hand on these teachings in accordance with what we call the Esoteric tradition, nevertheless there is a danger that we, as students, have also to try and avoid. There is nothing easier than to permit the mind to crystallize its thought, its understanding, upon some one or other of the Theosophical doctrines, and so prevent the entrance of any further light. This is a serious danger to the student, and I want to read you a rather remarkable passage from Dr. de Purucker's book, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 202, in which he deals with this particular tendency. He says:

If anyone thinks — I never did, thank the immortal Gods! — if anyone thinks that he knows *The Secret Doctrine* by reading it once or even a dozen times, or a score of times, he mistakes greatly the situation. It must be read not only between the lines, but within the words. I have found the value of the following rule: never take a single statement in it and allow your mind to mould itself around it, never let a single idea crystallize; break the molds, let in the light. It is an excellent rule. As soon as a man says "I have the truth. I do not agree with such a one of our teachers: I think such and such a teacher was wrong," look out for him, for he is

probably blind. The molds of his mind are crystallized, and he cannot see the light.

That statement is worth taking to heart, and because of it I am going to endeavor — I say advisedly — endeavor — because I do not know just how the experiment will work out — to raise with you certain points of view that may perhaps be new in our understanding of the subject.

You can translate Destiny, if you like, by the word 'Karma' — Sanskrit word. You can translate Liberation by the word 'Yoga,' and Annihilation by 'Nirvana.' Therefore, these being important parts of the Esoteric philosophy, we want to pay at least some attention to them tonight.

Does Theosophy believe in Destiny for us human individuals? Are we predestined to follow such or another path through earth life? Is it all mapped out for us in advance according to the dictates or the will of some personal or extra-cosmic deity, who decrees that such and such a man shall do such and such a thing, whether he be good, evil or what? On the other hand have we complete free-will? These I think you will agree are important issues. Well, Theosophy does believe in Destiny; it also believes in free-will, and it makes the following statement. At the close of his period of rest, before he returns to earth, the immortal Seer is shown the general course of his life as a man, and the causes that led up to that moment. He is also shown a picture of the future with its opportunities of progress, its successes, its failures, and the reasons for them. Then the human entity, in the process of incarnation (or reincarnation) forgets the causes. He has a new human brain; he has the difficult task of subjecting or gaining power over the new physical mechanism, and the new brain has no recollection of anything that did not pass through its cells.

On the other hand it has character, and the character of the

individual, strange as it may appear, is actually its destiny. The past Karma, the consequences, the effects of every single thing that the entity had thought, willed, felt or done in the infinitely long series of its past incarnations is wrought into the very fabric of that entity's own being, and produces the man as he is today or at any moment in life. Therefore Theosophy says man is his own Karma, and Karma is nothing else but the man himself, containing within himself all consequences, be they good or evil, that appear to flow to him from outside himself. So we can immediately deduce that Destiny is something that, if it exists, the man has made for himself. You see man is an incarnate God actually. He is a being with power to create — to create his future for good or ill. At any moment that he may like to examine his personal life he will find that his circumstances, his powers and faculties, his condition of health or ill-health, have all been produced by his own action. He has created his own destiny and he can change it. You see Theosophy does not admit for a single moment that any individual in the Universe has special privilege. He has gained any advantages of personality, individuality or spirituality, or advantages of environment, or anything else you can think of, strictly by his own effort. There are no special privileges anywhere in nature, and therefore we come to the next step, viz. — everybody has had to win at some time or another the powers or faculties that he possesses. How has it been done? We can look at the Titan intellects of the human race — the great Teachers, the tradition that we have of those Buddha-like men who embody Wisdom and Compassion, and we can say to ourselves — "What they have done we some day can, must, and will do." But how?

Let us use two or three of the golden keys or jewels of Wisdom that unlock a further stage to the understanding of this problem. We have used one of the keys in talking about the doctrine of

Karma. We have also touched on Reincarnation. Now these are keys I would ask you to note that we, as students, should try to apply to the understanding of any problem. But you cannot understand the doctrine of Karma, or any other problem of human life, unless you understand something about the doctrine of what we call Hierarchies. As applied to man this means that he is not a single, simple entity — perhaps just a physical body as some may think — but on the contrary he is composite of literally untold millions of lives and intelligences. He is a sevenfold being — a ten and twelvefold being; and each department of his nature is seven, ten and twelvefold in its turn. Man is a Hierarchy — spiritual, intellectual and physical: three main systems of evolution going on all the time.

Now Karma is actually made, and the repository of it is, so to speak, contained in the intermediate principle of the man. I wonder if you have ever read H. P. B.'s own definition of what Karma is. Let me read you a rather fascinating paragraph from her *Theosophical Glossary*. She says:

When Buddhism teaches that "Karma is that moral kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration" or reincarnation, it simply means that there remains nought after each Personality but the causes produced by it; causes which are undying, *i. e.*, which cannot be eliminated from the Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects, and wiped out by them, so to speak, and such causes — unless compensated during the life of the person [note that] who produced them with adequate effects, will follow the reincarnated Ego and reach it in its subsequent reincarnation until a harmony between effects and causes is fully re-established. . . .

And as it is that Ego which chooses the personality it will

inform, after each Devachan, and which receives through these personalities the effects of the Karmic causes produced, it is therefore the Ego, that *self* which is the "moral kernel" referred to and embodied karma, "which alone survives death."

So there you have H. P. B.'s own statement that man is his own Karma. It is the "moral kernel" of the individual — the higher part of the intellectual, thinking, human entity.

You will wonder what all this is leading up to. I began to draw these deductions and make these statements about the conception of Destiny.

Now I want to draw your attention for awhile to the other idea of Liberation. Liberation from what? Liberation means freeing ourselves — from Destiny, the self-created thing that has bound us to the wheel of birth and death, forever, unless we find the way of escaping from it. It is the great statement of Theosophy that we can and must find such liberation. The great Buddha taught the way to get free from the miseries of life and the wheel of birth and death. How is it to be done?

There must be a way. How often do we not get asked: "Well, you tell me that I have made myself what I am, but I am in such an appalling state, that Heaven knows when I shall be able to work out the consequences of what somebody you theorists say was I, has done in perhaps preceding incarnations — for I never did anything in this life to warrant my present condition. Can I change it? Have I just got to sit down and put up with it? What is the practical issue involved?"

You who have been brought up in a Christian land will probably be connecting these ideas with the Christian idea of vicarious atonement, forgiveness of sins, and various other things. You are

right so to connect them, just to see what light Theosophy throws upon such problems. We do not believe — and the Great Sages of antiquity have never taught — that anyone can do anything at all to wipe out or bear for us the consequences of our own wrong doing. That doctrine, which has gained a hold on the mind of Christendom, is something that has caused untold damage to the mind of the race. It has warped its thinking, and it has actually brought about an immense amount of actual evil in the world; but, as in all these things, there is behind it a truth of some kind which in the process of time has become distorted. Throughout the East the idea of Liberation from the bonds of Karma is everywhere. They all believe it is possible if they go the right way about it; and you also find that the Christian firmly believes in the possibility of a full and perfect remission of his sins — that is what he calls it. What is it all about?

At this point I am going to read to you two or three Aphorisms on Karma, which come from an article under that title by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path*, March, 1893. There are some 31 Aphorisms of a profoundly metaphysical nature, but this is what I want you to listen to:

The effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects.

I think you will agree that there is a distinct suggestion that it is possible to counteract and mitigate.

Now another one:

Changes may occur in the instrument [that is the body and psychological mechanism of the man] during one life so as

to make it appropriate for a new class of Karma, and this may take place in two ways: (a) through intensity of thought and the power of a vow, and (b) through natural alterations due to complete exhaustion of old causes.

"Through intensity of thought and the power of a vow" — that is the particular one that I think we should pay attention to, because again it is a practical issue that we want to get at.

You may be interested further to bear what Katherine Tingley had to say on the subject of a vow.

A vow is an action rising like a star high above the level of the common deeds of life. It is a witness that the outer man has at that moment realized its union with the inner [you will notice 'union with the inner' — that means by Liberation or Yoga] purpose of its existence, registering a great resolve to become one with its Father in Heaven. At that moment the radiant Path of Light is seen with the eye of pure vision. The disciple is reborn, the old life is left behind, he enters a new way. For a moment he feels the touch of a guiding hand ever stretched out to him from the inner chamber. For a moment his ear catches the harmonies of the soul. It is a descent upon him of the Holy Ghost, 'the Grace of God.'

I have read these passages to show you that the deduction I want to make has a very good foundation in our recorded teachings. It is possible, friends and brothers, to change ourselves by intensity of thought, by self-sacrifice, by the power of a vow. If it is possible it means this — the changing of our destiny. How? You will say "But I have hundreds of lives of Karma, and they are going to keep me as I am for ever — or at least for another three or four lives." Now that is sometimes the way we comfort ourselves, you see, with the doctrine of reincarnation, which is another way of

putting off till tomorrow what we ought to perform today. But directly we wake up to the fact that we shall not have any different tomorrow unless we change ourselves today, then we begin to wonder whether it may not be better worth while to get a move on now, in the present.

That is what some students have come to believe. They recognise, in the light of the teachings of Theosophy, that we have got to do something about changing the "moral kernel" of our nature: that we have got to so change it that the consequences that flow to it and from it are the kind that we want, instead of the kind that make us feel so very uncomfortable and even miserable.

Do you think that it is impossible to get a clue — another clue — as to what we have to do from the teachings of the Avatara Jesus? I rather think we shall find that that Master Mind threw a dazzling light upon the problem in something that you and I, perhaps, have neglected to pay much attention to for many long years — I refer to that best known of all Invocations, or Occult Formulae, as it truly is, called the Lord's Prayer. It is a wonderful Invocation, and therein is made the appeal to our Father in Heaven — our Inner God, our Higher Self. "To forgive us our misdeeds"; but it states the condition: that we are willing to forgive those who have trespassed against us. What do you think He meant? It is not written so that he who runs may read, but I commend it to your attention as something for deep meditation and thinking over. You have to study it with the idea well in mind that if you created causes you have got to reap the effects: you cannot escape, and yet there is this idea of forgiveness, this Eastern idea of liberation from all bonds of Karma. You have the statement in the *Bhagavad-Gita* that an evil man speedily becometh a righteous man when once he has rightly determined — determined to do what? — to renounce his personal self and devote it to the Supreme. There is a deeply mystical meaning in

this idea of the forgiveness of sin. What is it, do you think, that shuts out the light that prevents our having or being in that state that Katherine Tingley refers to as the "Grace of God," of being in a state of spiritual grace? I venture to suggest to you that it is nothing in the world but actions of a personal kind with a personal end, misguidedly performed, which have made what Theosophists call "bad Karma," and what the Christian calls in one word, "sin." Now that creates a block which makes it impossible for the man, when he goes into his closet to commune with his Father in Heaven, to hear the still small Voice of his spiritual consciousness. It makes it impossible, I say, for him to hear that voice, and therefore is he in a state, not of liberation, but of bondage, and not atonement, or Yoga, or union, but simply of unregenerate human frailty and sinfulness.

But if the whole of the personal man is cleansed by the "power of a vow," by the determination from this time forward to empty himself of all thoughts and tendencies to action which are detrimental to his fellow man, and which keep him from the light of the God within; then in the strength of that vow, and in the power of the appeal to the Christos within his own heart, something happens, and an actual change can and does take place within his soul nature (which remember is the sum total of all his past actions that we call Karma). A change takes place when he has been willing to pay the price; but I want to emphasize that the price has to be paid by every human soul that seeks to find the path to union with his own Augoeides.

The man who makes that renunciation of his personal self can, in a moment of time, pay such a price that the very harmony that he disturbed is righted, transmuted, changed, and in that moment he is liberated from the Cross of matter upon which he has been fixed; his bonds fall away, and he rises into union — one-ness — with the light of his own Divinity.

Do you see what a different light we begin to get upon the whole problem with which every one of our personal lives is confronted?

There is another word we have not yet touched upon that is included in our subject tonight — the awe-inspiring term 'Annihilation.' There are two or three ways in which we can understand that term. Do you believe that it is possible for a human entity to be completely annihilated — wiped out, extinguished, so that there is nothing left? It is possible if you go about it properly, and do just the worst you know how to do for a number of lives, and keep on doing it. Then you will eventually get into the condition or state where you will forfeit all possibility of Yoga or union with your divine, spiritual counterpart or parent. In other words you may gain the whole world, but in the process you will lose your own soul which, incidentally, is the only thing that makes life worth living. Such an entity, being first soulless, and then becoming a lost soul, proceeds downwards, lower and lower and lower, until he is literally annihilated. But fortunately there is another aspect to this idea of annihilation. Remember that no human being is ever too far gone if he wants to save himself, for a single upward aspiration to the light of his own Savior and Redeemer — the God in him — will actually re-establish the link of connexion that has been broken.

There is another kind of annihilation that the Western Orientalists used rather to delight to talk about — and you know that they actually translated the Buddhist term 'Nirvana' as Annihilation! Theosophy denies the accuracy of the translation. And yet the word, if you go to its root and origin, actually means 'blown out' or 'snuffed out,' and this is part of the highest spiritual teachings of the Buddha himself. Whilst still on earth he was said to have achieved Nirvana, but he certainly was not wiped out. He

was very much there, and he taught — made the statement, that wherever his precepts were practised in their fulness there was Nirvana. Nirvana means 'Enlightenment'; it means union; it means entering into peace and into bliss; but in the process the personal nature of the man, the animal entity, has to be yielded up, ground over, and literally annihilated. The poor physical body has very little to do with it at all; it is often the unwilling slave of the nature of the man inside. The Theosophical conception of Nirvana is to enter into union with the Supreme while living here on earth; and we make the further statement that if we do not succeed in doing it here, we cannot do it hereafter.

QUESTION: What do you mean by the expression, "To pay the price"? You said that a price has to be paid by every human soul, that seeks to find the path to union with his own Augoeides.

ANSWER: I mean what the New Testament meant when describing the man who had to go and sell all that he had, and follow the Teacher. Now it sounds simple, when translated in terms of material possessions, but that is the least of the things that you have to cease to be attached to. It is not necessary that you have no money; it is not necessary that you have no roof over your head, nor any family connexions. It is necessary that you use and hold all these things with a sense of stewardship, which means that you personally renounce all interest in them, and use them simply for the spiritual purpose to which your life is dedicated. The main difficulty comes in renouncing those likes and dislikes, tendencies of thought, and will and feeling that go to make up the whole of the personal nature of the disciple. It is that to which *Light on the Path* refers when it speaks of tearing out of the heart the giant weed of self. It has got to go. It means the complete renunciation of the personal view, of the personal will, and of what we like, perhaps, to think of as our intellectual power

of accomplishment, and what not. Whatever it is that we cling to, that we are not willing to surrender to the dictates of the God within, we have eventually to pay the price of losing; and that is another way of saying that we have to learn to lose our lives — lose our personal lives, and permit them to be annihilated.

QUESTION: How can we recognize the voice of the Higher Self?

ANSWER: You cannot know what are the dictates of the Higher Self, unless you simply make the listening to the "still small voice" of your spiritual consciousness the most important thing in life. Set aside time for it, aspire towards it, look for it, seek for it; and until you have been willing to pay the price that is necessary, and which must differ with every human individual — and have yielded up your personal life — you will not hear that Voice which speaks, as *Light on the Path* says, "where there is none to speak." It cannot be done. That is why some people say it is impossible to do it at all. But that is not true. There would be no hope for us, obviously, if it were impossible to live in the light of the Higher Self, since Theosophy teaches that that is man's only Savior and Redeemer; and true it is that, until we have made at least some connexion with the God Within, we shall not even get a feeble whisper of that inner Voice, and we shall not find the strength of that Inner Warrior. We should warn ourselves that, because of the limited extent to which we as individuals have succeeded in entering into union, it is possible for us to make many mistakes in following out the dictates of what we believe to be the highest and the best we know. But are we going to be deterred by that because somebody says it is difficult? Did not a Great Teacher say that the Kingdom of Heaven has got to be taken by storm? That means strength! Nothing worth while was ever won, nor anything worth while ever learnt, by the man who never made a mistake, or was afraid of making a mistake, and

paying the price and taking the consequences. We have got to do it. But which is the better thing to do? Surely it is to aspire towards the only source of Light that exists (within our own hearts); to prove its existence, and all the time live up to the highest that we see at any moment — even if, from time to time, we find we have less of a vision of the Truth than we believed ourselves to have. Nevertheless at least we will be living up to the highest that we know, and the man that does that sincerely, following out that fourth of the Buddha's Paramitas: "With dauntless energy fighting his way to the Supernal Truth, undismayed by any failure," will surely arrive; and in every effort that he makes, the bonds that unite the Higher to the intermediate Self grow stronger and stronger. The more you look towards Him the more will He fight in thee. It is better to take the risk of making a mistake or two, than never to aspire at all.

QUESTION: The standard of life you have laid down seems too high for ordinary mortals. What is the use of preaching a philosophy that few, if any, can live up to?

ANSWER: I am speaking here tonight, not for people who are so enormously advanced that listening to this philosophy has no purpose for them. It does not seem to me to be a useful or even a practical thing to study a teaching that no one but a Mahatma can live up to. Why did the Great Masters of Wisdom give us these teachings if it is impossible to perform them? Why did they teach us? What did H. P. B. teach, in *The Key to Theosophy*, as to where a Theosophist must look for strength to conquer himself, i. e., the weaknesses in his personal nature? She dismissed it with a single sentence: "He looks to the Higher Self." Well now, since H. P. B.'s definition of a Theosophist is one in whom the Higher nature predominates relatively over the lower; since he is taught that his only source of inspiration, of strength to conquer himself, is that same Higher Self, I think that we can give you proof — in chapter

and verse — which should be perfectly sufficient to show that this idea is implicit in all Theosophical teaching. Necessarily it must be so, but please do not misunderstand me or forget what I said just now: that we have got to begin; that the completely unregenerate, profane human individual does not receive such inspiration. All right. But he can begin to change himself; he can begin to live the life and aspire towards the source of light that exists in him. Do you not admit that there will be a result? Yes. I suggested that it might be a feeble glimmer, in comparison with which the full union of a perfected Adept would be the difference between the blazing sun and a flickering candle; but nevertheless, the flickering candle is of vast importance to a man in a dark cellar. It is the source of light within ourselves, and if it were impossible to get any light we might as well give up the attempt.

Spiritual Gifts and Their Attainment

This title, "Spiritual Gifts and their Attainment," you may possibly be thinking — and I am not at all sure that I would not agree with you — is something of a misnomer directly we begin to examine its significance. However, the expression was used by William Q. Judge in an article that he published many years ago in his inspired magazine *The Path*. He there inquired into the question of spiritual gifts: as to whether there actually are such things as gifts of any kind that are bestowed upon any human being.

You remember, H. P. B. in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* laid it down as a fundamental principle of all spiritual effort, and an underlying law of our own being, that there are no special gifts or privileges that man is heir to. On the contrary, she said, every spiritual, intellectual, psychical or physical power that anyone is able to bring forth, manifest, and show to the world, any such power or faculty, has been developed by his own striving, by his own effort.

In what sense, therefore, can we understand this question of so-called spiritual gifts? I think it is true to say that our old friend St. Paul was responsible for the term "spiritual gifts"; and he included in the term such qualities as faith, vision, and the knowledge of the performance of feats which in those days were called miracles, such as healing; and likewise the performance of various other actions of a very good and spiritual character. Yet he pointed out in his *Epistle to the Corinthians* that, excellent as these things undoubtedly are, and useful in their proper place, nevertheless there were spiritual qualities that transcended all these, and that the gift of Charity (so translated in the Bible) — which incidentally is the first of the Divine Paramitas of *The Voice of the Silence* — was said to transcend all these. In fact that it was possible to have all these other gifts, and if they were not permeated and irradiated by Compassion, they were worth nothing. Therefore we have to come to the conclusion that spiritual gifts, if they mean anything, are those which are bestowed upon the human being who has given up his personal life; and they thereby become an instrument in the hands of his own inner and higher nature — a channel in fact for the power of the Supreme Spirit to pour forth into the world. All mystics, all disciples, of all ages, have borne witness to the fact that, though they had given up everything that from a personal and worldly point of view might be considered to make life worth living, nevertheless they treasured above everything that power to do, to will, to know, and to serve their fellows. They entered into the purified Temple of their own being once they had passed through the experience of losing their physical lives, of giving up the things that prevented the light of the Supreme Spirit from flooding into the purified Temple of the body.

This is the subject of the whole discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. If you study carefully the first Discourse of this wonderful spiritual

allegory you will find there the four characters that give us a clue to the symbols that are used throughout this great epic. First there is, of course, the Divine Teacher Krishna in the three or four aspects of the Supreme which he severally adopts and acts through in his instruction of Arjuna. Krishna is the symbol of the Supreme: he is the Paramatman, the Self: that Self which is the same in you, in me, and in all creatures everywhere; that Self which is the object of all our strivings, all our aspirations, all our searchings for Truth; our answer, once we have done the work that will enable us to perceive the precepts of gods and men in our own hearts. If we are searching for the true spiritual gifts, then we shall turn to the *Bhagavad-Gita* and see whether we can kindle the lamp of spiritual knowledge through the fire that burns and glimmers through the pages of that ancient book.

Krishna is the first character then, whose words of instruction we shall listen to as he teaches his disciple Arjuna; and Arjuna is the symbol of the higher mind — the Higher Manas, as we should say in our technical Theosophical language — as he stands on the battlefield of his being, on the field of Kurukshetra. He stands, as all spiritual pilgrims do, upon the battlefield of his own being: the Higher Manas, the higher mind, the real individuality in you and in me.

Then you have the character of Dhritarashtra, the blind King, and you can regard him as the lower unpurified mind: the personality in all its unattractiveness. He is blind, he is unable to see a thing.

Finally you have the fourth character, Sanjaya, the Brahmin Teacher, who represents the voice of conscience, actually standing for the link between the Higher and the lower Manas in much the same way as Buddhi is the principle that unites the higher mind to the supreme spirit, Atman — as those of you will recognise who are aware of our Theosophical arrangement of the

inner nature, and the principles that go to make up man's constitution. Sanjaya, the voice of conscience, is that which enables the lower personal man to wake up and begin to listen to the first whisperings and promptings of his own higher nature.

And so we come to inquire as to what really is the nature of the work that we have to do on ourselves if we are going to succeed in developing the spiritual faculties that all men desire, and rightly desire, to find unfolding within themselves; for these are the powers and faculties that we can share with all men. This work and training take nothing from any human creature, but on the contrary, once this inner fire is kindled in the heart of any one of us, he becomes to a very small degree a channel through which spiritual and regenerating ideas flow to the world of men.

What, then, is the nature of this work? I will try to find language to give at least some ideas about it. First of all we shall not be interested in these subjects unless we have already come to the conclusion that there is a spiritual power that it is possible for us to contact; that there is something in the depths of the heart, or in the spiritual part of our being, that, if we could only learn how to reflect, to become, to manifest it, at least for a decent part of our waking life, would greatly benefit ourselves as individuals, and likewise those around us. We recognise that the spiritual power is there if we can only reach it; but according to the particular point in the ladder of evolution that we stand at, we are in the position of Dhritarashtra. We have a lower personality, a mind and emotions, that are more or less turbulent, more or less attached to the objects of the senses, to all that makes up the outward attractiveness of the earth or world. That personality is probably engaged in the struggle for existence; or, if born into circumstances where there is no such struggle, then it has a still harder time, for it has more to learn, more to give up, and less incentive to enter into the performance of action which calls forth

capacity to attend to the daily duties and learn how to perform them in a way that will open up the possibility of knowing the true individuality something quite different from the consciousness for so long experienced in what is really and truly the tomb of personal life.

And so the individual, or rather the personal man, when he is awakened to the point where he recognises the existence of the spiritual nature within, arises and sets forth to seek out the Ancient Teachers of the race. He aspires, and somewhere in the depths of his own being he begins to experience the promptings of conscience, to follow along and do certain simple, perhaps everyday, actions helpful to others, or to carry out some simple or more complex duties. Directly he begins to do that there come the whisperings of the Higher Manas to the personality; and then perhaps such a book as the *Bhagavad-Gita* falls into his hands, and he begins to study. The lower mind begins to be purified, the emotions to be stirred, and as he goes on aspiring perhaps he is fortunate in companionship of others engaged in a similar pursuit. Then one day comes that event when the aspiration of the lower man evokes an outpouring of divine life from the Buddhic splendor within him, the vehicle of that shoreless ocean of spiritual life which is frontierless and boundless, and which all men live in and are inspired by. He realizes that to take this Kingdom of Heaven by the force of his awakened spiritual will he must enter the Temple of the Heart. He must plunge deep within his own nature; and if he does this, there will come that flashing response which will mean that this personal man is no longer left as a more or less rudderless ship, but that the strength of his own true individuality descends into his own heart as a flame. From that moment onwards he has in a true sense set his feet upon the pathway that will carry him to the heart of being itself; will take him to the source from which all impulses of a spiritual kind flow

into this universe.

The sublime possibilities for the human aspirant are so distant that in a sense they hardly act as an incentive to push forward. The man that enters upon this Pathway eventually becomes the Mahatma, the Great Soul; but he has his long, long pilgrimage to perform; and there has never been any secret made of it that this state is not achieved at a single bound in one short life, but demands steady, devoted, self-sacrificing effort toward one clear objective with all personal side-issues dropped.

Somehow, one feels that in these days when the stress and storm of world-events touches us all so closely, men's minds are not so concerned with high metaphysics. They want to know what is their next step; they want to know what they have to do; and I believe that we shall meet with success in our Work to the extent that we can give a practical message. I do not mean in a material sense, but a practical spiritual message to those who are interested in spiritual things. There is nothing that any one of us has that we believe of value in the spiritual life that we cannot share with another. And so this matter of the first steps on the Pathway is being discussed designedly tonight. It is the things that *we can do* that are the most interesting for us; and *we can* take the first steps on the Pathway that will lead us to make use of the gifts of our spiritual nature.

QUESTION: What is the significance of Teachers for those who enter upon this search?

ANSWER: There are Teachers in the world that it is possible for you and me to reach. There are other Teachers that it may be possible for us to reach if we are successful in our search — our inward search; if we are successful in accomplishing a few steps of what the alchemists of old called the Great Work. Our Teachers are necessary for us.

What function do they play in our own pilgrimage? Let us reflect on this fact: that it is very few — probably it is true to say that no one comes into contact with this Movement who does not owe his knowledge of it to books or to other people who are engaged in the Movement; and all of these efforts, the literature, the teachings, are due to the sacrifice made by those who have given their lives to teach. It will be found that if we want to make progress in the real sense of the word we shall do well to seek out that company, and try to be in the company of what Mr. Judge described as "holy men."

And it should be remembered at this point that this does not mean that we are seeking out someone who shall do our work for us, because if we do that we shall be disappointed. That would merely be the eternal looking outside of ourselves for something that we would never find. We shall never find a true Teacher until we have found something within ourselves that will enable us to recognise the true Teacher when we come across him. The example of such a one, the spiritual and philosophical instruction, the inner spiritual stimulus, is such as to make him the real heart and head of a Movement such as ours. You cannot in a spiritual Movement expect that any real spiritual life will exist unless there is a consolidated community of individuals linked together by a common aspiration, a common purpose, with spiritual Leadership that they trust, and with a common teaching — a teaching that is not only ethical, intellectual, philosophical and spiritual, but also universal in character.

QUESTION: Should we seek after this union with our Higher Self? Is so much concentration on ourselves a spiritual selfishness?

ANSWER: I suppose everything can be a kind of selfishness. There are such beings as Pratyeka-Buddhas in our philosophy: those

who seek their knowledge purely for themselves. Such beings exist: such a path exists, and I believe this path is called the Path of Liberation, a path that is followed by one who simply seeks knowledge for his own self-satisfaction. And yet this is not the path that the Teachers of mankind have indicated to us. They point to the fact that these spiritual beings do exist who are concentrated upon their own perfection; but that the true way is to be found by a dropping of interest in all personal ambition, all personal strivings for success, and living simply to be an instrument in the hands of the only one Teacher.

QUESTION: Is it always necessary to experience suffering in order to enter the Path?

ANSWER: There are many things that call forth the effort to spiritual striving, according to the nature of the man. Take the case of a scientist. I can conceive of a scientist, and even a great one, who from his early life became absorbed in the pursuit of knowledge, perhaps with the very highest ideal of offering up his knowledge on the altar of the service of his fellows. I can quite conceive that suffering as such may not touch his life for a long, long time. Are you going to tell me that such a man who truly follows his researches into the secrets of Mother Nature is not following a pathway of evolution suitable for him — knowledge and service of the race having called forth his effort?

Then there are people who would listen to no appeal, and yet would be moved by the message contained in great art, in beauty. That has opened up some channel in their spiritual being; but sooner or later, if they progress upon the Pathway at all, suffering will come. It cannot be avoided and it is the greatest Teacher. That does not mean to say that you have to sit around with a moping expression waiting for this suffering to descend upon you. It will come in its own time, and it will unlock doors when it

comes.

The Mystery of Pain

Rather more than six hundred years before the beginning of our Christian era the great Sage Sakyamuni, whom we know through our historical records as Gautama the Buddha, lived and died in ancient Hindusthan, and he taught the origin of suffering; he taught what is its root; he taught what is the annihilation of suffering, and what is the means whereby you could enter upon that annihilation, what he called the four noble Truths. Most of the Buddha's teaching and philosophy centers around the explanation of those four noble Truths, and of the eightfold Path which he explained as the means towards attaining the great end, the emancipation from suffering. Therefore right at the outset of our consideration of the subject, we have not only the great ideal of the Buddha himself, but we have the statement which must ever be of the most tremendous encouragement to all who strive upon the upward Path. We have that statement of his that emancipation from the suffering of human misery such as we know it can be achieved even in this life. More, he went still farther in saying that if a man would sincerely enter upon the noble eightfold way, and strive to put into practice, and to make a reality, the eight conditions of that Path, even for a comparatively short while, such a man would receive the fruits of merit of that deed, and thereby would begin to feel the results in his own life.

Many of us have heard over and over again the statement of those qualities demanded by the eightfold Path. We are familiar with the noble Truths, and like many things that we have heard so often, sometimes the significance is missed by us, and we do not apply it. The realization of the practical application of those great teachings does not seem to enter into the very being of us. Tonight we want to examine for a while in the light of Theosophy

how we can apply the teaching of the Buddha to our own lives. We must remember that in the time of the Blessed One there was the Order, the holy company of the monks and ascetics, the Bhikkus, who followed in his footsteps; and of course his remarks were addressed largely to his disciples. Today in our own times it is amongst such Brotherhoods as Theosophical Societies that you will find those who are striving to tread that same eightfold Path. It is there that you will find that spiritual companionship that is so necessary as a support, as an encouragement, in all endeavor towards spiritual living.

Let us ask ourselves, therefore, first of all what change comes over the attitude of mind of one who has made a study and an application of Theosophical truth. How does it influence his attitude towards this mystery of human suffering? Well, friends, it is a very large question; but in the first place has it ever struck you how enormous is the amount of human misery that is caused by our attitude of mind to what we call God? Cast your mind back to your own childhood. Think of the amount of misery you suffered owing to the supposed wrath that you incurred of some Deity external to yourself, who was going to punish you. We Theosophists do not believe in that personal God of all the orthodox Churches. We do not believe in him because there is logically no room for him. If God, a being, was the omnipotent and omniscient creator and controller of this universe, then how are we to account for the presence of evil in our midst? We must of necessity hold him responsible for it if he is omnipotent, if he is all-wise, and if he is all-worthy. Therefore this is the first great idea that Theosophy gives to us as to the nature of Deity: In essence every man is a God. At the heart of his own being there is that living fire which exists at the heart of every created thing in this Universe.

Whence, you may ask, are the laws of nature that obviously exist

around us? We discover their existence when we break them and reap the penalty of so doing! Are those laws the will of a Creator? What are they? Theosophy gives one a very helpful symbol, a helpful image, whereby we can begin to understand the relationship of man to nature. According to that ancient teaching there exists nowhere in the Universe a Being who consciously controls by means of the laws of nature other created beings — you and me, in other words. We are told by the ancient Teachers that we shall get an absolutely wrong idea, and one harmful to ourselves and to our spiritual growth and progress, if we imagine God as a being somewhere outside of us, who is controlling our destinies.

How can we think about it? How can we begin to understand the problem? Why, first, friends, by studying ourselves. What are we? Look at this body of ours. We see, if we examine the teachings of science, that it itself is a vast universe; that it is composed of millions upon millions of tiny lives, atoms, molecules, and structures of living, vibrating matter pulsing with life; and the teaching of Theosophy comes along and says that each of these tiny lives is instinct with the same life that imbues your own consciousness as a Thinker; that each of those tiny lives in vast and age-long evolution proceeds to unfold, to unwrap, the forces inherent in the very being of it, inherent in the heart of it; until it passes through all the stages of progress up to and including the power of conscious and deliberate choice of action and thought; that each of those tiny lives will be raised up to the level of a conscious Thinker.

Just for a moment let us think of ourselves as bearing the same relation to the unknown Deity that those tiny lives of our own bodies bear to the consciousness of the personal man. Here is a great thought for us, because actually if you consider that relationship, you can see it is most unlikely that to those tiny lives

any complete consciousness is possible of the man who lives and uses the body which they compose and build up. All that they know is that there is a central will, a central force, and certain laws — call them laws of nature if you will — which work. Can they possibly have any conception of the God within who uses that body of flesh and blood as a means of locomotion, as a means of action, as a means of thought and feeling and service to other human beings? Not at all. Such an idea must be for them merely an inferential possibility, if they can think at all.

Now that is exactly our relation to the unknown Deity. His conscious power to control anything, anywhere, must be for us a mere inferential possibility, and therefore we rid ourselves once and for all of the bogey of a conscious Being controlling and directing our destinies; and we look for a grander, truer, more spiritual teaching which will enable us to realize ourselves in the sense and meaning of the ancient Delphic Oracle: "Man, know thyself." Man know yourself to be what you are in your innermost spiritual essence. That is our problem, and that ultimately must hold the meaning and explanation of suffering; for after all what is it that suffers? Man is not only a body. We know that the body suffers, but there is something more permanent, more real — the Eternal man transcending the body: the man that passes from body to body and life to life, and even from planet to planet, and world to world, and solar system to solar system, in the age-long pilgrimage upon which he is bound.

That brings us to the second thought that I want to put before you: that the change that takes place in a man when he studies Theosophy in regard to the problem of human suffering is tremendously influenced by the great doctrine of Reimbodiment, or Reincarnation. We do not believe that man has only one short life to live on this planet, because such an idea is an absolute denial of all justice. Do we not often see the sinner dying in his sin

and from our point of view never having received any adequate punishment — to use the term — for all the evil he has done? On the other hand, as we look about us and study ourselves, do we not ask: although the purpose of life is not only progress but perfection, how many of us reach perfection at the end of one short life? Obviously so few that it is not worth considering. Therefore when we hear for the first time that great doctrine of Reincarnation by which the eternal, inner, real man comes again into tabernacles of flesh to take up his life, take up his task where he left it off, then we get another key which will help us to understand human suffering.

And the third key that I want to put before you is that other doctrine, Karma, as they call it in the East: the doctrine by which that eternal man, that reincarnating entity, does represent every single result of every cause that he created during any one particular earth-life. We do not admit the possibility that man does actually endure suffering which is unmerited. *Unmerited from his point of view it may be*, yes, because we do not bring back to this life, as you know, a recollection of previous lives. Why is that? Simply because we have now a new brain, we have a new mechanism of consciousness, which has not received the impress and record of the previous lives that have been led; and therefore the man in his new body does not remember. But the real man remembers and sees the essential justice of his human experience.

Bearing these three main ideas in mind: the nature of the Deity, the law of Reincarnation, and the law of Karma, what would you teach a child about the idea of pain? It is a very fundamental question that. What would you teach a child? Well, perhaps it is not a question that is very easy to answer, but I think the first great lesson that any child should learn is to gain the habit and power of not identifying itself with discomfort, with pleasure, as a

matter of fact, or with pain. You will say perhaps that is a bit of a counsel of perfection for a tiny child, but it is not so: tiny children do respond in the most wonderful and impersonal way if you go the right way about it and teach them, to use the ancient Eastern simile, to regard pain for themselves with indifference; to be to themselves in regard to pain as the stone of the mango. At the same time inculcate the idea that, while they are hard and indifferent to the pain which comes to them, they should be soft as the fruit in the pulp of the mango to every cry of pain and every cry of distress that they hear from another outside of themselves. You will find that even a tiny child will respond to that idea, and will learn the first great lesson: that for it pleasure and pain are equal and opposite; things to be experienced merely, but never to be identified with to the point of losing hold of the calm spirit within their own heart as a guiding light in their own lives.

Remember that directly pain or pleasure gains the power over us to distract our spiritual meditation, then it begins to represent evil for us; and therefore the earlier that we can get hold of the impersonal idea towards pain the better it is for us. Some people may think that it is not possible to apply this principle with a tiny child, but I will give you a little example because it shows you how the great teaching of Theosophy can be applied in life. Little children are always tumbling about, always hurting themselves, always bursting into tears, are they not? — as they learn to walk and so on. Well, what are you going to do about it? A tiny child will respond to the idea that he may have hurt that which he bumped up against, and in distracting the attention of the child to the consideration of the damage that he has done to his father's furniture, for instance, lo and behold! you find the child has forgotten all about the bump that he has received. And so with the Spirit of man: while his thought is turned ever and eternally

away from himself he forgets the personal, as he forgets the bumps and bruises and the unpleasantnesses of life; and he becomes detached from objects of sense, and his heart begins to enter on the Way of Peace. That after all is the meaning of all teaching, of all Theosophy.

Shall we be always subject to pain? In answer, you have the teaching of the Blessed Buddha, who won complete enlightenment in this life, and lived in imperishable and eternal bliss while walking the ways of men. He gave it as a promise to all who followed in his footsteps: that they should realize here and now, when they had gone through the necessary steps of purification, that life was no longer a mystery of pain; they would then experience right in the core of their own being the ineffable joy and bliss that actually are at the heart of all existence. Do not think that that is merely a figure of speech. I do not mean it so. If Theosophy means anything at all, it means just that profound realization in the lives of individual Theosophists that they have an understanding, that they have a peace, that they have a joy in spiritual living which takes them in consciousness away — literally away — from all the unpleasantness of life, and turns it into one endless progression of lessons and experiences.

Think what the Theosophical conception really means! Probably a true understanding of the mystery of pain is not realized, and cannot be understood, until the age-old Path is entered and the man begins to take hold of his own lower nature, and studying it he begins to realize the blessing of pain. After all, all entry into new life is caused through pain or through death. Death of what? Why, the death of the lower elements of being. All growth and progress is a turning away of mind from that which has been, to that which is to be; and what does this mean? It means a parting from the habits of mind, and the states of being, and the modes of action, to which we are accustomed. It means that we are

prepared, having seen the light, and something more and better, to relinquish our old methods and old habits of mind and being. In that moment we die: the spiritual life is a constant dying, a constant death upon the cross of our material being. Is that a miserable thing? Is that an unhappy thing, as the Christian scriptures have rather taught us to believe? Not at all, because it simply means a giving up of the things that are not essential in our lives. We give up that which for the time being we think important, which we think has significance for us, because we realize that this giving up is in accordance with and in harmony with the higher law.

Then what happens? In a little while, after we have passed through the strangeness and the quietness that succeed an entry into a new state of being, we realize that the suffering that we have gone through has merely brought forth blossoms and buds of spiritual life in ourselves, and we realize that there is not one single experience of pain that we pass through in this small life of ours but has a peculiar significance to the man who is treading the noble eightfold Path. And I speak particularly to the one who is a spiritual aspirant — because the meaning of pain is missed, is passed by, by those who have not got the conscious spiritual guidance by which to direct their lives — that until you have learned to subordinate every single action in life to your inner spiritual purpose, you won't understand the meaning of the pain; but directly you have learned that lesson, then comes the realization that those things in your life which have been the hardest, the most difficult to cope with, are the very things which have given you the power, the capacity, the knowledge, the sympathy, and most of all the understanding, with which to help your fellow pilgrims upon that same Spiritual Path that you yourself are beginning to tread. It is one of the deepest mysteries of the great subject of pain, how every experience of life tends

towards the development of some faculty, some power, of the inner Spiritual being, which will enable you to help some brother one step farther upon the Path.

Let us turn back for a moment with that thought in mind to the inner nature of man, because Theosophy has such a sublime teaching, and it is this: that the very progress of the inner nature of man towards perfection is dependent upon the effort of that inner man to raise first of all his own material being to the condition where that lower man is a fit tabernacle for the God that exists within; and as a further stage beyond that: progress of the inner man depends upon his identification with the God who broods over him and in his own heart. Now the progress of that inner God also depends — and here is one of the great teachings of Theosophy — the progress of that God depends upon its power, its effort, to raise the lower man, to raise the inner real man, to the conscious recognition of its oneness with that inner God. How does it come about? As that inner Spiritual being is always ready, if we turn the polarity of our minds upward to the inner Spiritual nature within us, that beam of light that exists there will grow stronger and stronger until it blazes as a lamp within the heart of that inner man; and he knows without any argument, without any reasoning or help from outside himself, *he knows* that his own next step on the Path of Spiritual progress will be a step towards truth; and he then can bring that light of knowledge that he has won to those who as yet tread the path in darkness. Is it not a sublime thought that as we ourselves — and we can all of us do it, friends, at any rate to some extent — as we look out from ourselves, and leaning down for a moment stoop to help someone who needs that help, in that moment the doors of the soul open, and the light of the inner man grows stronger and stronger; and so the inner God raises the inner man, and the inner man raises the outer man, and all three together work in the service of the

one cause and the one life and the one light that exist in the heart of all creation. Don't you see how it works? It is a wonderful idea.

In these times when the stress of economic life is so tremendous, we are forced to realize that men and women, by the very privations that they are forced to go through, enter into one of the classes of beings who begin to study spiritual truths, who begin to long for an explanation of the sufferings of material life; and so it is that during the times of adversity the spiritual life of men is actually quickened. During the times of tremendous prosperity all their attention is turned outwards in identification with the very things that will lead them away from the search that we are all really and truly, however misguidedly, engaged in pursuing.

One of the troubles that many people have to face is the loss of some individual with whom they have spent some part of their lives; the loss of some loved one who passes into the Great Beyond; and that for them brings about an anguish and suffering that is very real. Now Theosophy does work a great change in a man's life even in such a case as that. Why is this? Simply because the man who has learnt to tread the Spiritual Path within himself has found a Divine companion. He has found a Divine companion that he can never lose; and therefore, while he becomes more sensitive, more loving, more compassionate, and more sympathetic to the needs of those around him, the personal loss takes on an altogether different aspect, because he knows the laws of nature, he knows that the great rhythm of life that brought the loved one to him must inevitably take the same one away beyond into a further life, and he knows that that is not something to cause sorrow to anybody except the one who is left behind. He realizes that it is only a personal and selfish idea; he renounces his personal sorrow like other things of the personal life. He gives it up because he knows that the loved one has gone to a region where there is no more sorrow, where he will enter

into a realm of Spiritual bliss and living which is beyond the mystery of pain altogether. He is free from the shackles of the flesh and all that it means until he returns once more into earth life.

What is the message of Theosophy to those whose business it is to minister to the sick? They indeed are brought constantly into this problem of pain in every moment of their lives. I think the answer would be this: that in all pain and all disease, although every individual receives naught but what he himself has sown, yet he is in need very often — and most of the time — much more of Spiritual comfort than of material assistance; and therefore the great idea that Theosophy would give to every physician of the body would be to see if you cannot light in the patient's mind and in his heart a faith, a conscious recognition, of the spiritual power that is lying dormant within his own nature. Think, if everybody, if every physician, were also a physician and healer of the soul — why, friends, the world would quickly be a different place. It is because in most cases physicians and others do not know how to minister to the needs of the soul that the needs of the body become so very pressing.

Sometimes the question is asked: Are disease and pain a mere figment of our imagination? Will a change of mind, a change of thought, cure them? Is it my fault, can I cure them by merely taking thought? That is a big question, a very important one, because, as you know, there is a whole school — what shall I call it? — Scientists, Christian Scientists, Mental Psychologists, I do not know what you would like to call them — those who believe, and so teach, that there is no such thing as pain, that there is no such thing as evil. But turn to the record of the lives of the great Teachers that have been in past ages, and see what their attitude to the problem of pain and disease is. Did they say it did not exist? Not at all. On the contrary, every single case of suffering that any

one of the great Teachers came across invariably called forth their human pity and compassion, showing that they realized what it meant; and they gave a spiritual remedy, quickening the spiritual life in that individual so that he should learn how to heal himself.

What is the healing that Theosophy recognises and considers permissible? — because, friends, it is a fact and a very potent and spiritual fact, that a change of mind and heart of the individual does affect the physical and bodily health, and even his circumstances. It is a fact; but does that mean that where a man has got a serious physical disease, or even a simple ache or pain, he shall deliberately deny it in his mind and his consciousness, and tell himself that he has only got to go on thinking that way and it will disappear? Well now, it is a fact that probably if he goes about it strongly enough he may lose that particular ache or pain. It is not a very happy thing for him if he does, because he has merely deflected it for future use. He has forced it back into the mechanism of his own consciousness where it came from, and in the fulness of time it will work out again. It had its root in a thought, in a feeling, in some wrong action; and until it has worked itself out it cannot be got rid of. All the individual can do is to learn, simply as the Buddha taught, to give up the practice of evil, to enter the noble eightfold Path, and in so doing he ceases to create future causes of evil. That is why the *Bhagavad-Gita* states: "Even a man of very evil ways, once he is devoted to me, crossing over every evil in the bark of knowledge, will verily come to me." That is the truth. All we have to do is to consider that ray of spiritual light in ourselves; and faith in that connexion and aspiration are a tremendous force for good, not only in our own lives but in everything that we try to do for others.

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The Place of Devotion in the Life of Discipleship

— Closing address at the European Convention of the T. S.,
London, August 2-3, 1936.

We come to the last moments of these happy two days together, and I offer you my sincere regrets for your sake that Brother Oosterink [Chairman, Committee of National Presidents of the European Sections, T. S.] is unable to be here to speak to you tonight; but the subject that you would have heard him discuss I shall try to say a few words upon: "The Place of Devotion in the Life of Discipleship."

This subject immediately calls to my mind that most inspiring passage in *The Secret Doctrine*, concerning the origin of devotion in human hearts; and if you will refer to it in the first volume (p. 210), you will find the interesting statement that devotion actually arose in human breasts because of the age-old and eternal memory that we all have, that we owe our spiritual origin to those Lords of Wisdom who actually infused into us the spark of self-consciousness. If we carry that thought forward when we think of the inspired doctrine of the lighting up of Manas by the Manasaputras in the Third Root Race, and remember the

marvelous body of doctrine associated with that event; and reflect that all men — savages and educated men, high and low and of all races — have this feeling, this yearning of devotion to some Being, stirring in the depths of their consciousness, the longing to find that Teacher, that Savior, however it may be formulated or expressed, we realize that it all comes from that far-off, Divine event which gave us birth to ourselves, and that we, in the higher parts of our being, are actually those Manasaputras ourselves. So we see the true origin of devotion as welling up from the Divine part of our own being, and yet as indissolubly associated with our devotion to those ancient Teachers of the Race that are symbolized for us under the name of the Great Lodge — the Brotherhood of living men who, Theosophy and the message of H. P. B. have taught us, actually exist in this world today.

The second thought that occurred to me was that wonderful and beautifully suggestive passage in *Letters That Have Helped Me*, so full of beautiful thought; and I would suggest to any of you who are perhaps less acquainted with Theosophical literature, and who do not possess that book, immediately to obtain it. It is the short passage that you will find on pages 66-7 in regard to what he describes as the Guru-parampara Chain. There we have another aspect of the origin of Devotion. I am going to read you the passage:

The relation of Guru and Chela is nothing if it is not a spiritual one. Whatever is merely outward, or formal, as the relation established by mere asking and acceptance, is not spiritual, but formal, and is that which arises between *teacher* and *pupil*. Yet even this latter is not in my way despicable, because the teacher stands to his pupil, in so far forth as the relation permits, in the same way as the Guru to his Chela. . . .

So from earliest times, among all but the modern western people, the teacher was given great reverence by the pupil, and the latter was taught from youth to look upon his preceptor as only second to his father and mother in dignity. It was among these people a great sin, a thing that did one actual harm in his moral being, to be disrespectful to his teacher even in thought. The reason for this lay then, and no less to-day does also lie, in the fact that a long chain of influences extends from the highest spiritual guide who may belong to any man, down through vast numbers of spiritual chiefs, ending at last even in the mere teacher of our youth. Or, to restate it in modern reversion of thought, a chain extends up from our teacher or preceptors to the highest spiritual chief in whose ray or descending line one may happen to be. And it makes no difference whatever, in, this occult relation, that, neither pupil nor final guide may be aware, or admit, that this is the case.

That means surely that all the world has the opportunity of participating in this marvelous fount of the occult Universe, whether they know it or not.

Thus it happens that the child who holds his teacher in reverence and diligently applies himself accordingly with faith, does no violence to this intangible but mighty chain, and is benefited accordingly, whether he knows it or not. Nor again does it matter that a child has a teacher who evidently gives him a bad system. This is his Karma, and by his reverent and diligent attitude he works it out, and transcends erstwhile that teacher.

This chain of influence is called the *Guruparampara chain*.

The Guru is the *guide or readjuster*, and may not always

combine the function of teacher with it.

There is a world of vital thought in that idea, and this leads me to the next thought that naturally arises out of it: how are we to find these Teachers — to come in contact with them? Is it possible for us to do so? I would venture to suggest one or two ideas that I personally believe in. If we study the evidence in our literature, in *The Mahatma Letters* and in many parts of H. P. B.'s teaching, and so on, we must come to the realization, if we are really honest with ourselves, that these Beings have a high probability of existence; and still we may be without what might be called internal evidence that they do exist as living men. We may not have had the privilege of coming in contact with anybody who is in the position of being able to say he knows because he has experience.

What are we as individuals to do in order to gain this inner certainty for ourselves? — which brings us back to this question of devotion and its place in our spiritual lives — for has not the statement been made that the Masters are a symbol collectively of the Higher Self; and will you not find, if you turn to *Light on the Path*, that the way to gain some understanding of what is meant by the Masters of Wisdom, by the great Teachers of the Race, by the Mahatmas, is to fit ourselves to be instruments in their hands? — for that is the only condition wherefrom we may enter into any kind of relationship with these Teachers. If we can find the way to become instruments in their hands, if we would make our voice heard, and make it possible to impress our thoughts upon their akasa, then we must learn that that voice of ours will not be heard unless it is the voice of the Higher part of our being; and therefore we have to learn to rise up enough into the higher realms of our inner being, so that with the voice of the Higher Self we can make our call upon the Law. Then comes the response from "the Keepers of the Sacred Light," as Master K. H. phrases it

in *The Mahatma Letters*. May I read to you the passage from Letter LXIV, page 358, where Master K. H. deals with one of these problems:

Ah, how long shall the mysteries of chelaship overpower and lead astray from the path of truth the wise and perspicacious, as much as the foolish and the credulous! How few of the many pilgrims who have to start without chart or compass on that shoreless Ocean of Occultism reach the wished for land. Believe me, faithful friend, that *nothing* short of full confidence in us, in our good motives if not in our wisdom, in our foresight, if not omniscience — which is not to be found on this earth — can help one to cross over from one's land of dream and fiction to our Truth land, the region of stern reality and fact. Otherwise the ocean will prove shoreless indeed; its waves will carry one no longer on waters of hope, but will turn every ripple into doubt and suspicion; and bitter shall they prove to him who starts on that dismal, tossing sea of the Unknown, with a prejudiced mind!

Another thought occurred to me: if we seek to become instruments in Their hands, then once we have recognised by our own desperate need, the need that others must have (because we all more or less are in the same boat), our first and most obvious duty calls forth our effort to relieve the need that we know exists in the hearts of others. This leads us to take the first step, and, having the literature in our hands as part of our tools of work, this course presents itself to each one of us. The way is pointed out in *The Mahatma Letters* very clearly, but it is useless for us to sit still in our Lodge room and watch other people doing the work. For each of us has the responsibility to find that creative piece of work which touches causes; and by that I mean that we shall seriously consider the problem as to what any one of us can

do that will be a real, creative piece of work. We can all do it in some way or another in the circumstances in which we are placed; and it is that kind of effort, combined with the aspiration that I was trying to express to you in relation to the Higher Self and its connexion with the Masters: it is this kind of effort that will bring us the internal evidence that They do exist.

Thus having become instruments — dedicated instruments — in Their hands, all here who have tried the experiment will agree and know that the greatest happiness I suppose that any Theosophist has is when, being self-forgetful, he is able to give to others the message of Theosophy, however haltingly or however beautifully the ideas are expressed; for there we find an inexhaustible stream of happiness resulting from that kind of work in which we are all engaged. Contrariwise, if through our own fault we are not living to our highest, if we in any way forfeit the capacity, or lose the opportunity, of acting in that way as instruments, then the corresponding pain and suffering can be very great.

Again I want to remind you of that passage that I have thought of so many times in these last two days, that you will find in *Light on the Path*, that in the life of the disciple he never knows until the entrance to the Pathway is found at what moment he will discover and hear the voice of the Beloved in the hearts of those around him. It seemed to me such a marvelous expression of just that discovery that we have witnessed in these two days of the Convention: we have heard the voice of the Beloved speaking to us in the thoughts and words that have been so spontaneously uttered by all who have contributed here either as speakers or by their presence and sympathy. It is the voice of the Spirit that has sounded through our ranks, and we are all deeply sensible of it.

A last thought I want to put to you. I am reminded of that

wonderful story of one of the Bhikkus of the Buddha — one of those who was called upon to preach the doctrine, and his situation was likened to a man who was digging a well for water in the desert, because the Bhikku complained that he did not get the response from his hearers that he thought the teachings of Buddhism should evoke from his congregation, or from what we should call the public. He had a feeling that they were not interested; and the Buddha drew his attention to the man who was digging the well in the desert, and asked the Bhikku what he would do if, having dug to a great depth, as he thought, he did not find water. He answered that he must dig deeper. Being applied to the experience of the Bhikku, it simply meant that if he did not get the response from the hearts of his hearers, then he had not dug deep enough into his own spiritual nature, and therefore he had to dig deeper and deeper, and then would come the response from the hearts of his hearers.

Now is it not just to that great work that we Theosophists are dedicated — dedicated to the bringing forth of the spiritual and higher nature in the lives of all mankind? To bring forth the spiritual qualities in all men — that is our great work!

* * * * *

So Brothers, with full hearts we will just enter upon a moment or two of silence, and we will close with the Invocation.

The Creative Power of Thought

The subject of the Creative Power of Thought is intimately related with the first principle in which our Theosophical Movement is rooted. You cannot consider the dynamic and creative effects of the thinking power of the human mind without immediately being struck by the fact that all nations and all men are in reality interconnected to such an extent that they are affected morally

and physically by the thoughts and actions of each other. In other words, if there is a nation which is bent upon a vicious, destructive, downward and degenerate course, that nation will inevitably poison the very thought atmosphere of this Globe; and then by means of the inner constitution of the planet upon which we live, there is conveyed to all other nations of the earth that main current of thought and destructive energy that such a nation — or if we choose to make the application, such an individual — chooses to generate.

If that is true, there is fortunately a more cheerful side to the picture, and that is, that just as we are affected morally and physically to our detriment if we are negative and weak enough to be so affected, so also, even unconsciously and against our will, we benefit by those nations and men of goodwill, those individuals of high spiritual nature, who are pouring forth their beneficent thought upon the world; and because of the inescapable unity in which we are all rooted, it benefits with its creative power in the same way that the other, destructive kind of energy pulls the whole fabric of universal life downward — or shall I say retards it somewhat in its upward progress.

This is a very fundamental thought, as I see it, from which to commence our whole study of the subject. In that rather famous book called *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, there are stated three great Truths, and one of them is to the effect that man has it in his own hands to create his own weal or woe, his own future life and future destiny; and it is done without any doubt at all by means of the dynamic, creative force of his own desire, his aspirations, his thought, and his will. These are the tools which the Theosophist, the occultist, the disciple, the Mahatma, and the man of the world, have at their disposal.

The Theosophical philosophy, therefore, at the very outset of our

study ennobles man, and shows him that he has within a godlike and creative power to make for himself the very conditions for which his heart most yearns, most secretly aspires towards. We have all, I have no doubt, tried to experiment with these laws in greater or less degree, in an endeavor to apply them to ourselves. But as a practical example: what should we do if we find ourselves surrounded by conditions we do not want? First of all it is necessary to create the clear mental picture of that which you individually want to achieve, the particular objective that you have set yourself; and immediately very powerful forces are set in motion, for which you individually have a great responsibility. Everything that we desire, especially when the desire is very strong, immediately sets up a current along magnetic lines of force to those layers of space which contain that which we seek; thus creating lines of magnetic attraction with other human beings or spiritual entities who have the capacity to bring to it that which we have set our minds upon. Directly you begin to desire a thing, immediately you are beginning to create for yourself opportunity, and the opportunity will come inevitably to work out that which you yourself, for good or ill, have set your creative forces in motion to bring about. Therefore is it necessary to emphasize the tremendous importance of submitting every such determination, aspiration, desire, to the dictates of the Higher Self in each one of us, to the Silent Witness of all our endeavors. For otherwise, if we are not willing to take the position that was taken two thousand years ago by those who created for us the New Testament; if we have not the point of view "Not my will but Thine," then we may risk to create something of a personal effect or result which will hang around our necks like mill-stones: for the forces that we set in motion are real — they will bring to us that which we want them to bring. Fix your mind, and your will, and your desire to bring evil to another, and you will be destroyed yourself by the reaction that such kind

of work brings about.

These forces — we are talking about occultism — are creative and destructive: hence the very thorough drilling that those who study the genuine teachings of Theosophy receive in the moral and ethical basis of the Theosophical philosophy. For if that is not rooted in the student's and aspirant's mind, it is more than likely he will make an application of these laws, when he begins to understand them, that will not only wreck or bring evil (and untold evil) to others with whom he is associated, but still more will he wreck himself.

Now a word as to the means by which the thoughts of other individuals and other nations affect us. It is by means of that which Eliphas Levi called the Astral Light, that part of the Cosmic Ether which is actually the lowest part of that universal Cosmic principle which in the East they call *Akasa*. That astral light interpenetrates our whole Globe just as it does every other planet in the Solar system. It is imponderable, tenuous, and contains the picture, the impress, the record, and therefore the memory, of every thought and every act that has ever been performed on this Globe. It is because thought travels, that when we emit or permit to pass through our minds a thought, which is a living intelligence, a thing full of life, we are setting in motion a force which goes to the farthest confines of space. Think of all the creative ideas for good along constructive and healthy lines: great inventions, wonderful ideas dreamed by inventors, by poets, by Adepts, by Mahatmas, which are stored up as it were in the *Akasa*, in the Astral Light, waiting for that man or woman who is high-minded enough to give them expression in action. This is the explanation why, when an inventive mind is concentrated upon a particular problem, the complete solution will often come into his mind, although he has not worked out all the logical steps to the solution that is eventually arrived at. In other words it is possible,

if we learn how to do it, to call to our aid the thoughts of the past, and those of the mighty spiritual thinkers of our own era, to help us, to encourage us, in any worthy purpose that we may have, or may be engaged upon. Conversely, to the extent that we are living under the control of the sense life, of the personality, of negative states of mind and thought — to that extent we are calling to — I won't say our aid, but we are attracting, setting in motion, a reinforcement of the very negative, sensual, destructive or evil states of mind in which we may be at any moment of time.

So what does it amount to? It amounts to this: since our mind and consciousness are always busy with something, even when we are almost in a state of inertia, there is some thought, some idea, some aspiration, and some desire, coloring the whole kama-manasic consciousness. Whatever it is that is in our mind is being reinforced, strengthened, by all past thinking along the same line that is stored in the astral light. See how important this is.

Without any volition on our part, if we are living at a consistently low level we are inviting all the same forces of a low level to strengthen us in that negative and weak attitude that we are adopting. See, therefore, what tremendous powers and implication and hope the spreading of the Theosophical philosophy and teaching has for mankind. Why? Because you are giving them something in the way of food for their minds that lets the whole Inner Soul of the man rise and take in its comprehension the vast sweep of the Universal Mind, letting in the sunlight of the spiritual life, giving it food, attracting the human soul and the human mind upward.

Directly you link to these teachings on the Creative Power of Thought the doctrine of Karma, and the doctrine of Reincarnation, you begin to see where we are being led: what happens to a man before birth, and what happens to him after death. What he believes about those two stages — ante-natal and

after-death — will necessarily govern his thinking here and now. Therefore, these great subjects which have occupied the greatest minds and intellects that the world has ever known, and on which we have a very rich collection of teaching, are necessarily of the greatest importance, just because they do influence our thought, and therefore our action.

There is a very telling page in William Q. Judge's *Epitome of Theosophy*, which deals with the mechanism by which thought really works, and it shows how, if we fix our mind in disapproval or judgment upon another human being, we attract to ourselves elemental entities of the very nature of the fault that we are condemning, and then we proceed to build into ourselves the very condition that we wish to eradicate in somebody else; and so the fault goes backwards and forwards, intensifying the characteristics in both. The obligation and the remedy are obvious in this case. Exactly the reverse is true if we dwell upon thoughts of beautiful qualities that we would like to see, and do see around us in many cases; for then we are strengthening by our approval, and our goodwill, these characteristics in ourselves and others.

I would like, in connexion with this subject of thought, just to touch very briefly upon the relation of the Theosophical classification of man's constitution, with that of modern psychology. What is the connexion between the conscious mind of the modern psychologist and the Theosophical classification? What is meant by the modern psychologist's subjective mind, and where does it fit into the scheme of occult science?

I venture to suggest that the objective, or conscious mind of the modern psychologist is the lower manas, which is responsible for our ordinary every-day objective thinking; but the unconscious or subjective mind is another matter. The psychologists mix up,

from lack of knowledge, the two parts of the mind — the Spiritual, that which inheres in Buddhi: that power of direct cognition and discrimination: the higher part of man; and the force inherent in what we may term the instinctive mind, the mind that is connected with *kama-manas*. We share this instinctive mind with all kingdoms of nature below us, and in particular the animal kingdom. Here we have nascent thought in the higher exemplars of the animal kingdom; and in that instinctive mind are many of the characteristics that modern psychologists attribute to the subjective mind. But they leave out of account, or are unable to account for, the source of all those higher, nobler ideas of the human mind, which really come from the Divine part of his nature, and which they just classify as the unconscious. These things are very important for us because the Theosophical classification gives a clue as to what we must do in order to use our mental and creative faculties to the highest end.

There is one aspect of this problem that is particularly interesting and very helpful. I have no doubt that many of us have at times been — afflicted, shall I say, with a problem which seems at times beyond our individual capacity to solve: a problem of such difficulty that the advantages and disadvantages of each course are almost equally balanced; and the mind becomes weary, the capacity to think and to solve apparently so inefficient that the person is in a very difficult position. It happens every day for many people. If we apply the laws that are behind this practical application of occult and scientific principles, it is quite possible to relegate the solution of the problem to the right department of the mind, and cease to worry. What do you think is the origin of the useful old practice of not making a decision until you have slept on it, until you have given time for this higher part of what the psychologist calls the Unconscious, or subjective mind, to get to work? It is capable of providing the solution of any problem.

Read what H. P. B. has to say in *Isis Unveiled* about the power of the Adept to rise into the higher consciousness, and know all that ever was, is, or can be known about any subject in the Universe. Why? Simply because the higher part of us, the Divine part of us, is actually omniscient: therefore all we have to do is to find the means of opening ourselves to the inflow of this knowledge — and it can be done by asking for it, by aspiring towards it, by opening our minds to it, by presenting the problem in a good and orderly fashion, and leaving it to that higher part of the mind to find the solution; and if you have a sufficiently strong desire, and a sufficiently developed will, and enough confident expectation (which you may, if you wish, call faith), the result is quite certain, and you find within the requisite time the solution of the problem. This, of course, is a law which is constantly used by all of us all the time — generally perhaps more or less unconsciously; but nevertheless it is a law which works, and it is an extremely creative law. There are many illustrations of the working of it which you have probably read about and know very well.

QUESTION: Can thoughts be seen in the Astral Light?

ANSWER: Yes, if we have the necessary power of psychic vision, of course they are very easy to see; but if you have not this psychic vision opened you won't see them — you will see just what is before your eyes as usual.

QUESTION: In what form would they be seen or colored?

ANSWER: It just depends upon the person who has created the thought — whether he is able to think with precision and clarity, in which case the thought will achieve a very definite form, and will be imbued with pranic life and color in accordance with the quality of thought, emotion, aspiration, desire, that the person injected into it at the time the thought was emitted. It might be

said that the kind of thought which is sent forth with the most powerful type of will is usually the most evil and material. Thoughts that are sent out with passion and hatred are very powerful, because they are energized with a tremendous amount of pranic vitality. Stronger still, of course, are thoughts sent out by a highly spiritual entity. Such a thought will actually have the power, when projected into the aura of an individual, or into a room full of people such as this, of producing a peaceful and beneficent influence almost as great as if a Mahatma were present in the very room. These are some of the different effects of thought, but of course the subject is a big one.

QUESTION: The laws of desire and thought — ought they to be used for any practical purpose in one's own life, or used merely for spiritual purposes?

ANSWER: I have been trying to give illustrations of the way we can use them in our daily lives. It just depends: if our lives are selfish then our desires and thoughts will necessarily be selfish; but probably you are attaching too low a value, and too much significance, and at the same time too little significance, to our personal and everyday needs. I think it is a profound mistake to try to divorce the everyday demands of life that we all experience from the spiritual part of our being. Man should be looked upon, and we should look upon ourselves, as complete entities, not chopped up into little parts. If we have spiritual ideals and objectives we shall also have personal duties in life to perform, and thus the laws that we learn and study in Theosophical teaching are properly applied to the regeneration of our personal lives, desires, thoughts, feelings and all the rest. Certainly we should use them.

QUESTION: In what sense did you use the words 'creation of a thought'?

ANSWER: The thought itself is not created, but we are janitors of the temple so to speak, and we can permit or refuse the entrance into the temple of the mind whatever thought we like. In that sense I have been using the idea of creative thought, because we are arbiters of our destiny, and therefore in a true sense creators. Though we do not create thought we nevertheless create those causes for which we are responsible for good or ill.

QUESTION: How is thought affected by Karma? If a man's thoughts are negative and evil and he suddenly changes.

ANSWER: If people have for years or lives thought negatively, that is because that is the state of their own inner being; and once the reaction, which must be extremely painful, as all negative states are not only painful but also destructive — when the suffering caused by such reaction has reached sufficient intensity, and gone on long enough, the man will be compelled by nature's beneficent and compassionate law, to turn inward upon himself and seek the cause of this negative condition, and then he will realize that he has placed himself in a prison of his own making. You will find that his course has been downward into matter all these years or lives, and he will say, "Well, I have put myself in this box, I will get out of it"; and by aspiring upwards and making a good strong effort of his spiritual will, he begins to create real thoughts, living messengers of good for himself and his fellows. Certainly he can begin right now. He has no need to wait. We have it in our hands to do these things.

QUESTION: Would you say that the thoughts fade out of the Astral Light as the effects of them are worked out, or do they remain just as evident?

ANSWER: They tend to dissipate as they are translated into action. Assuming that powerful thoughts are generated, they are not necessarily translated into action. There are plenty of people who

are very good at dreaming and inventing clever things, but who are not really men of action; and these thoughts will remain in the astral light until eventually they find a responsive mind, and their energy is dissipated by being worked out in action; but then they are created thereby still more powerful. For example, you think of an invention that nobody knows anything about except the inventor; then somebody takes it up, translates it, and all the world knows about this new invention. Well then the Astral Light is more impregnated by this idea than it was before. If the thoughts are weak then they tend to dissipate more quickly, but if spiritually vital or destructively powerful they last quite a long time.

QUESTION: At that rate there may be cases where there is no record left at all of certain thoughts?

ANSWER: There is actually a record, permanent and indelible, in the higher parts of Akasa. It is so for thought in the same way as there is a permanent and indelible record of all past history. It is there, but there is this difference: that a record may be there, but there is no dynamic force in a record *per se*. It is like a page of a book, which is nothing unless someone reads it and is affected by it; but thought force, creative thought, energy, which is of course an elemental creature — actually comes into being around an idea or a powerful desire, and is a creative energy in the Universe; and then, when it has worked out its destiny — fulfilled its karmic destiny — then only the record remains as distinct from the undischarged and vital energy. It is like the record that we leave behind us when we depart from this earth. It is not the same thing as having the man here in life. He is the vital entity who can do things the record can do nothing.

Faith Versus Wisdom

If you search Theosophical literature you will come to realize probably, as I have, that it is very difficult to find much teaching or information upon the general question of Faith. In fact one is rather astonished to discover that in the Index to *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. B. describes Faith as one of the pillars of the devil; and it is rather that attitude to faith that seems to pervade Theosophical literature, for some reason. That is why we chose for our evening's reading that wonderful discourse from the *Bhagavad-Gita* 'Devotion by means of Faith' (chapter xii, *Bhagavad-Gita*); from which it is immediately clear that the most enlightened spiritual instructors are quite agreed that faith in that spiritual sense of the term is a *sine qua non* for the success of the Arjuna who sets out towards the goal of reaching Yoga, or union with the Supreme.

How are we to understand the Divine faith then from the Theosophists' point of view, and just what are they getting at when they throw cold water upon what the ordinary man and woman are accustomed to regard as faith? Is it a great desire to hurt, and to treat with contempt the religious views of other people? Because if so it is a denial, right at the outset, of the fundamental principle upon which our Movement is based. It may appear to be so, but if we look a little deeper we see that all the aspersions are cast, not upon Faith in its higher spiritual meaning, but upon that shadow of real faith which in two words may be summed up as blind belief, or credulity; credulity, the tendency to swallow open-mouthed any glamorous, marvelous idea that passes for truth and philosophy. There is an abundance of credulity in the world today. We all, I suppose, at some time in our lives are unduly credulous. We place our faith and trust in things and people that are not really worthy of it; but is that true faith, or is it blind belief and credulity? Obviously the latter; and it is that looking outside of oneself with credulity which is verily

the "pillar of the devil" that H. P. B. speaks of. It takes from man his only hope of any illumination, because he is all the time looking outward, looking for props to lean upon. True faith must be something that is rooted in the eternal and indestructible part of a man's being. It must be something which is based upon recognition of the omnipotence of man's immortal spirit.

The whole of the Theosophical philosophy tends towards a greater and greater understanding and realization of this higher nature in man; and I venture to say that there is no faith for an individual in the sense in which Paul the Initiate uses the term, except in so far as he has had at least a glimpse within himself of the light of the higher nature. For all Truth, all Wisdom, Love, and true Knowledge flow from the higher part of our being.

Faith is the knowledge that Truth exists; it is the knowledge that there are men in the world who know that Truth; it is the certainty that if we aspire rightly and live our lives in terms of that search for the higher realities, we can know with a knowledge which is beyond any possibility of doubt. That is why I have sometimes described faith as knowledge based upon experience — experience, that is, of the higher truths and the higher realities. If we take this view of faith, is it not obvious that the title of our study tonight, 'Faith versus Wisdom,' is a bit of an anomaly? I deny that Faith can ever be set against Wisdom, for faith in the true sense of the word is an indispensable part of Wisdom. Only those who have Wisdom will have Faith, and *vice versa* to some extent.

Yet there is another aspect of this problem: there are many men and women who may truly be said to possess faith; and yet from the Theosophical point of view have they Wisdom? This is a more difficult problem to answer. They have faith in the sense in which I have been trying to speak of it, and this means necessarily that

they have a shadow of inner illumination; but on the other hand they lack something, and that something it is which the great Theosophical Movement has come into the world to bring to men. There is nothing that is of more value to any human soul than that inner feeling of quiet, the certitude that there is a beneficent, protecting influence at the root of his being, and overshadowing, as it were, all his effort on this plane: that certainty, found in so many so-called ordinary men and women of the world, which guides them on their life's Pathway. It comes, as H. P. B. described it, from the fact that in these people the higher nature already predominates over the lower. In fact, that is how she defined a Theosophist. Whether he has ever heard the word or not, whether he has ever seen the literature or not, if the higher nature in him predominates over the lower, that man is a Theosophist.

We believe, however, that Wisdom is something more than this, because it implies the completeness, the wholeness, of one who has balanced his nature, who has achieved unity of spirit, soul, and body; and brought them into such harmony and such union with the higher pole of his being that he can at will identify himself with the Universal Mind, the Universal Soul of nature itself. But that is necessarily an exalted state of being. Wisdom, as you will find in *Isis Unveiled* and elsewhere, from a Theosophical point of view means the esoteric teaching as a whole. That teaching, it is true, can be found in books; however, will you have Wisdom if you know all that there is in the books? The answer is No. Books are but a means to collect the fuel, as it were, which, truly kindled by the fire of the Spirit, may one of these days burst into the flame of wisdom.

Wisdom is an interior quality, but it does imply knowledge, as distinct from a kind of subjective certainty or faith. There are many mystical people in the world who feel truth intuitively, and

yet who would be sorely put to it to explain the reason, the laws, underlying the truth that they dimly perceive intuitively; and this is what the Theosophist means when he distinguishes between Faith and Wisdom. Picture a Mahatma, for example. You cannot conceive of any instance in which he would not be able to supply you with the reasons underlying the situation in which you find yourself, and in which mankind finds itself at any moment in time. He understands the laws — spiritual, intellectual, psychical, cosmical — underlying the evolution of all the kingdoms of nature, and man's relation to them, and to the planet in which he lives. He understands these laws because of his unveiled inner spiritual perception. Because of it he is able to relate any part of his own consciousness with the corresponding part of nature from which the essence of that principle was originally drawn. But for all that, will the Mahatma be an individual who because of his Wisdom is without Faith? On the contrary, he is one who *knows* with absolute certainty, and therefore expectancy, that when he sets his will in motion with a clear-cut picture in his mind, he will achieve that which he wills to achieve. He has absolute faith, because he has absolute knowledge in the unerring infallibility of the result that he will bring about.

I will read you a passage from the Preface of *Isis Unveiled* (I, vi) which rather sums up these ideas and shows the Theosophists' attitude thereto:

When, years ago, we first travelled over the East, exploring the penetralia of its deserted sanctuaries, two saddening and ever-recurring questions oppressed our thoughts: Where, when, WHAT is GOD? *Who ever saw the IMMORTAL SPIRIT of man, so as to be able to assure himself of man's immortality?*

It was while most anxious to solve these perplexing

problems that we came into contact with certain men, endowed with such mysterious powers and such profound knowledge that we may truly designate them as the sages of the Orient. To their instructions we lent a ready ear. They showed us that by combining science with religion, the existence of God and immortality of man's spirit may be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid. For the first time we received the assurance that the Oriental philosophy has room for no other faith than an absolute and immovable faith in the omnipotence of man's own immortal self. We were taught that this omnipotence comes from the kinship of man's spirit with the Universal Soul — God! The latter, they said, can never be demonstrated but by the former. Man-spirit proves God-spirit, as the one drop of water proves a source from which it must have come. Tell one who had never seen water, that there is an ocean of water, and he must accept it on faith or reject it altogether. But let one drop fall upon his hand, and he then has the fact from which all the rest may be inferred. After that he could by degrees understand that a boundless and fathomless ocean of water exists. Blind faith would no longer be necessary; he would have supplanted it with KNOWLEDGE. When one sees mortal man displaying tremendous capabilities, controlling the forces of nature and opening up to view the world of spirit, the reflective mind is overwhelmed with the conviction that if one man's spiritual *Ego* can do this much, the capabilities of the FATHER SPIRIT must be relatively as much vaster as the whole ocean surpasses the single drop in volume and potency. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*; prove the soul of man by its wondrous powers — you have proved God!

QUESTION: What can you say to a person who says, "I have no

faith in anyone"?

ANSWER: I should like to suggest this: that such a person in almost every case that I can think of, has almost certainly never come across the literature of occultism and Theosophy; and it is possible to arouse his interest and to stimulate his zeal to enter upon an experimental research for himself. Look into this literature and see if there is not a message for him there which will change that negative and destructive point of view. To believe in nothing and nobody spells ultimate death; it means that such an individual has no sure hold upon the rudder of the boat of life. But I suppose the thing that will help that person most is the perception, in regard to the one who is trying to help him: "Here is somebody who seems to have a certain inner peace, knowledge, certainty, who has certain spiritual qualities of life." Then he will necessarily begin to wonder where these things come from, and how they can be gained for himself. Perhaps others can give a more illuminating reply.

QUESTION: I have heard that if you want a thing very much and have faith that it will come, and work for it, eventually it comes. How far are we justified in wishing for a thing and trusting that it will come — because it may not be good for us?

ANSWER: Nevertheless it is this engine, this machinery, that makes the world go round; it is this that we are doing every moment of the day; it is this mechanism, or this law, which enables us, when we so decide, to walk out of this room and down into the street. How far are we justified in desiring, hoping, willing and having faith that our objectives will one day be achieved? I say — at least I believe — that we have every justification for the use of this faculty and power. If I were to say the contrary it might mean, for myself and for others, that we would lose the ability to act at all. If we did not feel and believe

and *know* that some day, somewhere, sooner or later we should achieve that upon which we had, set our heart's desire, we would never lift a finger, we would never move a step; and therefore the problem is not as to the means, but rather as to the *motive*, and the ends that we have set our hearts upon. It is certain we shall achieve what we want to achieve if we just concentrate enough on it.

We have all had proof of it in our own lives: that often the thing that we thought desirable, and wished to achieve, did not come to us perhaps for many years — but it came! And when it eventually came, you remembered how you set out to get that thing many years ago. Is not this the meaning of that passage in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, where it is pointed out that the ways and objectives of worldly men are manifold, that they have hundreds of objectives; and therefore they only reach these objectives in a scattered kind of way? They achieve some of them, but not all of them, probably because they do not put sufficient concentration and energy into the pursuit of them. "But my devotee," says Krishna, "has only one objective," and that is the finding of union with Him; and in that pursuit, in that concentrated upward aspiration, all other objectives and pursuits eventually become merged. "For," as he says in one of the Discourses, "when one is concentrated in devotion to me, I take the responsibility for the happiness of that individual." It is just a parallel of the other statement in the New Testament of seeking the kingdom of Heaven, and all the other lower things that one needs in life will be added to them. But the great safeguard in the choice of the objectives that we pursue is always and all the time to seek the light of the Inner Self upon that which we wish to achieve. What is the meaning of the Gayatri if not just that: praying that the fire of the Supreme Will shall illumine our hearts and minds, that we may see the direct Pathway before our feet: that it will show its

the pitfalls that we are about to stumble into if we set our wills upon achieving such and such a thing. But if in truth we are seeking the spiritual things, then we are always prepared to renounce as unimportant those things that do not fit in with the promptings of the Spirit; for we find that the Spirit is always pushing us in the direction where our true heart is set.

QUESTION: Is it true that when that position is reached, there is no renunciation and no self-sacrifice, because one realizes that one is doing just the thing one should do?

ANSWER: I think it is true; but at the same time the human nature of the individual aspirant is often, in fact in many cases, probably sufficiently active at times to feel the pull of having to give up personal opinion to impersonal and Inner leading as it were. There are many instances in the New Testament and elsewhere of that struggle of the individual aspirant. Nevertheless the law of it all is that if he receives the Inner guidance, then he has at all costs to follow it lest he lose it; and once it is experienced, then that is at once the most valuable and precious of all possessions.

QUESTION: Is intellectual knowledge a hindrance towards gaining true Wisdom?

ANSWER: We should say that it depends very largely upon the type of individual concerned. You know there is the type sometimes described as "stupid saint"; to such a one, some intellectual knowledge would be very valuable, because it would round out and supply the missing link in that individual! You would find that he never thinks at all, that he lives in the realms of sentiment and emotion largely — 'feeling' would be a better expression; and some good, sound, healthy philosophy would be invaluable to that individual. But to the type of person who readily reads vast quantities of literature and who becomes the armchair-philosopher, and never translates it into action, more

intellectual study becomes a hindrance; and to such a person the more mystical and devotional kinds of Yoga, as set forth in such a book as the *Bhagavad-Gita* would tend to round out the unbalanced nature.

QUESTION: While it is a good thing to have faith, to take what we are told by a Teacher we trust, should we not always have a sort of "divine discontent," and always an urge to get something more — a feeling that that is not the end?

ANSWER: I think we should be in a very happy situation, if we realized — which I imagine we should — if we felt we had a Teacher, any of us individually, who had given us so much that it was impossible to want any more. But I venture to say that there is no aspirant or disciple who has not that feeling of what the questioner calls "divine discontent," always urging him forward and upward, always to seek and penetrate farther and farther into the depths of his own being. It must be so, because if we become completely satisfied, Nature won't let us stay there so very long. We have to go forward and upward again. If we did not feel the need of any further progress, we should stay where we are and not do very much about it!

"The Dual Aspect of Wisdom"

Friends: H. P. B. quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* those familiar words, "Knowledge dwells in heads replete with thoughts of other men, Wisdom in minds attentive to their own"; and an early Christian writer remarked that the business of Wisdom is to discern first that which is true, and then to be able to discern that which is false. Now Theosophy — the Wisdom of the Ages — points out the fundamental duality, as it were, that runs throughout the manifested Universe: that while the whole of manifested nature is rooted in an indissoluble unity, which it is

the business of Wisdom to discover so that we can realize it in our own consciousness, nevertheless, directly we pass in thought from that boundless, infinite unity which in this philosophy we call Parabrahman, the Absolute, then we come down in thought necessarily to the contrast in nature between Spirit and Matter, subject and object, and so forth.

This, applied to man, immediately shows us that we have a spiritual pole to our being, as well as a material one; and in *Isis Unveiled*, the first book of Mme. Blavatsky, she pointed out that there is indwelling within the external form of man and of the Universe a connecting link between Spirit and Matter, which in the human entity she calls "the Real Man." Now it is the whole purpose of Wisdom, I venture to suggest, to show how this inner Real Entity in man, which is the thinking, human, striving soul, the Personal Ego, the Astral Monad, the Manas — call it what you will — it is this Entity, as it were, fixed, crucified, in Space between heaven above and the earth beneath, which has to tread the Golgotha of life, which is a pilgrim marching literally through eternity, from age to age, but which is not unconditionally immortal.

Wherever there is a spark of the Boundless All, there you have all the sevenfold principles of life in embryo. It is purely a question of degree of unfoldment: the consciousness is latent in the life of an atom as it is in the highest God that your mind can rise to: therefore it will not come as a shock, the idea that this intermediate principle in man, striving towards Wisdom on the one hand, and pulled down towards matter on the other, is a being that has to win immortality; and the process by which he mounts the ladder of life, the stairway of evolution, is the seven rungs of his own being. Occultism is the process; as T. Subba Row said in the early days of this Movement: "It is the process by which man learns to transfer his individual consciousness from

his mortal, material body, up the stairway of his being to the incorruptible world of non-being represented by his seventh principle." So Wisdom is that state of consciousness which is achieved when the human entity has learned how to merge itself into an indissoluble unity with its own Divine part, its Higher Self, the Higher Ego — what in Theosophical terminology is called Manas indissolubly united to Buddhi.

All men have this higher nature. It is, if we did but know it, a god not in embryo but in actuality, dwelling in full power, omniscient almost, one with the Universal World-Soul. And it is because this Higher Nature of ours is part of that indissoluble unity of the Supreme Soul itself, that we have an aspect of our being which is of the nature of Truth. Half our task is but to open ourselves, open a certain door of our being, that we may enter into the inspiration, the light, the knowledge, which is actually inherent in that part of our being.

I dared to call this lecture 'The Dual Aspect of Wisdom,' and while I do not want to concentrate attention too much upon the lower side, the lower aspect of wisdom, nevertheless it must be evident to all of us, as was shown so perfectly by St. James in the New Testament, that there is a terrestrial, psychic, and devilish Wisdom, if it may be so called, as well as the Divine nature. I think that if you will permit me I will just read you the passage, because it shows the Wisdom that is to be found scattered throughout the New Testament. In the third chapter (11-17), you find these words, and here is shown very beautifully the contrast between these two poles of man's being:

Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water
and bitter?

You will remember that H. P. B. in the early days of the Movement in a mood of protest at the lives of certain Theosophists, pointed

out that pure water could not be given to the world out of a foul bucket, and that the lower nature of men must be cleansed.

Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries, either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

I ask you to note that phrase:

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

There you get in the New Testament the statement — one of the statements — of the dual aspect of Wisdom; and H. P. B. has a remarkable article dealing with the subject in one of the early volumes of *Lucifer* (her own magazine) where she pointed out how often Theosophists are taken to task because they believe in the Wisdom of the Ancients: they uphold it, they stand for it, they believe in it; while the disciples of modern knowledge, so to speak, think and believe that modern scientists, modern

inventions and thought and psychology and so-called philosophy, are in every way equal, if not superior, to the Wisdom of old. The question is, "Is that so?" H. P. B. challenges the whole position very, very strongly, and her words are so suggestive, so pregnant with illuminating ideas, as well as rather amusing, that I should like to read you some of the passages that she has in this article. She is replying to somebody who has put the point of view that modern wisdom is superior to the Ancient. She says:

. . . Our correspondent is welcome to his own views, but so are we to ours. Let him imagine that the Eiffel Tower dwarfs the Pyramid of Ghizeh into a mole-hill, and the Crystal Palace grounds transform the hanging gardens of Semiramis into a kitchen garden — if he likes. But if we are seriously "challenged" by him to show "in what respect our age of hourly progress and gigantic thought" — a progress a trifle marred, however, by our Huxleys being denounced by our Spurgeons, and the University ladies, senior classics and wranglers, by the "hallelujah lasses" — is inferior to the ages of, say, a hen-pecked "Socrates and a cross-legged Buddha," then we will answer him, giving him, of course, our own personal opinion.

Our age, we say, is inferior in wisdom to any other, because it professes, more visibly every day, *contempt for truth and justice, without which there can be no wisdom*. Because our civilization, built up of shams and appearances, is at best like a beautiful green morass, a bog, spread over a deadly quagmire. Because this century of culture and worship of matter, while offering prizes and premiums for every "best thing" under the sun, from the biggest baby and the largest orchid down to the strongest pugilist and the fattest pig, has no encouragement to offer to morality, no prize to give for any moral virtue. . . . —

'The Dual Aspect of Wisdom' (*Lucifer*, Vol. VII, London, Sept. 15, 1890).

(She is wonderful in the language she chooses, is H. P. B.!)

I think that none of us can question the truth of this challenge that she throws down; and some of you who have read that book called *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* will remember that one of the Masters there states that Wisdom will ever be denied but to those who seek it for its own sake without any secondary motive of turning it to personal profit and gain. The whole of the Theosophical Movement rests upon that high endeavor.

You will find the lower side of the dual aspect of Wisdom rampant in the world today. Go out and look, for example, at the advertisements in some present-day magazines; and there you will find every kind of psychism and claptrap and exploitation of human beings, where money is asked for initiation into so-called Rosicrucian rites; where the 'secrets,' so-called, of the Ancient Wisdom are offered to be sold for money in the market-places of commerce. You will find every kind of medium, spiritualistic performance, and goodness knows what. Now all these things are expressions of this lower, psychic, terrestrial aspect of wisdom. It is not that the psychic and the so-called clairvoyant who take your money and offer to tell you something about yourself do not tell you a good deal that you may find very interesting and true, and that may give you all sorts of pleasant dreams about the future, which often also are true. But the main point is that true Wisdom cannot be obtained where there are any motives of self-seeking of whatever kind; and anything in the nature of personal gain or taking of money in the realm of the occult is fatal to Wisdom; yet it is everywhere rampant at the present time, in this crisis in the world's history, when the earth is passing through one of the critical points of her great cycle. Men and women are looking at

each other, examining themselves, not knowing quite what is going to happen; and it is at such times as these that the soothsayers and the clairvoyants and the like burst forth in a great crescendo of psychic activity — the terrestrial lower wisdom, if you like to call it so.

There is another aspect that we have to deal with. It is, briefly, that if there is a true Wisdom in the world, there is also a spurious wisdom, shown forth by this manifestation that I have been speaking about; and I must not fail to mention that it is pre-eminently shown forth in that flood of literature that may be termed pseudo-occult, pseudo-theosophic, which again diverts men's minds from the true Wisdom, fills them up with a lot of psychic junk. The seeds of thought that are in these books sink deep into the psychic nature of the individual, and bring forth but evil fruit. That is another manifestation; and further, one should mention here the fact that there is such a thing as wisdom in evil, where there are self-conscious human beings who have made evil their God, and who have a knowledge of all the laws of the universe, and can turn them to their own evil ends — in one word, sorcery.

These are some illustrations of the lower aspect of Wisdom. You can work them out in a thousand different ways; but I should like to dwell upon the higher aspect by referring to what are called in certain parts of Theosophical literature, and the literature of the Ancients, the seven Jewels of Wisdom, which have relation exclusively to True Wisdom or Magic: those seven Golden Keys or key-doctrines around which *The Secret Doctrine* of Blavatsky was actually written. Test this statement for yourselves. Those seven doctrines I have no doubt you are absolutely familiar with, but may I just enumerate them for you? The first is the doctrine of Reincarnation; the second Karma, the law of cause and effect; the third the doctrine of Hierarchies, which means that everything in

the universe is interlinked and interblended with everything else, which it really interpenetrates in its essential nature. You will see how everything in *The Secret Doctrine* can be related to one of these seven jewels, and therefore they are worth remembering. The fourth is the doctrine of what in Sanskrit is called Swabhava, which is the essential characteristic of a thing, of a being, of a Monad. This, interpreted, means that a man is in his outward nature but a reflexion of what he is in his inward nature, and that everything in the universe is different, although rooted in unity; that there are not two beings in the universe alike, any more than there are any two atoms, or two grains of sand, or two flowers, or two trees, or two beasts, alike. Every single thing in the universe has its essential characteristic, its Swabhava, its keynote. You and I, we all, have our characteristic spiritual tone, our note, that we try to show forth; and in the great drama of life we learn to bring forth from within ourselves, that is from within that seed-root of Divinity, that Monad, the germ from which all our lower being springs, which is its Father in Heaven. It is this which provides our characteristic, essential, true Self. It is the eternal 'I' which never perishes.

The fifth key is the doctrine of Evolution; and the sixth is related to something that I was saying just now: it is the doctrine of what in Sanskrit — if you will forgive me for quoting a Sanskrit term again — is called the Amrita-Yana and the Pratyeka-Yana, which means the right-hand Path and the left-hand Path, the Path that leads to Wisdom, and the path that leads downwards — the Path of Wisdom and the path of self. There again you see the contrast of the two aspects of Wisdom — the sixth of the keys around which *The Secret Doctrine* is written. And the last — Atma-Vidya, the knowledge of the Self and of the marvelous teachings concerning how the One becomes the Many.

I asked you to allow me to mention those seven keys to you for a

particular purpose. There are certain formulae in the Theosophical system of thought that as a student I have found immensely helpful — things that one can make a part of one's being, and apply to any problem of life in meditation. Whenever one has a quiet moment one can revert to the statement of fundamental principles that is given in the twelfth chapter of Volume II of *Isis Unveiled*. There are ten of them. You can turn to that formula and to the three Fundamental Propositions in the Proem to *The Secret Doctrine*, and find the basis on which the whole philosophy is said to rest: these seven jewels that I have just referred to, and the seven or ten Paramitas that are given in *The Voice of the Silence*.

Now the last thought that I want to leave with you is the correspondence between the order of the seven Paramitas, the Buddha's virtues which the disciple makes his code of ethical conduct, and the order of the Seven Jewels. The Paramitas are so beautiful that I will read them to you, and I want to try to show that this correspondence is most suggestive.

The first of these keys: *Dana*, "the key of charity and love immortal." At first sight does this connect with the first jewel — the doctrine of Reincarnation? I believe you will find that it does if you think deeply enough about it, for reincarnation means regeneration. Reincarnation or reimpodiment takes place in a human being when the indwelling consciousness has grown to that point where the existing form no longer serves it; and then there is a death of a certain part of the being, a regeneration and a rebirth into a higher state, into the higher part of the nature, and it is here and by this process that all love comes into a man's life. He cannot live or express Wisdom or Charity immortal unless this regenerative process is going on.

The second Paramita — *Sila*, "the key of harmony in word and

act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect and leaves no further room for Karmic action." I think that it is sufficiently obvious that the second jewel, the doctrine of Karma, exactly corresponds to the second Paramita.

The third is not so obvious but contains an inspiring thought — *Kshanti*, "patience sweet, that nought can ruffle." How does this relate to the third of the jewels, the doctrine of Hierarchies? I suggest that there is no more perfect example of that patience sweet that the disciple is called upon to show forth in his life than the Silent Watcher, who in *The Secret Doctrine*, you remember, is shown as sitting at the threshold of darkness which he will not quit until the weary, sore-footed pilgrims of humanity have each passed into the great Nirvana before him. That is the picture of the great summit, the Heaven of the spiritual, psychological Hierarchy of Adepts — the Silent Watcher of our world or Universe.

The fourth Paramita — *Viraga*, "indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived." I suggest that there is a very direct correspondence between that and the doctrine of Swabhava, the essential characteristic of a nature, for which you will have to go to the very root and core of a man's being. When the consciousness is rooted in the higher part of the man's being, then only is it possible for it to show forth his perfect spiritual keynote or tone, and that balanced indifference to pleasure and pain.

Then *Virya*, "the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal TRUTH, out of the mire of lies terrestrial." What better illustration can you have of evolution than that Paramita? It depicts the whole struggle out of the corruption of matter to the incorruptible world of the Spirit. That is *Virya*, the dauntless energy and courage that we are called upon to develop.

The sixth Paramita — *Dhyana*, "whose gate once opened leads the Naljor towards the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation." This, being interpreted, means meditation; and meditation, as you will agree, I believe and hope, is intimately related to the sixth of the seven jewels, that which is concerned with the Amrita-Yana, the Immortal vehicle, the right-hand Path; but there is no treading of this Path except by the practice of the Paramita called Dhyana or Meditation.

And the last — *Prajna*, "the key to which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis." That relates to the last and final jewel, Atma-Vidya, knowledge of the Self, the means by which the One, the Supreme, the Infinite, became the many in all this marvelous manifested Universe.

QUESTION: To which, if any, of the different keys would you relate the law of cycles?

ANSWER: I should relate it to the law of Reincarnation or Reimbodiment, which is a manifestation of the law of Cycles; but you must remember that all these Jewels in the Doctrines of Theosophy are interblended with each other. You cannot understand one without the other. You cannot understand the law of Karma, the law of the rhythmic flow of cause and effect, which is also intimately related with the doctrine of Cycles, unless you understand the doctrine of ebb and flow as it expresses itself in the law of Reincarnation and Reimbodiment; for this is the rhythmic pulse of Nature that goes through the life-cycle of the tiniest infusoria: even a mosquito, a butterfly, any of these creatures, exhibits the law of cycles — it reimbodies itself. Then, too, it is shown forth in the attraction of the tides, in the phases of the moon, in the pilgrimage of the planets in their orbit around the sun, in the birth and death of worlds, of solar systems: for worlds are born and die just as man, only in infinitely longer

cycles of time. I think you can relate it to the first, and if you wish, to the second of the jewels. I hope that this is responsive to the question.

QUESTION: Is it correct to say that the left-hand Path is incomplete wisdom because mastery of the lower self has not been obtained? In other words, incomplete because inhibited by the personal?

ANSWER: In a certain sense that is perfectly true, for we all of us fail to tread the highest Path in any moment that we act from a consciousness centered in our personality. It is the personality which enshrouds our spiritual vision and prevents our seeing the Light, and therefore prevents our seeing the right-hand Path. Do you remember the definition of these two Paths given by Master Koot Hoomi in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, where on a certain left-hand page — I have forgotten the number, but a certain left-hand page [page 114] — he gave a definition of the Amrita-Yana and the Pratyeka-Yana, and he shows that these are simply another way of stating the doctrines relating to the individuality and the personality, and the Personal Ego and its identity with the Astral Monad? Now the Personal Ego is that, you remember, which goes to Devachan; and what is the Personal Ego? The Personal Ego, he says, is a combination of the five lower principles; and the Immortal vehicle: Amrita-Yana, the Higher Ego, is, of course, the combination of Higher Manas united to Buddhi.

QUESTION: Re the lower and distorted aspects of wisdom such as one finds in modern science and even psychism: do not they conform with the unity of Evolution, since in the Cosmic economy there can be no such thing as waste, and there may conceivably be people who need the left-hand Path to find the Right?

ANSWER: I would interpret this in a slightly different sense, that is to say, what is called the descending arc and the ascending arc: the Path of forth-going, as it is called, and the Path of ascent, or return — the Path of Involution into matter, and Evolution out of it. I personally am a little in doubt about this idea that men need an evil path. I do not think that this is what is meant; but they do have to descend into matter, and they do have to evolve out of it; and there is another interesting point from a student's point of view here. You know the doctrine of a Planetary Chain, and you know that this Planetary Chain is represented symbolically as a ring of circles, and it goes down on the left side and goes up on the right side. The side on the left is the descending, and on the right the ascending arc. Has it ever occurred to you what is the correspondence in our lives of that idea? It is this: that when we live in the higher part of our being we express the spiritual qualities: we are identifying ourselves in consciousness with the superior qualities of the Planetary Chain, and what in Buddhist — or rather Brahmanistic — terminology is called the Lokas; but when we live in the lower part of our being we are concerning ourselves with the descending arc and with the talas — a stimulating thought: that we can live in the lokas, or in the talas: in the higher spiritual part of the being, or be buried in the personal.

QUESTION: Does not a study of technical Theosophy tempt one towards becoming merely an arm-chair philosopher? In other words, do you not think that the appeal of *The Secret Doctrine* is more to the intellect than to the heart?

ANSWER: Those who have studied H. P. B.'s teachings realize that there is some truth in what the questioner has suggested: that it is possible to study these teachings and become a mere arm-chair philosopher. In other words, they can be studied from a purely intellectual point of view. You may become acquainted with a

great deal of her teachings, and do nothing whatever about it, merely remain sitting on the fence or in your arm-chair, and entirely fail to lead the life, as she stressed in *The Secret Doctrine*, which is the necessary pre-requisite to an obtaining of any measure of Wisdom at all.

The Theosophist has a perfectly complete answer to the charge of the complexity of the doctrines hiding the essential life of the spirit — which is another way, I take it, of saying what the questioner meant. All I can say is that if any individual finds there to be such a doctrine, all he has to do is to concentrate upon the ethical aspects of the teaching, as found, for example, in *The Voice of the Silence*, in the seven Paramitas I read to you. I venture to think if he sets to work to practise the seven Paramitas of perfection, he will have his hands full; and if our brother will give himself that exercise I think he won't have much to complain about, because he will understand a very great deal by the time he has finished that exercise.

I imagine the Masters of Wisdom had a very good reason for casting their philosophy and message to the Western world in the way they did; and one must come to the conclusion that since the characteristic of our present age is an endeavor to develop the thinking principle — a characteristic of our Western people is that they want reasons for everything — in the Theosophical philosophy they get a closely reasoned explanation for almost everything in the Universe. I think that is sufficient: if you want an explanation of the Universe there is the philosophy to satisfy you; and if you want to live the life, you have the Sermon on the Mount; you have the teachings of Buddha; you have the ethical principles of all the great religions, as well as the precepts to be found in *The Voice of the Silence*. It is only that the Theosophical system is infinitely rich not only in ethical ideas but in philosophy as well. There is food for the spirit, there is food for the heart, and

satisfaction for the intellectual part of the man, in the whole system. At least that is how I understand it.

The Evolution of the Soul

The result of Theosophical study should be that that inner something which H. P. B. called the Real Man should come to predominate over the exterior form and take possession of it, and thereby become in a real sense of the word the Captain of the ship. It is something which those who have taken the pursuit of spiritual things seriously must have glimpsed to a larger or smaller extent: a realization that comes, after a certain period of study and effort along the lines of the spiritual life, as a result of inward and upward striving. It is an inflow of energy and inspiration from the higher part of their being, which enables them to steer the ship of their own life with a sense of conscious direction which they never had up to that moment.

I wonder what this title, "The Evolution of the Soul" signifies to you. Probably if you have not had the inestimable privilege, as we believe it to be, of studying the Theosophical philosophy, you will be saying to yourselves that the evolution of the soul has reference to the development and growth of something within a man, and you will probably leave it at that. But to the Theosophist, immediately you talk of the evolution of the soul a vast picture presents itself — not of man alone, but of the whole universe. One of the fundamental statements of the Theosophical philosophy is that the whole universe exists for but one purpose, and that is the evolution of the soul.

What is meant by that statement? For there is another one that goes side by side with it: that every entity in the universe either was a man, or is a man at the present time, or will be in the future. This idea of the whole universe existing for the evolution

of the soul immediately suggests that Soul is everywhere present: that life and spirituality and consciousness are present at every point in space; that there is no such thing at all as dead matter anywhere. Therefore to the Theosophist, when he thinks of this problem of the growth of the soul, it signifies the unfolding of Divine powers and capacities in the life which is everywhere present, even in that which scientists call inorganic matter. That means that we are not merely concerned in our thought with the problems of man and his growth and development, but we realize that the whole of the Universe of which we are a part, is a living entity, bound together in one indissoluble unity in all its parts, in all its kingdoms, and united by the unfolding intelligence which is indwelling in every atom of which it is composed.

Think of the vast ocean of space in which this Universe "lives and moves and has its being." Everything proceeds forth from it, and one day will return into it again. But immediately you think of evolution and growth you wonder, Where did it all begin? Actually what is the origin of a solar system? Well, if you look at the Universe *in toto* as a vast plane which is periodically the playground of numberless Universes which come and go incessantly, then you realize that the birth and death of a man, the birth and death of a planet, is a process not different from that of the birth and ultimate dissolution of a solar system. Therefore, when we study man himself, we realize that there is something within man which is eternal, which is undying, and which is, as it were, a seed of life into which everything returns at the end of any one of his excursions into manifested existence, such as a single human incarnation. There is that into which all this outward manifestation that we call a man is indrawn; and then at a single moment in time, under cyclic law, that seed — that divine spark, if you will — fructifies: puts forth its energy, and once again, evolving and growing from within without, a

little child is born, and the entity that we call a man emerges once again on the stage of human life. I would like to suggest to you the thought that exactly the same process takes place in the evolution of a universe or a solar system. There is a germ within the root of a solar system which periodically fructifies in exactly the same way.

Evolution, according to Theosophy, proceeds in three streams. We must not merely regard it as an evolution of form. If we do we should be materialists. That is why the scientists' search to answer the riddle of evolution fails, because they do not realize that it is not a problem of the unfolding, development and differentiation of species of physical forms at all. It is essentially a problem of the evolution of the soul: the indwelling life within the form. Yet they came very close to the true solution of the problem of evolution when they discovered that the embryonic stages of the evolution of the foetus recapitulate all the kingdoms of nature. They deduced from that that this human form of ours has actually descended from animal ancestors. Yet there is no greater illusion in the world than that; and it is absolutely necessary when attempting to speak upon Theosophical doctrines concerning evolution, to draw a sharp line of distinction between the philosophical and religious conception of the evolution of the soul on the one hand, and the scientific ideas of Darwin, and the evolution of human forms from animal ancestors, on the other hand.

I said a moment ago that evolution proceeds in three streams. These are, the spiritual, the intellectual, and the physical; and in man these three streams become evident and provable to ourselves. We can observe these three streams if we observe ourselves. We know that we have an external form; and if we delve deep into ourselves we realize the existence of the intellectual and thinking part of us that H. P. B. called the Real

Man; and then, if we delve still deeper, we realize that there is a sovereign immortal spiritual principle, brooding over and illuminating the two lower principles; and it is that which is the fountain and origin of all the inspiration which any man at any time ever became the recipient of.

The beginnings of life in any solar system, and the origin of any individual man, must be a subject of the profoundest interest to any thinking person. You remember the words of Edwin Arnold in *The Song Celestial*:

Nor I, nor thou, nor any one of these,
Ever was not, nor ever will not be,
For ever and for ever afterwards.

And probably there is no one who ever began the study of Theosophical teachings who was not profoundly perplexed about this riddle of the eternity of life, of this beginningless and endless existence which we are attempting to show forth the characteristics of.

I would like to try to elucidate a little. What does it mean when we say to ourselves that we as spiritual beings never have a beginning and we can never have an end? Does it convey anything to you or not? Here is the answer that Theosophy gives. You cannot separate yourself in thought from all the other beings of the universe, and especially you cannot separate yourselves from that to which you owe your origin. What is the origin of an individual man? It is what the New Testament called his Father in Heaven — not in the sense of any personal God according to the teachings of the churches; but there was that spiritual principle which the Avatara of the New Testament declared himself to be at one with; and it is exactly the same for any one of us. There comes a time when we realize that we ourselves owe our origin to — we are indeed the children of — that divine part of us. See how

this links on to the question of "Never was I not, and never shall I hereafter cease to be."

There are three streams of evolution: spiritual, intellectual, and physical, and the physical and objective part of us is but the child or manifestation of the Inner Man, and that Inner Man is in turn the child of the spiritual part of us; so that you can say that an outer form of a universe, of a planet or a man, signifies an indwelling entity, eternally linked to and the expression of a spiritual being behind it. The divine entity, which is the parent of a man, for example, is in every case a God — "so many men on earth, so many Gods in heaven." The men that we are today — fallible, erring, but striving upwards to union with those deities — what were we yesterday? Obviously if evolution is a truth, then there was a time aeons ago, when we were actually passing through and struggling out of the beast kingdom, as today we are passing through and struggling to emerge from the human kingdom into something higher. Do you see the point? That entity which at one time was imbodyed in the kingdom of the animals, is today, as a result of its inward growth and development, imbodyed as a human being.

And the divine being, that immortal entity which is the inspiring force behind the evolution of any being or world or system: what about it? There was a time when it was a thinking man, when it too looked to its divine parent. So you see that life and consciousness is a hierarchy of being and existence. There are many entities within man. Man is not just a simple being: he is a very complex entity; and those beings, if we look within ourselves, exist on a hierarchical principle; and that Golden Chain, that Sutratman, that thread of eternal consciousness on which our whole being is strung, has no possible beginning and no possible ending, for it is rooted in the very fabric and structure of the Universe itself.

Just think to yourself of this chain of life: eternal because ever being, that is strung upon that thread and is progressing to higher and higher states of being. The man that we are today, tomorrow will have won his way, if he runs the cosmic race successfully, up to that higher stage of being where he in his turn will have become the inspiriting force behind the men of tomorrow. So the men of today emerge at the end of a great world period of evolution as perfected God-men, fully self-conscious, fully developed; and when the time comes for the manifestation of life in a new period — a new world period — then the humanity of the last period become the leaders, spiritually speaking, of those who will emerge on the stage of human life in that period, who were ensouling the world of the animals during the preceding world period. So the evolution of the soul presents a rather complex picture, if I may so express it.

Lastly, I would like to leave this thought with you and invite you to raise questions on all those many aspects of the doctrines of evolution that I have left unsaid, and that last thought is this: if, in the unfolding of the powers within man it is possible for us to unfold spiritual and intellectual and psychical powers equal to those of the highest entity that the mind of man can conceive of, think of the noble and grand picture of the great Teachers of the human race, as they are recorded in religious history, for example, those who are virtually God-men. If those beings have truly trodden the ways of men, they show forth an ideal, they hold up a lamp, which shows us that what they have done we must necessarily be able to do and to achieve one of these days. Why? Because it is a fundamental of this philosophy that there are no special privileges in nature for any being in the Universe, except those that the individual has won by his own efforts and striving. Therefore the Mahatma and all great souls possess the powers that they do over space and matter simply because they

have found the way as a result of a long series of lives of bringing forth the virtually omniscient powers of their own spirits, and have acquired full control of their own mechanism of consciousness. It is actually that goal that humanity is set in its evolutionary progress to unfold from within itself: that spiritual power by which the human, thinking entity within us is raised into indissoluble one-ness with the divine principle of his being. That is the goal of all Theosophical and spiritual endeavor; and those Teachers of the human race who now hold the lamp of spiritual truth for us, at one time stood exactly where we stand today. They are men like us: but spiritual men, who know because they have realized the power of the Divinity that lies at the root of their being.

The Real Man

Mr. Sidney King [member of Phoenix Lodge] at our White Lotus Day celebration the other night made the statement that the teachings of H. P. B. could be understood as a kind of algebraic formula, which, rightly understood, could be applied to the understanding of any problem of life. We are to consider tonight the subject of what in Theosophy is called the Real Man. Let us apply the proper algebraic formula to an understanding of what is meant by this term. The Real Man signifies that there is something else besides reality in man, and if you turn to H. P. B.'s statements of fundamental principles of the Oriental philosophy, you find her laying it down that man is not his objective body, but that there is within him this something which she calls the Real Man, which is an indwelling and energizing principle; and that this Inner Man is ever striving, acting, thinking, feeling, on this evolutionary journey through earth-life, upwards to that ever-brooding Divinity which is at once its parent and its inspirer. We understand our algebraical formula to suggest that man divided

into the simplest terms for easiest comprehension may be considered as spiritual, intellectual, and vehicular. In other words there are conjoined in man at any one time three actual streams of evolution. I do not know whether you have brooded upon this question. "Three streams of evolution" seems to suggest that there are entities evolving on all three levels of man's constitution.

Now then, this question of the Real Man will not be comprehensible unless we succeed in showing that that which we call reality in man is something eternal and indestructible. The permanent individuality in man is actually rooted in the spiritual pole of his being, which is in itself dual in character. You notice that H. P. B. in the Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine lays it down that duality pervades the manifested universe directly you drop in thought from the highest metaphysical Triad, of which Eternal Duration, Space, and Motion are the three symbolic terms. Therefore we need not be surprised when we find that man in his highest spiritual part is dual. Even his Monadic Essence could not express itself did it not do so in two streams or parts: one spiritual and having the aspect of consciousness, and the other, having the aspect of substance, the vehicle side of spiritual conscious life: and these two together make the dual Atma-Buddhic Monad. It is this which is the highest entity evolving in that septenary Cosmos which we call the human being. That entity is performing an evolutionary journey — a long one; and because it is doing so it may be said that it actually expresses the highest of the three evolutionary streams that are combined in man.

Let us drop in thought to the next part of our being, which H. P. B. in a generalizing way calls the Real Man. This also is dual. According to the septenary classification you get Manas and Kama. Here you have the center of what is called the Human Ego, and this Human Ego passes actually from life to life. The

Reincarnating Ego is the higher part of this kama-manasic dual entity, and during life the consciousness is centered mostly in the lower part of it. But the Real Man is centered in the higher part; and it is this higher part of the dual Human Ego which owes the permanence of its individuality to the spiritual brooding presence of the Monadic Essence above it.

Therefore, as you would expect, after death there comes a division which cuts in twain this dual Human Ego which H. P. B. calls the Real Man, and that is why this division of man into a threefold entity, consisting of two duads and a triad, is a very good one, because it shows us how the different workings of man's nature, during life and after death, actually take place. After death there occurs a division between the *manas* and the *kama*, and the higher part of it is drawn upwards until it becomes permanently grafted by a process of interior disruption, as it were, on that eternal principle which is represented by man's spiritual nature. And so you gain immediately the conception that it is *we men living here* in earth-life who are the transient beings; but that there is an eternal Pilgrim within the heart of every man, which is here not once but many times, expressing itself through bodies of flesh, but relatively remaining untouched — that is to say no more touched than the actor is by playing the successive roles that fall to his lot.

This immediately suggests the thought to us: since most of us are necessarily absorbed, identified to a very large extent, with the material pursuits of life — the struggle for existence and what not — there is an urgent necessity to find a means of refreshing our objective daily consciousness, if I may so express it: that part of our being which not only suffers fatigue, but is overburdened with the cares of this world; that suffers fears and anxieties and what not — which are but a symbol of the unreal man, but a symbol of the transient personality. Theosophy, if it does

anything at all, attracts men's attention to that higher part of their being where in the midst of storm and material difficulties the Real Man may be like a Master Mariner with his hand upon the helm of the ship of life. He may provide, as it were, for the harassed human soul the port that is always calm, and into which the lower man can enter, if he will, at any time — whether it be while he is at work, or whether he deliberately enters into a state of spiritual meditation. It is because the Real Man is a fact that, if we go about it in the right way, we can raise our consciousness and fix it in that higher state from which balance, discrimination, pure and compassionate judgment flow. This is the application of the Theosophical formula, this algebraic formula that we were speaking of the other night.

Now another thought immediately occurs; it is that this permanent individuality lasts for an almost inconceivably long period of time, and it actually incarnates on this planet — let alone the other planets and globes of the planetary chain — I do not know, and should be afraid to say, how many times, how many incarnations it has to go through; but eventually this Human Ego wins what is called its Immortality. If you have studied the question you will know that mankind as they are — average men and women — are at best but conditionally immortal: in other words the human part of them is not sufficiently united to, not sufficiently illuminated by, the higher part of their being, to be able to claim that they are immortal entities. To be an immortal entity is the supreme achievement of evolution — not as ordinarily understood, but understood in terms of occult science.

When a Mahatma reaches the end of the first five steps on the initiatory Pathway, he enters into an indissoluble state of union between the human Ego and the God within him. It is to this: the first part, the beginning of this process, that all Theosophists are

striving: otherwise our endeavors have no meaning at all. Step by step we are learning to raise this Human Ego, this reincarnating entity, to a recognition that there is that eternal reality in the depths of our being, from which we may get hurried away by the affairs of life, by the domination of what the *Bhagavad-Gita* calls the objects of the senses. These things serve to becloud man's vision: the Real Man identifies himself with the lower man and he forgets the reality not only of his Divine origin but of his permanent home: and then such a man loses his calm, loses his perspective; he is unable to concentrate and do those things which a spiritual man is able to do.

The Real Man is actually composed of all the inherent characteristics or character of the individual. In other words it is Karma. Karma is that moral kernel of the individual which is indestructible, but at the same time which can only be modified from within without — by growth. Therefore if we want to change our destiny, our Karma, and therefore our character, we simply have to recognise that it is our whole being which has to alter. Whatever we are today is simply an expression of that inherent, essential keynote of our being which has been sounding down through all the ages as we incarnated here, always sounding out a similar kind of note, until step by step we learn to clarify, to purify, and to raise the tone pitch and the key, until finally we ourselves become convinced that the Real Man is a fact; and we strive from that point forward to realize its presence in our lives from day to day.

The Destruction of Illusion

The question of the destruction of illusion is one that naturally can be treated from very many aspects. What do we mean by illusion? Because after all, all the philosophers of India — metaphysicians and what not — have told us for centuries after

centuries that all the manifested universe is illusion. Now of course we know that in a sense that is so, but on the other hand, as H. P. B. pointed out, this universe that we live in, this planet on which we live, our own bodies that are related to that planet, are very real to us. They have a very outstanding importance, relative importance, but none the less necessary for us to take into consideration. We cannot leave it out of account like the great school of Deniers, who say that there is no matter, and that it does not exist. No! Our School is one of what is called objective idealism, that is to say that the Universe has an objective existence during certain periods of time, and after the expiration of that period of time it is withdrawn into the bosom of That from which all things proceed, and unto which all must again return. Now that Infinite, Divine Principle is actually the Light of our being, the source of all our spiritual strength, and it is this that we rely upon to join ourselves to, to reach to union with, in order to destroy, to rise above, the erratic illusion. There is no other means. I speak of illusion of all sorts — whether it results in every kind of what is called in Christian terminology 'sinful action'; or whether it results in misguided action based upon ignorant searching for Truth in regions where it simply does not exist. I refer to those seekers who investigate into the *mayavi* (illusory) realms of the Astral Light, into the dismal regions of spooks and what not: seeking to tear off the veils that Nature has kindly put upon their inner sight; seeking to open the pathway of their being into these astral realms, where indeed they become overpowered by the great influence of the very serpent of illusion: for everything there bears a kind of glamorous aspect, and yet, as *The Voice of the Silence* says, "under every flower there is a serpent coiled." There is no wisdom in these psychic regions; there is no spiritual object, no spiritual reality at all, in the purely psychic faculties that we share with the beasts. They have these faculties too, but they are proper in the beasts, because they are

at that stage of evolution where their progress is not dependent upon their wit, but upon natural impulse. Therefore it is not their function to overcome illusion in any sense of the word.

One of the most striking thoughts when we meditate upon this, is to discover what in our lives is due to the action of *maya*, of illusion. We are staggered by the extent to which this illusory power of nature works upon us: how it hides from us the truth about ourselves, about the universe, about others; and therefore it behooves us to enquire a little as to how we may recognise when our consciousness is being obscured by one or other of the possible forms of illusion.

Now the great devotional book called the *Bhagavad-Gita* is, I suppose, one of the greatest scriptures that the world knows of: a very ancient book giving to us the matchless wisdom and knowledge about the nature of man, given in the words of a divine incarnation, who, as you know, was called Krishna. In the sixteenth Discourse he gives to us a list of the different qualities that you find in human beings, when the various states of illusion or their absence are operative. We cannot fail to profit from the teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

Fearlessness, sincerity, assiduity in devotion, generosity, self-restraint, piety, and alms-giving, study, mortification, and rectitude; harmlessness, veracity, and freedom from anger, resignation, equanimity, and not speaking of the faults of others, universal compassion, modesty, and mildness; patience, power, fortitude, and purity, discretion, dignity, unrevengefulness, and freedom from conceit — these are the marks of him whose virtues are of a godlike character, O son of Bharata.

A wonderful collection of qualities. It is a marvelous book for calming the mind, and for removing the veil that hides our vision

from the truth. You pick up the *Gita*, and it causes the lamp of true knowledge within you to burn more brightly. At one time these qualities are present in us, and then each one of us will find certain things of which we can say, "Yes, I have experienced this at times," and we shall know that in the light of the teaching of the *Gita* there is a certain spiritual quality working; and you will find at other times when the illusion is there, when the personality is blotting out the light, that you show qualities of a different kind:

Those, O son of Pritha, who are born with demoniacal dispositions are marked by hypocrisy, pride, anger, presumption, harshness of speech, and ignorance. The destiny of those whose attributes are godlike is final liberation, while those of demoniacal dispositions, born to the Asuras' lot is continued bondage to mortal birth; grieve not, O son of Pandu, for thou art born with the divine destiny. There are two kinds of natures in beings in this world, that which is godlike, and the other which is demoniacal; the godlike hath been fully declared, hear now from me, O son of Pritha, what the demoniacal is.

Those who are born with the demoniacal disposition — of the nature of the Asuras — know not the nature of action nor of cessation from action, they know not purity nor right behavior, they possess no truthfulness. They deny that the universe has any truth in it, saying it is not governed by law, declaring that it hath no spirit; they say creatures are produced alone through the union of the sexes, and that all is for enjoyment only. Maintaining this view, their souls being ruined, their minds contracted, with natures perverted, enemies of the world, they are born to destroy. They indulge insatiable desires, are full of hypocrisy, fast-fixed in false beliefs through their illusions.

They indulge in unlimited reflections which end only in annihilation, convinced until death that the enjoyment of the objects of their desires is the supreme good. Fastbound by the hundred cords of desire, prone to lust and anger, they seek by injustice and the accumulation of wealth for the gratification of their own lusts and appetites. 'This today hath been acquired by me, and that object of my heart I shall obtain; this wealth I have, and that also shall be mine. This foe have I already slain, and others will I forthwith vanquish; I am the lord, I am powerful, and I am happy. I am rich and with precedence among men; where is there another like unto me? I shall make sacrifices, give alms, and enjoy.' In this manner do those speak who are deluded. Confounded by all manner of desires, entangled in the net of illusion, firmly attached to the gratification of their desires, they descend into hell. Esteeming themselves very highly, self-willed, full of pride and ever in pursuit of riches, they perform worship with hypocrisy and not even according to ritual, but only for outward show. Indulging in pride, selfishness, ostentation, power, lust, and anger, they detest me who am in their bodies and in the bodies of others. Wherefore I continually hurl these cruel haters, the lowest of men, into wombs of an infernal nature in this world of rebirth. And they being doomed to those infernal wombs, more and more deluded in each succeeding rebirth, never come to me, O son of Kunti, but go at length to the lowest region.

The gates of hell are three — desire, anger, covetousness, which destroy the soul; wherefore one should abandon them. Being free from these three gates of hell, O son of Kunti, a man worketh for the salvation of his soul, and thus proceeds to the highest path. He who abandoneth the

ordinances of the Scriptures to follow the dictates of his own desires, attaineth neither perfection nor happiness nor the highest path. Therefore, in deciding what is fit and what unfit to be done, thou shouldst perform actions on earth with a knowledge of what is declared in Holy Writ.

This is a very healthful way — to me at least — of finding out how to destroy illusion. I would like to say just this: that when we find that any of these lower qualities begin to become active in our consciousness, there is no other way of dealing with them except somehow by an effort of will, an endeavor to rise in consciousness into the higher part of our being; and in that state of consciousness the illusory aspects of personality cease, they lose their power, and the man is able to regain balance, calm, peace. The supreme guide, life itself, is always providing opportunities to test us. Some concatenation of circumstances arises, and, as you know, an individual may go along life's pathway, quietly, serenely, thinking that everything is lovely in the garden; and then some person comes along who is so constituted that he touches a certain button, a certain knob in the psychological constitution, and some personal ego within, of which there are many by the way, reacts, and plays its tune, pleasant or unpleasant — a kind of gramophone record that plays over and over again the same tune. It will be found, after we observe ourselves closely, that similar stimuli tend to produce these similar recurrent phases, good, bad and indifferent, which proves to us that part of our illusion is caused by the mechanical nature of our being. In other words that it is not perfectly under the control of the real part of us. The inner individual is not master of its vehicles of consciousness that we call the personality and through which it expresses itself. We do all sorts of things in a most mechanical way, and it is our reactions to sudden stimuli through various circumstances in life that teach us perhaps the

greatest lessons, because amongst spiritually-minded people at least, among all seekers after truth, there is the sincere desire to live in the light of one's Higher being, and the great misery and unhappiness of at times doing quite the opposite. This is the kind of illusion that we must seek out the means of eradicating, and one of the best ways of all, I believe, is a constant and daily steady reading of such a book as the *Bhagavad-Gita*. You have to be very discriminating in the kind of book or scripture that you rely upon to give you that spiritual sustenance without which man cannot live — spiritually speaking, especially in this striving, material, difficult world that we have to live in.

Day by day we must see to it that we give ourselves five or ten minutes — if only that — for spiritual sustenance. The first thing in the morning, if possible, before another thought enters your consciousness, if you spend a few minutes of quiet reflexion, self-examination, aspiration towards the higher part of your being, help does come in a very strange way that has to be experienced in order to realize it.

There at any rate are a few thoughts upon this question of illusion, so now I will leave it to you to raise other questions if you wish.

QUESTION: Among that list of divine qualities that you read in the sixteenth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, is one that I think must be a mistranslation. I do not think that one understands it as a divine quality — and that is mortification.

ANSWER: Many questions like that crop up in the study of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. What does it mean? The questioner suggests that it is a mistranslation, but I think it is only a matter of understanding what is meant by mortification. I think that I cannot do better than find out what Krishna has to say about this subject of mortification, because it is really very interesting:

Honoring the gods, the brahmans, the teachers, and the wise, purity, rectitude, chastity, and harmlessness are called mortification of the body. Gentle speech which causes no anxiety, which is truthful and friendly, and diligence in the reading of the Scriptures, are said to be austerities of speech. Serenity of mind, mildness of temper, silence, self-restraint, absolute straightforwardness of conduct, are called mortification of the mind. This threefold mortification or austerity practised with supreme faith and by those who long not for a reward is of the *sattva* quality.

QUESTION: Is not truth even to this day indefinable?

ANSWER: I think it is probably truly so, because in what terms are you going to define truth? You may turn round to me and say, "Do you think that you said anything that is true tonight?" And I say, "Well, at least I hope that it may be what you might call relative truth." I do not believe that any attempt to expound philosophically ideas of Ancient Wisdom, which after all are an attempt to state some aspects of truth, can be perfectly performed by any one who is not perfect. How can it be so? So you must have a Mahatma or Divine Being who can perfectly express truth in human language, and even then it will not be so much the words that he utters, but that which his whole being does to your consciousness — raising it to that point where it is able to perceive truth.

Now can we give or have any kind of conception of what a Theosophist means by truth? I can only tell you the way I reason about it and it is simply this: that truth is the reality, the facts of Nature where it operates in the particular sphere that you are considering. What you call truth has to reflect perfectly the workings of that department of Nature that you are studying. So I

think the questioner is quite right — it is impossible to define truth. It exists perfectly at the level of Universal Mind. If we want to perceive truth we have to rise into our spiritual being, where we are not subjected to the distortion of the brain-mind.

QUESTION: It is possible to get into a dangerous state when we get out of our body and feel that everything is illusion?

ANSWER: I think that the best advice in such a case, assuming that we are talking to a person who is interested in these matters, is to hand him a copy of *The Voice of the Silence*, underlining the seven Paramitas — that is the Buddhistic qualities of perfection. In other words there are certain rather short ethical precepts, concentration upon which we are told will have a very beneficial effect upon the mind. Now that may sound trite, but nevertheless really something like that is the only thing to do, because if you get into a state of complete confusion of that kind then you have lost your moorings, your anchor, you have not got hold of your rudder, and you have to do something about it; and the surest thing is to attempt to concentrate upon and practise the Paramitas, and look for some healthy, religious or philosophical literature that will be of benefit.

QUESTION: In the demoniacal qualities in the sixteenth Discourse it stated that the personality, I presume life after life, seemed to sink lower and lower each life. Now is that a fact? Does not karmic action make it so very unpleasant for the personality that automatically this sinking lower and lower is checked?

ANSWER: In the ordinary case of evolution — Yes. That is to say that the average human being who does not live marvelously well, but not too badly — he has his moments when he jumps off the deep end, and it is these things that he will be sorry for afterwards. Well, if the balance of his karmic memory gets below

a certain point, he is going to add and add to these actions of a personal character, and if that goes on, then he begins to slip down the scale life after life. But Nature will react against him: he will have scored karmic penalties which are designed by merciful Nature to wake him up, and then the natural impulse of evolution will gradually straighten things out. Nevertheless the slip down the decline mentioned in the *Gita* is, we believe, a possibility in Nature. We do not need to dwell upon it, but there it is.

QUESTION: If all the people connected with such a one were to help him, could not the fall be avoided or checked?

ANSWER: I think that is an important question because we must all have the experience in life of being associated in our own families perhaps or elsewhere amongst our human relationships, with someone who is finding the battle of life too much, one who seems to be losing in that battle of life. Now when the questioner asks if those associated with that person can do anything to help, I venture to suggest, that instead of pointing out to that individual all day and every day just exactly what one thought of him, even to the point — what shall I say? — of lowering one's self-respect by the constant criticism — instead of doing that, let him keep his own consciousness on as high a level as he knows how to do, including this individual within his spiritual meditation. This has a wonderful effect. I have seen it work over and over and over again, and I have seen the terribly cruel and destructive effect of criticism. It is a strange fact, you know, that Brother Judge pointed out in a little book called *The Epitome of Theosophy*: that in fixing your thought in condemnation (and the stronger the hatred that goes with it, the more important and lasting the effect) you mix yourself with the quality in the other person that you hate, and you pretty soon begin to express that quality. It comes back to you. So I believe that one of the most important things you can do is to keep your own consciousness up and

include the sufferer in your spiritual meditation.

[Part 6](#)

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6a. The Rationale of the After-Life

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[The key to understanding Life is a knowledge of the mysteries of Death. In the Theosophical philosophy Death and Life are not opposites, but each is a doorway into a different realm of LIFE.

These teachings of the after-death life were carefully guarded in the ancient Mystery-Schools, but since 1875 with the founding of the Theosophical Society they have been issued to the public as that portion or new instalment of wisdom which the Masters declare this new cycle demands if our civilization is to be saved from the total embrace of materialism and consequent deterioration and decay.

The articles in this chapter concern (a) the general Theosophical teaching about Death; (b) the difference between the spiritualistic theory and teaching and that of the Ancient Wisdom, and, as fitting perhaps better here than elsewhere, (c) the difference between Theosophical teaching and that of Christian Science.]

The Living Dead

One of the difficulties that we are all faced with in studying this great philosophy, is not so much that as a result of it we do not come to recognise and know certain things — our difficulty is rather in translating the implication of those ideas into action.

Now, it was because we came to a recognition that this is a difficulty the majority of us need to solve, that we were led to choose the title for this series of lectures: — "A Rational Basis for Ethics." What we are trying to do with each subject that we take up is first to consider very briefly what the teachings are; and then to try to extract the ethical implication from the metaphysical teaching, and see how we are going to translate it into action in our lives. That makes the philosophy a living power in our lives if we want it to be so.

I am taking for granted tonight necessarily that you are familiar with the subjects of the two preceding lectures in this series: the first was on the Sevenfold Constitution and Powers of Man; and the second one dealt with Cyclic Law, Reincarnation, and to some extent Evolution. That is the background upon which the great Teachers of life and knowledge have thrown, as it were, upon a screen, the marvelous solutions and explanations that they have to give of the great mysteries of the life after death.

There are at least three ways that this title "The Living Dead" can be understood, because, as you will have divined, that title comes from the Mystery Schools of old time. The Living Dead can be understood as those who have put aside their mortal body — the people that colloquially we call 'dead' people, but who, according to all the great religions of antiquity, and therefore in the teachings of Theosophy, are still indeed living. We can understand the title in that way, and we shall consider the Theosophical teachings on the subject from that point of view.

Then again, this phrase can signify living people, or those that we call living, but who none the less are really and truly dead, in the sense that they are unawakened — spiritually asleep. It is these that in the Mystery Schools of antiquity they called the 'profane' — those who have not been awakened to the reality of the

spiritual life.

And there is yet another way of looking at that title: those fewer in number, who, whilst still living in the body have dared to die in their personalities — who have dared to lose their personal lives, and have been reborn, spiritually speaking, and have therefore found their lives.

So we will try briefly to study the subject from these three points of view, amongst others.

May I try to give you a brief sketch of just what the Theosophical teachings are about the passage from what we call life through the intermediate worlds into the after-life, and back in cyclical return to earth again. The teachings on this subject in Theosophical philosophy are very rich. They are treated in great detail, and their implication is of tremendous importance and significance for us here. Then, when I have given you that picture, I will try to extract from it some of the implications of an ethical kind. First at the moment of death everybody — whether dying quietly in their beds, whether what is called insane, or dying by accident or violence — everybody: young, old, under all conditions, experience in the last fleeting moments, when the cord of life is snapped, a complete review of every incident of the life from first to last. That is the first point we want to get the significance of, for surely it means that we have to remember that in the memory of Nature nothing is ever forgotten. Do not let us deceive ourselves for an instant that any single one of our actions can be lost. We may choose to wipe it from our memories and forget it, but the soul memory cannot forget; the memory of Nature does not forget; and therefore sooner or later we have got to face the implications and consequences of our own acts.

Then, the review completed, the whole of the being that is left — the fivefold man — goes into that intermediate realm which in

some parts of Christian doctrines is known as purgatory: into that region of purgation where the higher and lower elements of the being of the man are separated into their component parts. Therefore think of all that is left other than the body and life going into the great intermediate realm, and there instantly being subjected to a process by which the lower material parts of the man's being begin to separate by downward attraction from the spiritual efflorescence of his being, which is attracted inevitably upwards, upwards, upwards.

That is a process that happens without the man's will. If he dies a normal death he goes into that after-death condition but without the power to initiate new actions. He is in a subjective world; he can no longer will, perceive and know in a conscious way. He is rather like a man in a dream, or if his life has been very material it will be perhaps more like a nightmare.

Then he experiences what is known as the second death. Now please note this particular teaching, for of all teachings it probably has the greatest significance for those who want really to be reborn either during life on earth, or after death. The separation of the higher principles from the lower, leaves the lower to separate and disintegrate into their component parts — the lower consisting of all that is necessarily transient in Nature: the passions, the evil thoughts, the hatreds, all those qualities that are essentially impermanent and of the nature of death. They are doomed to fade out since there is no permanent survival of man's personality. And directly those principles are separated the last process of which is a struggle resulting in another or second death — then is the man reborn into the Heaven world.

Now what gives him birth there? Simply his spiritual aspirations, his religious yearnings, his philosophical and spiritual meditations of a lifetime; the high, beautiful and holy things that

the man's heart was set upon during life; the innumerable mystical dreams and imaginations that most of us weave during life and never have a chance to work out and translate into action. They are ideal pictures, beautiful imaginings, true ideas — unfulfilled spiritual hopes. Now it is these things, not the will whether personal or spiritual, which cause a man to be reborn, spiritually speaking, in the Heaven world which in Theosophical teaching is called the world of Devachan or Sukhavati, the Land of the Gods.

What happens when he gets there, when he enters into that state of consciousness? — for that is what it is. He is reborn as a little child as he was on earth, and his first recollections will be those that he had on earth — of his mother, his parents, his family, and from that tiny babylike beginning will be evolving the abstract effects of his own spiritual thinking, the causes of which were generated in the thought-life of the man's last personal incarnation. There, in that after-death state he will be surrounded with all those that he loved and left on earth — the ideal picture of them, the idealized personalities of father and mother, husband or wife, and friends. He will be provided, as it were, by the creative power of his own imaginative thinking, with the opportunity of carrying to the nth degree his philosophical and mystical researches into the secret ways of the inner heart of Nature. He will be able to enter into the companionship of the great thinkers, the great Sages and Teachers of the human race. He will be able to work out these ideas and translate them, as it seems to him, into action. Yet he is really only living in a glorious dream world, but full of happiness, peace, bliss and the power of the spirit.

And when the full tide of the assimilation process, gradually waning, finally leaves him, with all the spiritual effects of his last personal life fully worked out, assimilated into the fabric of his

spiritual being, what happens? Why, the efflorescence of that last life on earth, the fruit of that human soul, is gathered up into the bosom of its Father in Heaven, merging into union with the Spiritual, there to experience the vast panoramic vision of all its past existences — each incarnation as it were a pearl upon the golden thread of life and consciousness. And in the memory of the Immortal Seer is seen every one of the causes that led to such and another effect in life after life on earth: that which he had done of good bringing beautiful results and that which he had done of evil resulting necessarily in suffering. Finally he sees as a whole the past life that he has just completed, and the destiny which he himself has created of the life that is about to open in his next incarnation — seeing as it were in the ideal thought of his own inner Divinity, the plan laid down there in his own highest spiritual self for the life which he is about to embark upon. Just like an ideal architectural plan of a universe to be — in this case the future life of a man on earth. Then when that wonderful vision of all that he will have to go through is complete, the triumphs of the spirit that he will experience, and the failures due to the blows of karmic destiny — the results of those things of an evil kind which the man had generated in past existences: when all has been seen, he begins to descend step by step, drawing back to himself the life-atoms, the very matter through which he had experienced the passions, desires, and thoughts — good, bad, and indifferent — of the last personality; drawing them all together by the power of attraction and finally emerging on the stage of life once again as a little child.

That in brief is an imperfect picture of the Theosophical teaching about the life after death for those people who die a normal, natural death at the end of their life period. I have purposely left out all the exceptions to the general law, because it would take us too far afield. But when we discover what the implications of

these ideas are and we try to work out how to translate these implications into action in terms of ethics, then we begin truly to *think*; then indeed life begins for us and takes on an entirely different aspect to merely reading about these things in an intellectual way and leaving it there.

We spoke about the review of the past life. That is an automatic process, and we have already seen the implication that nothing is forgotten in the book of Nature, or in the Soul's memory. The man has passed from earth, necessarily leaving behind him all his purely material possessions; and then you have the teaching about the separation of the principles and the second death. Now what are the implications of this idea? First that in terms of a man's spirituality, to the extent to which during life the higher and divine nature of the man had dominated the lower personal nature, to that extent will he pass through the intermediate worlds and purgatorial regions with speed: if a spiritual, if a holy life and pure one, the lower nature will just fade away. The higher will then gravitate upwards, rising like a cork does in the sea — it cannot help itself; and because the lower nature had been transcended during life there is very little to disintegrate, and so it vanishes away like the mist before the rising sun. We see at once the tremendous spiritual benefit to the man who lives in terms of ethics during life even in that one fact.

Consider another aspect of it. Supposing the reverse kind of life had been led, and you have before you the life of a materialist, a man who has lived in the animal nature, pursuing the objects of the senses, living in his desires, the spiritual nature given no attention to — perhaps hardly wakened at all. The center of gravity is in the animal soul. He must pass a long period in the purgatorial regions, to the extent that he dies with active, vigorous hatreds and passions and desires, and he must suffer the unsatisfied longings which he can no longer assuage in the after-

death world. These he will experience as a terrible nightmare, which he is unable to do anything about. A sufficient reason indeed for living an ethical life here — but still worse is to come, because it is just such individuals who can be most easily attracted and drawn into the mediumistic vortex of the spiritualistic seance. Earthly is that animal soul by nature, and earthly are the forces that attract to the spiritualistic seance. And then that discarnate animal — almost devil — seeks to satiate the animal passions, vicariously as it were, through the human beings that he is brought into contact with through the medium; and unfortunately many are the cases of insanity, suicide, obsession, that are caused by such people. Not only do they do damage to the living, but through the excesses that they commit they gradually build into themselves worse and worse tendencies in that part of their nature than they had actually done during earth life. So you get an ethical implication there at once — the condemnation as a practice of getting in touch with these entities through the mediumistic seance, and at the same time a tremendous incentive to leave behind, to turn around from that kind of life while living on earth, because after death it is too late — you cannot do anything about it.

Now the third, and as I think, the most important application of this far-reaching doctrine: what is it that really causes a man to be reborn in the Heaven-world or Devachan? It is really a state during life of spiritual ignorance, a state of spirituality, of spiritual yearnings, spiritual imaginings and strivings, but without that deep understanding of the laws of Nature which would enable the individual to translate that ideal thinking into action in the living present, and therefore he has to work them out in an ideal state instead of here in the objective universe. That means that it is really a state of illusion, although much nearer reality, than earth-life — very much nearer; but nevertheless,

from the point of view of a really spiritual self-conscious being such as any of the great Sages and Seers, the great religious Teachers of the human race — from their point of view it is a state of ignorance, and it is something that can be transcended by a certain process. What is it? Simply this: that just as in the after-death state the spiritual nature by its predominance goes instantly into the higher worlds and expresses itself there in a rebirth of the spirit by transcending all the actions of the material, passionate, lower nature; so here in order to extract the ethical implication of this idea we have simply to realize that it is possible for us — you and I — at this moment, any time, from day to day, from hour to hour, to die to everything that is of a character that prevents the expression of our own high, divine, spiritual nature and powers. It is those things of a lower nature that are keeping us from a realization of the God Within, that are keeping us from being incarnate Gods here in the temple of the body. To avoid the illusory state — necessary, beneficent and useful as it is — of the Heaven-world, we simply have to take a high ethical standard of life and realize it in the body here and now; and that will mean to lose our personal lives completely from an ordinary point of view. It will be to follow the advice of the Initiate Paul: to die daily that he might be reborn in Christ. This is a possibility for us, and it simply means translating ethics from the realm of the ideal into the living present through action here and now. That is one of the main implications of the whole of the after-death teaching of Theosophy: the possibility first, and then the necessity, the impelling necessity for those who want to live in terms of the spiritual idea — to do the thing in the only place that it can be done, which is on earth here where we are. Here alone can we learn so to dominate by the power of the spirit the lower man, that we become actually reborn during life.

One last idea I want to draw your attention to: the plan that our

Paramatman, our own Father in Heaven, has for each one of us; the plan that our own Inner God shows to us before we come into this world, of the incarnation that we are about to embark upon. That is something that has a tremendous importance, for deep down in the spiritual nature of our own being there is that which knows the justice of every single accident that will come to us in the life that is opening: the justice of the rewards and the retribution that we experience seemingly perhaps in some automatic way once the incarnation has begun. For if there is such a picture, such a plan of the ideal working-out of our destiny — destiny that we ourselves have created — then it rests with us so to live during life that we human, thinking entities, can reflect purely and perfectly that ideal plan for the living of our lives that exists in the mind of the God Within. And if we learn to do that in our daily meditation, listening for the voice of the Inner Warrior, our Inner Deity, our Personal Savior, we shall have revealed before our own Inner Spiritual Eye, step by step, the pathway which that Inner Divinity wants us to follow if we only will — and the price of it is simply the willingness to live an entirely different sort of life; a willingness to translate into the living present those simple ethical principles that all the great Teachers of the human race have laid down as essential and necessary for the saving of the souls of men.

The Mysteries of Death

I would like to begin by reading to you a short passage on one of the great mysteries of man's inner nature: the mystery that all of us are confronted with at the final stage of our lives; the mystery that at certain times during the course of our earthly pilgrimage we are brought face to face with when someone with whom we have been closely connected — dear to us possibly — passes over the Great Divide and we are brought into living consciousness

with eternal realities.

Now these mysteries that surround the whole great subject of Death absorb modern thought to a quite surprising degree. One of the biggest Movements of our times is that which is called the Movement of Spiritualism — miscalled as we think because it has little to do with Spirit, with the Divine; and it is my purpose tonight, after reading this short passage, to try to elucidate some of the thoughts that are contained therein. These lines are from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 170-1. In the pages of that book you will find an at present unexplored treasury of knowledge, a collection of information and facts about all the problems of Death — the problems with which the Spiritualists concern themselves — if you will examine them. Now listen to this:

Yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body — the *brain thinks* and the *Ego* lives over in those few brief seconds his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye, who assist at a death-bed, and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting on its reflection upon the Veil of the Future.

Is there any one of us who could hope to reach to such language as that? If you have a literary sense you will realize that words like that can come only out of the very heart of being itself, from one of those High Beings — a Mahatma, a Great Soul, one who has learned to attune his mind and heart to great Universal Mind itself, and is one with it. Being master of the forces of his own

being he can penetrate into the mysteries of Nature as a conscious, fully intelligent, and potentially omniscient being.

BEINGS WHO KNOW TRUTH

The doctrines that we are going to discuss tonight are not the vain speculations and theories of ancient or modern materialistic scientists who use instruments of matter, instruments of scientific precision; who reason from a collection of facts observable by the external senses, and endeavor to deduce therefrom some working hypothesis which for the time being they will label "the laws of nature." It is not about such so-called scientific facts that we wish to speak, because it is our experience that, in a matter of two or three centuries, such so-called scientific laws change. The scientist discovers that what he thought was truth, was not; and a new theory, a new hypothesis, has to be evolved. From such sources as this we could get no inspiration or light for our mind, and no food for our hearts; no relief for the perplexities under which humanity suffers. Therefore we have to find some other avenue of information and of knowledge; otherwise those great problems that perplex the human heart will not be solved.

So the nature of these doctrines then must come from men who know; and it is the statement of Theosophy — and one of the most helpful and illuminating statements that is to be found in the whole of our philosophy — that not only does Truth exist, being the workings of Nature herself in all departments visible and invisible, within and without and below — but that there are *Beings who know* — for something which exists merely in the abstract is of no possible use for us; we cannot utilize it unless there are Beings who know. Therefore our approach to knowledge must be directly or indirectly by an approach to those who already have this knowledge: and those, in a word, are the Ancient Teachers of the race who exist as a living Brotherhood

among men, sending their Messengers from time to time out into the world — always at work, mostly secretly but nevertheless having witnesses on the scene to testify that Truth, and knowledge of it, exist, and that there is a way by which man may illumine this material brain of his, and learn the Truth if he will.

The truths that we are going to study tonight, then, you can expect will literally strip the veils from this vast Unknown mystery, the mystery that the teachings enshrined — and truly enshrined — in the Christian scriptures simply do not approach at all. Go anywhere you like in any Christian church, and unless by — I was going to say by accident — you happen to come across a learned Kabbalist (and it is most unlikely because you would not find him there) you will not get any knowledge whatsoever of the mysteries of Death. You will be informed that the Almighty, if he had meant you to understand these mysteries, would have given you this information if it had been good for you, and the fact that it is not given in the Christian Bible means that we are to know nothing about it.

Theosophy begins with the statement that an Adept — one who is trained and skilled in Nature's mysteries — can by the power of his own Spirit know all that has been known, all that is known, and all that ever will be known. Now that is a large statement, but it is a necessary one if we are to have the right approach to this problem of the mysteries of Death.

THE SPIRITUALISTIC MEDIUM

Take the Spiritualist position. Some scientists have joined the ranks of the Spiritualist Movement hoping to gain illumination, scientific facts, and data that will bring knowledge of a mystery of which they are entitled to have information and experience if it be possible, and those who began to investigate along these lines in the beginning of the last quarter of the last century found that

in the majority of cases man has simply not got the equipment to enable him to go behind the curtain of matter and examine the process of what happens when a living intelligence passes out of this world — never to return, as far as he knows.

And so we have the first fact that accounts for the existence of a certain class of human beings who call themselves mediums, i. e., persons who have a peculiar constitution — a constitution which is psychically sensitive, in exactly the same way as a cat is. I don't wish to be offensive; don't think that for a moment. A cat is part of the cat-family of nature, and its mechanism is extremely psychically sensitive. Those of you who have ridden on a horse on a dark night will know that horses also are clairvoyant: they see. Cats see, dogs, most animals do; so that these senses that the spiritualistic community imagine are so highly spiritual, are shared, dear friends, by the animal kingdom — nothing more exalted than that; and the nervous mechanism from which this vision functions is that of the sympathetic nervous system, having its seat and controlling factor in what in the human being we call the solar plexus.

Anybody who is physiologically instructed will know that this mechanism is not under the control of our will at all. It is an unconscious function; and therefore, as you would expect, the capacities and so-called powers of a medium will not be under his or her conscious control. On the contrary, a definition of *medium* is one who is a passive instrument of forces that control and guide him — exterior forces. The medium imagines that because some exterior force comes and as it were hypnotizes him, and he surrenders the control of the divine temple of his body to this extraneous force, therefore it must give wisdom, when he has lost control of it and it begins, like the oracle in ancient times, to give messages that are supposed to come from entities beyond the veil of death.

When somebody loses one who is dear to him, and, not being instructed perhaps in philosophical teachings, feels all the more keenly the loss, it is this human feeling of loss that leads him to be attracted to anyone within reason who declares that he is able to communicate with the one he has lost — a very natural human feeling. So when such people hear that Theosophy challenges the position of Spiritualism, they begin to feel perhaps we are going to take something from them, and they perhaps for the time being give us a wide berth. Then perhaps they examine into Spiritualism; they attend seances — and what do they find? This is the crux of the situation. If they are patient enough and spend enough money: note this, *spend enough money*: they will see a variety of phenomena. In fact the number of diverse phenomena that they will see and perceive and learn about, and hear theories about, to try to explain them, are simply legion. I could not begin to tell you in an hour's talk more than the outer fringe of the numbers that they deal with; but nevertheless the most common, in whatever particular form of medium you are dealing with, is of course a message of some kind from one who has passed over.

Now then, practically the whole of the Spiritualist Movement is built up on one idea; and it is simply that they can communicate with the dead through mediums. Mediums gain their living this way: and there is roughly the whole thing in a nutshell. Theosophy comes along and says: "But you don't have the philosophy to explain your beliefs. We know you get messages; we know that you get materializations of some entity who is made to look like and assume the features and appearance of someone you knew. That is possible." Then the Spiritualists answer: "But this is evidence. Nobody ever looked like that but so-and-so," — and for the time being you are convinced. They call it evidential value; yet it is in reality one of the things that go to prove how our senses deceive us.

TWO ASPECTS OF THE AFTER-DEATH STATE

What are the facts underlying this matter? When the last particle of animal soul, as we read from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, leaves the body what happens? What is the nature of the being who is leaving its tenement of flesh? Whence did it come? Whither has it gone? Can our Christianity explain it? It cannot; it is only the knowledge of the ancient mystery teachings of antiquity that gives you the answer for which men and women are looking today. Who are you? What am I? Am I this body which is endeavoring to utter words and phrases to convey certain ideas to you tonight? Is it the body that is I? No. Therefore when the tenement is cold, that inner flame of intelligence that energizes all manifested lives, and especially human beings, vanishes in a flash. The human consciousness, the inner Ego, the true individuality of the man who is passing, in the last moments before the body is completely cold, lives over again every incident from death to birth: *every incident*: nothing is left out. So that he understands the long chain of causes that he has set going, the meaning, in all their aggregate sequences, of every incident of life, and these he gathers together in his memory in a period of complete unconscious supervision. This is the first step.

Then what happens? Check what I tell you tonight with what you may have heard stated in the fields of Spiritualism. This inner entity, if he has led a decent and spiritual kind of life, will pass through those disturbing ghostlike regions of the purgatorial and astral world; pass through them very much as a child will pass through a den of vice and be unaffected by it; and then that indwelling consciousness, the Real Man that has shaken off his body, begins to divest itself of that clothing of subtler matter through which he expresses the emotions, feelings, desires, and lower thoughts. This clothing of subtler matter you can think of as

corresponding to the physical body on earth; but though the body may be burnt, this form of desire in the shape of the man that we know on earth persists, and if you had the clairvoyant vision you could see the exact likeness of the man or woman that was. The form is the same that in the East they call the Kama-rupa, "the body of desire."

It is around the desire-body that the whole field of psychic phenomena centers, for this cast-off spook, this mere simulacrum of the man that was, has certain peculiar faculties. We cannot call them powers but they are faculties, if you can use the term thus, because these spooks of the dead are made up of matter that is living, and this matter contains the impress and memory of everything that happens to the entity or around the entity during life. The curious thing about the mediumistic function is that directly such an entity is attracted to it, this dynamic force, this mediumistic power, acts very much like the energy that revolves the disc of the gramophone. The 'gramophone' is set, and the medium then repeats whatever incident is wanted out of the memory of the individual that is gone. Whoever goes to a Spiritualistic seance carries with him his own memory of all the long history of his relationship with the one that is lost. It is all there: the appearance of the one he loved, and every incident, happy or unhappy, in the whole long existence. We carry around with us from birth to death the whole record of everything that we have done, thought, said, felt, desired or willed, all that we have seen or heard even; and the medium can read that record, for it can all be seen by one who has the inner vision.

You will be asking: "Well, if all that is left of us after death is a spook, what about our boasted immortality?" Aye, you may well ask, for immortality is something that, according to the Ancient Wisdom Teachings, we have to earn. I asked just now what is the nature of the being that has gone into the Great Unknown. Is it

something essentially transitory and material; or is it something divine and immortal, winging its way into the spaces of space with the power and faculties of a god? And the answer to the question is, at least in part, that the transitory or 'devilish' part of it cannot proceed; and yet that upon which the Spiritualist bases his so-called evidence of survival, is the most transitory part — except the body. Strange, isn't it, but it is a fact. That which does wing its way into the inner spaces, cannot be reached by the ordinary medium. Assuming that the entity who has passed on was a spiritual person while on earth, one who had led a clean, religious, and ethical life, he won't be held in the lower purgatorial regions at all. He will have a slight discomfort, perhaps, in shaking himself free of the lower vessels; but it will be in a kind of dream state, and he will experience, later on, either after the longer or shorter dream, something that is equivalent to the passing from earth life: a struggle, a brief struggle, as he frees himself finally from the last clinging bonds of matter. Then that inner entity enters into what in our technical language we call a kind of gestation state — that which precedes birth; for Nature follows the same law everywhere, whether it is the birth of a mosquito, a human being, a planet, a sun or a solar system — the same law operates. It enters into a gestation period, and then very soon it enters into unspeakable peace and bliss where it commences to live over and over again from birth to death the spiritualized memory of the life it was living while on earth, with a memory as vivid as the imagination of a child. If you have watched a child you know what that means.

To the entities in the heaven-world there is no death: they have lost nothing. In their spiritualized dream they are surrounded by those they loved on earth, and they believe themselves to be on earth, for the life there is lived in terms of the real personality. I do not wish to dwell longer on this phase except to say this: that it

is possible for us to rise in spirit and contact that entity in that state of unalloyed bliss, absorbed in its dream as it is; but I beg leave to doubt whether any paid medium is capable of doing it. And because the medium cannot rise so high, what happens? You get those puerile messages of mere repetition, containing perhaps what you call evidential value because it quotes some peculiar characteristic that you knew belonged to the entity that is gone. But does it give you anything of real explanation? Does it give you any more knowledge than the individual had in life? None whatever, and generally less.

THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Now if these theories are true — and you will find it very difficult, and I dare suggest impossible, to explode or knock a hole in them, because they are consistent with Nature: they hold water and are true to the facts as we know them — if these theories are true, there must be a practical application to our lives; for a great Master once said that he who possesses the keys to the mysteries of death is possessed of the keys to life. Why is that so? It means simply this: that if we know what is going to happen to our inner soul nature when it passes into the Great Beyond, we shall be extremely unwise if we do not order our lives in accordance with that knowledge. If you know that to the extent that you live a sensual, devilish kind of life, if you know that a dwelling upon evil during physical life, in act and thought, will so intensify and materialise that which you have to meet face to face after death, if you know that you risk to have no rebirth into the spiritual world at all; that your experience after death will be one of intense suffering, and a suffering that you can do nothing at all about: will you not consider that it is time to do something about it now before it is too late? For, once we have passed over, our lives become dictated by the causes that we have set going in life: our hatreds and passions and desires are the things that will take

possession in the after-life and make existence a perfect hell, an evil nightmare of unrequited desire for beings we loved, and which we cannot get rid of. These will surround us in the after-life with all the intensity of a horrible nightmare, and if this is multiplied and intensified as in the most evil cases it is, it means the death of all that is spiritual in us.

On the contrary and in the other pole of consciousness, if we have lived in the ethical and spiritual side of our being, then indeed we have a tremendous incentive and encouragement and hope, for as we live life here, so it will be there; and if you want to know what you are going to discover when you pass the portals of death, study your own life now, and you will have a very good clue to the nature of the experiences that you will then undergo.

What Survives Death?

Our subject is one that must be of intimate and personal concern to every one of us. Every thinking man sooner or later is brought up against this problem; and we have to admit that the religious teaching of the West is almost entirely lacking in a satisfactory explanation of the important question. You may search the New Testament, and, although you will find ethical teaching of deep Wisdom that will satisfy you for the living of your daily life — you will find it there in all its purity if you have the eyes to read it and to understand it — the teaching about the life after death is not given there. It is one of those Teachings that Jesus kept for his disciples, whom he taught in secret, and to whom he explained those Mysteries that Christian priests are inclined to say "were never meant for you and me to understand: they are something over which Nature has drawn a veil, and it is not for us to penetrate, either by the opening of the psychic senses, or by the penetration and understanding of our intellects."

It is because of this lack of information in the orthodox Christian sources in the West that a tremendous demand has been made for at least the last fifty years by thinking and progressive people for something more satisfying; and the two main Movements that have striven to satisfy that very natural human yearning are: the Spiritualistic Movement, so-called, and the Theosophical Movement. Somewhere about 1850 the investigation of psychic and occult phenomena began to develop very strongly in America; and before long mediums whose names will probably be well known to those who are students of the subject, began to perform phenomena in public, and a good deal of evidence was collected; but it aroused, of course, an enormous amount of opposition and incredulity, and the said mediums were getting into very deep water because they were accused — and in many cases unfortunately quite rightly — of fraud. Eventually H. P. Blavatsky, who was at the time in Europe, set out to America to see whether she could do something to give this Spiritualistic Movement a very much needed upward impulse, while providing at the same time a philosophical and rational explanation of the occult phenomena which were undoubtedly taking place even under test conditions. While unmasking fraud where it existed, she also sought to give some help and protection to those mediumistic sensitives who were doing their best, according to their lights, to lead men from a purely materialistic outlook to something which was in their view more spiritual — and all men must admit that if their beliefs were not spiritual at least they were superphysical.

So into that world came H. P. Blavatsky, able to perform with the power of her own will the very phenomena that the psychics of New York and Boston were performing they knew not how, as the unconscious instruments of certain forces which controlled and utilized them. That is a true definition of what a medium is. A

medium can function only when some exterior agency takes possession of the lower instrument, which by a variety of means is rendered unconscious: either by trance or hypnotism, or by some other means. Therefore these mediums have no longer any control of their mechanism of consciousness, and they claim that the fact that some invisible, and as they call it *spiritual*, entity, takes possession of their vehicle and produces varieties of phenomena, proves that their experience is valuable and must be useful and uplifting. It is precisely upon these points that H. P. Blavatsky, while confirming the genuineness of many of these phenomena, uttered a tremendous challenge to all those who accepted the main spiritualistic hypothesis, viz: that these phenomena were the production of excarnate human entities who had returned, so to speak, from the veil of death in order to communicate with their friends who were still living on earth.

H. P. Blavatsky was, as always, extremely uncompromising on the point; she showed, demonstrated, and taught, that these phenomena were not produced by the excarnate human entities that they represented themselves to be. Not at all. There were the phenomena that take place with various kinds of automatic writing; the phenomena of speech that take place in trance; the sermons that were uttered by an entranced medium; and particularly the materializations whereby the images or faces of people that sitters were able to recognise, were materialized by a certain process, thus becoming visible to the audience.

Now the Theosophical teaching in regard to these matters is something entirely different from the Spiritualistic belief, and one of the great truths that H. P. B. hammered home was the fact that these pursuits, these investigations, into the psychic realms of Nature, were actually more materialistic from a certain point of view — that is from a spiritual point of view they were actually more materialistic — than a purely materialistic outlook. She

showed, and history proves her to have been correct, that the individuals who pursue these investigations of a psychic nature, who attend Spiritualistic seances, for example, and who constantly have their minds and emotions concentrated in these unwholesome psychic realms, become thereby debased: their spiritual, psychic, physical, and in some cases their moral tone suffers, by reason of the fact that the minds of such people are being concentrated in the world of ghosts and spooks — the atmosphere of the graveyard in other words; and this is an unwholesome thing. Moreover, H. P. Blavatsky pointed out with great truth the extraordinarily unsatisfactory results that come about for the mediums themselves.

To turn from this aspect. (Afterwards, if you wish, you can ask questions in regard to this psychic side of the matter, but I should prefer to turn to the Theosophical teaching as to what happens to the personal man after death.) What is the personal man? He is the collection of psychic and mental energies and emotions which express themselves through the physical body of man during life. A new combination of those bundles of energies is made at the beginning of earth-life for every entity. He is a new combination, and that combination is given a name and a form such as you and I now bear. That combination has never existed before; it never bore that name before, and as such it will never exist again. It is here for a short while; it is transitory; and if we believe — that this lower personality of ours is all that there is to survive; if we concentrate our attention upon its wants and needs, and are unable to raise our thought and aspiration to something higher; then we shall be of that vast company that H. P. Blavatsky called "the living dead," the soulless individuals that she said we elbow at every street-corner.

If anything is to survive death, surely you will agree that it has to be worthy of immortality; and therefore the question

immediately arises: Is man immortal according to the Theosophical teaching, or is he not? What has just been said would lead you to suppose that man is very decidedly mortal, and one part of him unquestionably is; but if we go a little deeper we find that this personal part of the man is, after all, only the envelope, the container, the instrument, the vehicle through which the flame of spiritual consciousness is striving to irradiate and illuminate and guide this erring personal entity through the intricacies of earth-life, through which intricacies many there are who lose their way.

Therefore we come to the position that man is only conditionally immortal: in other words the real entity who is living his life, and trying to express himself through this lower personality, has to find the way to raise himself inwards and upwards into union with the spiritual, permanent, eternal and immortal part of his own nature; and it is precisely that task that every initiated Adept has succeeded in doing to a greater or less extent. The whole purpose of occult science, the object of the initiation of the Initiate, is to bring him to a recognition that there is within, and brooding above the human individual, a definite entity which can be reached, the energy of which even today for every one of us shines into our personal nature in moments of crisis (personal and otherwise) when the personal man is, as it were, driven right down to his very foundations. It is then that he is forced to look inward and upward to the only source of inspiration that any man really has when he reaches bedrock; and there, when he finds that "still small voice" that can make itself heard if he listens for it (it is the inspiration to spiritual actions of whatever kind, to kindly human actions), there is at these moments the guiding and the saving spiritual energy that comes from the immortal part of his being. For most of us this contact is fragmentary; it is spasmodic; but we do get glimpses of it. It is the main purpose of

the study of Theosophical Wisdom: that we shall learn how to make our human brains porous, as Mr. Judge used to say, to that higher influence; so that day by day, week by week, it will beat down into our brains and we shall become more and more permanently aware of that spiritual influence in our lives.

Now this can be done without any mediumship — in fact mediumship militates against the spiritual influence; and yet, you see, the difficulty is that the psychic intermediate state offers such an attractive door to some natures. It is true that with very little difficulty the psychic senses can be opened by every one of us; and then we shall become aware of various kinds of entities that the spiritualists call their "spirit guides" and "angel guides" and what not. If they could see the said guides face to face I think they would get a very rude kind of shock. H. P. Blavatsky went so far as to state that most of the angel and spirit guides that come to mediumistic seances are the spooks of departed entities — not the entities themselves any more than your body is you — and you know the state of the human body after it is buried! You can easily imagine that after death the psychic remnants of your being are not in the cleanest condition. In other words they are disintegrating; and this part of our being, this cast-off remnant through which we expressed our psychic and intellectual emotions during life, has a form in the psychic worlds, which can be seen by sensitives, and it bears the shape and appearance of the human individuals that we were in life. So much so that a perfectly correct description can be given of Mrs. Jones or Mr. Smith, and the sitters can immediately say, "Oh, that is dear Mary," or "our John." "Nobody else was ever just like that. This must be a very holy person who is giving us all this interesting psychic information," — and they believe everything they are told.

Yet what has actually happened? Two things at least are possible,

both of them quite different from the explanation given by the believers in the Spiritualistic Movement, and these explanations are definitely interesting. First of all every one of us, in the magnetic sphere that surrounds us, contains an indelible record of every thought and act that we have ever committed from early infancy to old age — a somewhat staggering, perhaps uncomfortable thought; because any mediumistic sensitive can read in this aura or magnetic sphere all that we are doing or have done, and incidently can see, therefore, an image of those people who have made the deepest impression on our lives; and it is in this way that many descriptions and personal incidents are related without the entity concerned even being present. Exactly the same thing can be done from the memory of Nature, for there is recorded everything that takes place in any individual life; and if the psychic is sufficiently developed, that impression on the astral light can also be read.

So these are two possible explanations of phenomena; and yet a third, and a very frequent one, is that the excarnate entity is attracted to the seance, and that spook or ghost (whatever you like to call it) has a complete record of everything that it did and thought and said, but it has no power to act on its own; it is an unconscious bundle of energies that can only be stimulated or galvanized into activity by the psychic and electrical energy of the peculiar power of mediumship. That energy stimulates the ghost and it will play like a phonograph or a gramophone the records of anything that you like to call out from it, generally determined by the particular personal recollections of the sitters.

All the personal part of the man is doomed to disintegration, and only the part that is worthy of immortality really survives. According to the teachings of Theosophy the real entity in man very soon after death falls asleep and becomes unconscious; and in a longer or shorter period of time, determined by the relative

degree of spirituality of the individual — the more spiritual the quicker does he shake off the lower vehicles of consciousness, the psychic part of him — he then enters into a period which technically has been called the gestation state, exactly corresponding to the period of gestation of the human entity before physical birth. I should like you, if you will, to note the fact that there is a state after death exactly analogous to the state of gestation of the foetus before physical birth. One of the great Teachers to whom we owe some of the Theosophical teachings has recommended us to keep a spiritual eye upon the physiological processes of human birth if we want to understand some of the mysteries of nature: mosquitos, animals, and man, as well as planets and solar systems, come to birth by identically the same process.

So this entity after death sinks into a state of sleep; and after a certain period of time, which is determined by the ethereality of the spiritual energies that it generated during life, it is reborn in the Devachan, the region of the Gods (the Heaven world in the Christian language), as a little child, and there it will live over again — minus all recollections of the personal lower things; the evil passions, desires, hatreds and so on — it lives over again a kind of spiritualized recollection of all the beautiful and spiritual things that the entity dreamed about during life. Very few of us succeed in working out practically our spiritual aspirations and dreams. We have busy, work-a-day lives, and much remains to be worked out in the after-death state: in this ideal world we live from birth, through youth, adulthood, middle age and old age, and we assimilate and get the very maximum understanding and development of all those aspirations of a spiritual kind that we had during life.

But even this state one of these days comes to an end; and eventually when the period of assimilation and digestion,

spiritually speaking, of these energies is completed, then the hour strikes and the entity once again is drawn back inevitably to earth-life, for the fact that it has experienced this state of Devachan, which is a kind of spiritual illusion, though a very high one — the fact that it has experienced that state proves that it has not yet won its freedom from the wheel of birth and death. One of these days we all have to learn the lesson that even that state, which is only possible to those who lead relatively spiritual lives — *relatively* spiritual: an arrant materialist will not have that experience, and therefore it is a step forward — we all have to learn, I say, that there is a still further step, and that will come when we as individuals learn how to think and act so that the full spiritual meaning of every action and event is assimilated here and now, and for that we have to be fully self-conscious individuals. Then for us the interior worlds are open; there is no more death for us for there is no break in consciousness: consciousness proceeds unbroken, through sleeping and waking, through birth and death. Such a one is worthy and able to bear the burden of his immortality, but he has no Devachan in the sense of which I have been speaking of it. Periods of rest he must have, but that stage of illusion he has conquered and gone beyond.

More about 'What Survives Death'

QUESTION: What of the Lower Quaternary survives death?

ANSWER: The Lower Quaternary in Theosophical parlance includes:

- (1) The Body.
- (2) The Linga-Sarira, the framework upon which the body is built.
- (3) Prana, or life.

(4) Kama-Manas, the lower thoughts, emotions, desires, passions, etc.

These together make up that which we call the personality, and it must be said at once that these do not survive death as a conscious entity under normal circumstances for the ordinary person. If these attributes which make up the personality during life were to survive death it would mean that they would still persist in combination minus the physical body, whereas the exact reverse is the case, since this combination begins immediately after death to fall apart and disintegrate. We repeat, therefore, that as a *conscious entity* the Lower Quaternary does not survive death. Nevertheless the substance of which the different vehicles of consciousness are built is composed of life-atoms, and therefore has all of it a life of its own. This matter has been impressed with the emotional and thought tendencies during life, and in a very real sense this matter which we have used and expressed our consciousness through belongs to us. We are responsible for its future destiny in very much the same way as parents are responsible for their children. It should not be forgotten, however, that while the responsibility of parents in the way of supervision is very important, nevertheless, the child has an inherent destiny and individuality of its own. Exactly the same is true of the material substance of which the principles of the Lower Quaternary is composed. The substance is not dead: the life-atoms are monadic centers of life and consciousness; and whilst the combination in which they are held together during life as a personal entity is dissolved at death, nevertheless they will be required to enter into a new combination later on, when that part of our being which really does survive once again reimbodies itself.

QUESTION: Does the Upper Triad, as we understand it, survive death?

ANSWER: If we understand it correctly it does survive death. In fact this is the part that does survive. The higher part of Manas, bearing with it the efflorescence of the past personal existence: the fine aroma of the personality that was; all in fact that is worthy of immortality does survive on its own plane, but is neither capable of conscious communication with the living, nor is it subject to the interference of irresponsible mediums. The higher part of our being, represented by the Higher Triad, contains all that is real and eternal in man. It is the very essence, the essential part of him.

QUESTION: Do any of the physical senses survive? Has the discarnate spirit any of the six physical senses, in some form or other? Must we assume that the spirit is blind, deaf, and dumb, without the sense of smell or taste?

ANSWER: (a) The body has no senses, as these are actually centered in the Astral Body or Linga-sarira. These senses persist, therefore, in the Linga-sarira, and provide the explanation of the phenomena exhibited in spiritualism, in connexion with the *kama-rupic* shell which persists after death for a longer or shorter period, according to the degree of materiality or spirituality of the individual concerned. This *kama-rupic* shell, when attracted to the medium in a spiritualistic seance, can be stimulated so as to repeat mechanically the sensations, the lower thoughts and memories, with which it was familiar in life.

(b) The discarnate spirit, i. e., the Higher Triad, cannot be said to have six physical senses. On the other hand on its own plane it is fully conscious, is absorbed in a state of spiritual and ecstatic re-living of all the finer and higher thoughts and emotional experiences that were comprised in the dreams, aspirations, and unselfish or spiritual actions of the last incarnation.

(c) The spiritual entity, the Higher Triad, is anything but blind, deaf and dumb from the point of view of its own reflected consciousness; but nevertheless it should be emphasized that the entity is in a subjective state, and therefore incapable of responding to external stimuli.

QUESTION: To what extent do appetite, desires, ambition, hate, envy, jealousy, love, compassion, and similar attributes — of which a man in his physical body is conscious — survive death?

ANSWER: Appetite, desire, emotion, envy, jealousy, being essentially mortal attributes of the lower personality, do not survive as part of the higher conscious individuality. They persist for a while, associated with the *kama-rupic* shell, but this after death is in a state of disintegration; and finally the combination is dissolved, but the energies which are represented by these lower emotional characteristics constitute what in Buddhistic philosophy is called the *skandhas*, and these *skandhas*, impregnated in the life-atoms, await the reincarnating ego at the threshold of Devachan in its return to life. The Lower Quaternary thus absorbs the *skandhas* into the new combination.

Hatred has a certain quality of survival for — strange paradox — it has a certain spiritual quality about it, but it is a spirituality of evil: it is the basis for the only kind of immortality that the Adept in sorcery is able to experience. To the extent that the ordinary individual permits himself to express this highly disintegrating and destructive energy, he is generating for himself a period in the state which is known as Avichi — a state in every respect the opposite pole of Devachan. The latter is a spiritual and blissful experience, but the former is a spiritual experience of the most intense isolated anguish and suffering.

Love, compassion, the aspiration for Truth, Wisdom, and the

Higher Knowledge: these are inherent in the Higher Triad, and therefore without question survive, being part of the immortal and eternal man.

QUESTION: Does memory, as physical man functions in this respect, survive: in other words, does the discarnate spirit have recollection of physical world conditions?

ANSWER: The discarnate spiritual entity has recollection only of the environment associated with the spiritual experiences in the contemplation of which he is absorbed. For example, the spiritual entity will remember the parents he loved; and therefore, since parents must have material surroundings, he will recollect the environment, the home, and all the places, buildings, scenery, and landscapes with which he associates all his higher spiritual experiences; but the parent, the brother or sister, the school-master, or the school-mates, and the incidents connected with those persons which were productive of suffering or sin, will be excluded from the Devachanic memories. The entity in Devachan is in a subjective state, and is therefore unable to perceive material conditions upon the earth which he has left. He is not in the least concerned consciously with what may be happening to the individuals he left behind.

QUESTION: Do ambitions and plans made by the physical man looking to the next incarnation, consciously survive? In other words, can a man in this incarnation consciously plan for the next incarnation, using his daily thought and mental processes as the seed for the next incarnation's harvest and consciously carry these thoughts and plans beyond the grave? In other words, can a man here and now, agree on a definite, consistent plan of life, to be carried through various lives and incarnations?

ANSWER: This is an important and very interesting subject. The

individual who recognises the fact that he will have other incarnations, can most certainly plan consciously for those future lives. In so doing, however, he will have to come to the conclusion that what he plans to achieve in future incarnations should be the worth-while things, not those which would turn to ashes in the mouth and be productive of suffering and disillusionment. Whatever the heart of man is set upon that he will achieve and become, either in this life or in some future incarnation. Desire creates opportunity, and "what ye ask that will ye receive; therefore take care what ye will ask." Man is the creator of his own destiny, and decrees absolutely his future reward or punishment. If he seeks material ambitions, power merely for his own gratification, knowledge for his own benefit, forgetting the good of others: even these things can he lay the basis for by developing the faculties which these things demand.

The teaching of Theosophia, the Eternal Wisdom, is to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness, and then all these other things will be added unto him. Since man can create his own future destiny, he will be lacking in wisdom if he does not make his spiritual objective the highest of which he can conceive — to reach to union with his own indwelling Divinity and to dedicate all plans, aspirations, and ambitions whatsoever to the service of the Beloved. This should form the basis of our plans, if any, for future incarnations.

Working towards such a sublime objective, the Pilgrim Soul can agree upon a definite, consistent plan of action to be carried through various lives and incarnations. No man achieves Mahatmaship in that incarnation in which he first sets his foot upon the Path. Several incarnations must be devoted to that task; but once the goal is clearly seen and the vows are taken, all thought, ambition, aspiration, and planning are devoted to the one end. This is shown so beautifully in the Second Discourse of

the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

In this system of Yoga no effort is wasted, nor are there any evil consequences, and even a little of this practice delivereth a man from great risk. In this path there is only one single object, and this of a steady, constant nature; but widely-branched is the faith and infinite are the objects of those who follow not this system.

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6b. The Rationale of the After-Life

Psychic Phenomena

Theosophy and Christian Science

Psychic Phenomena

Friends: You heard tonight that the Theosophical Movement, of which this Society is an integral part, is an ethical and spiritual one; that it has existed all down the ages; and also that it has nothing but a feeling of friendliness, a feeling of brotherhood and fraternal sympathy, for all movements that strive according to their own methods and ways for the elevation, even to the smallest extent, of humanity. Therefore I want to say right at the beginning to those of our Spiritualistic brothers — some of them I see here tonight — who may or may not have come in contact with Theosophical teachings before: I want to say to them that we have much sympathy for them; but that we have furthermore the feeling that for them Theosophy has a very real message — something of vital importance to them as individuals.

The first object of this Theosophical Society is to promulgate a knowledge of the laws inherent in the Universe. That means, of course, a statement of that knowledge of the inner constituents of Nature and man which exists in the keeping and in the knowledge of those who are called the Elect among mankind, those who have always preserved it, and who from time to time come to restate it in language comprehensible to the age in which it is particularly given. This being one of our main purposes, we have to study the problem of psychic phenomena in the light of that Ancient Teaching.

Psychic phenomena have always existed, and the fact that they

play a very large part in the lives of an increasing number among an interested public means that the teachings that Theosophy has to give on this subject should fill some vital need in that public. One of the first statements is that there is no such thing as miracle; that that which looks to us like a marvelous and extraordinary and otherwise inexplicable happening or phenomenon is actually explainable in terms, if not of the physical Universe, then of the unseen and occult Universe, provided that you understand the laws involved. But many of the phenomena that we know of, from the New Testament down to our own age, especially those that are the constant happenings in Spiritualistic circles, do arouse in very many people a sense of wonder, if not of awe, and, friends, even of reverence for the powers which produce these mysterious phenomena. If we understand this, the great element of wonder is largely reduced as we look at the problems sincerely and say: "Well, now, there must be an explanation of this phenomenon." The Universe is a Universe of Law. Things do not happen fortuitously; and if we do not understand them, well then, the Theosophical Society provides another object amongst those which you have heard tonight, whereby in studying the laws and the powers innate in man we seek by an unfolding of those powers to understand what those hidden forces and hidden laws may be.

According to the Theosophical philosophy the Universe is guided, the Universe is evolved, under the direction of conscious and intelligent beings. The teaching is that every part of boundless Space is instinct with the life of the One Great Reality, the Great Breath of all existence, which pulses eternally throughout the heart of things, and throughout every living creature. Every one of the forces of Nature is actually the expression of the life-force of some group of beings that inhabit the inner spheres of Nature. The fact that we cannot see them matters not at all. That man is

not the only conscious thinking being in this Universe does not need a great deal of substantiation possibly; but the Theosophical teaching is that beyond man, in an endless series of progression, are rank after rank, hierarchy after hierarchy, of still more exalted beings. Descending also in a progressive scale into the depths of matter, you get different types of entities even lower than man, who still act as some of the unseen but intelligent agents and forces of Nature.

Man himself is built upon the same plan as Nature. Just as Nature is not only the external appearance that we all see in all its phases — some beautiful, some terrible — so also has man within himself a thinking, conscious, intelligent, directing influence: that which we call Soul in man — the real man as apart from his body. Man is not made up of merely that which we see. We have only to look inside ourselves to observe that we are made up, for example, of emotions, of passions, of thoughts, of a more or less material nature. Understand that to be the constitution of what you might call the animal-soul in man. Then you have what we call the Human Soul — that which makes a man a human being. It is in the Human Soul that repose the capacities of man to think, to know himself as a god. It is in that capacity that he is distinguished from the beast creation. Over and above those three principles — if you will and like to look upon them as such — you will find a fourth: that over-brooding and Divine immortal principle in man, with which it is possible for the Human Soul to identify itself.

With that fourfold division you have sufficient for our evening's study as regards man, and you will find that the great community of the Spiritualistic movement do believe (I think I am right in saying this) that the inner realms of the Universe are guided by unseen and intelligent forces. It is that really which gives them the right to be termed 'Spiritualists' in contradistinction to that

other section of the community (which happily is far less strong than it used to be in the early days of the last century, or shall we say in the middle of the last century?) the Materialists. Really the two words are the opposite of each other: one believes in the spiritual, energizing principles in Nature that we do not see but believe in, so to speak, if we cannot observe them. The other believes there is nothing beyond that which we can see and feel and touch.

The second great — shall we say belief? — that distinguishes those who come under the category of Spiritualists from other thinking people, is the belief or conviction that it is possible to communicate, or have communication, between the living such as ourselves, and those who have passed over into the Great Beyond. It is their belief; and therefore arising out of that you get their own activities, which result in what we call 'psychic phenomena.' You have only to examine the daily newspapers towards the week-end, principally the Sunday papers, to discover that even in one city like London there is a great, a large, body of people who call themselves the Spiritualistic Community. There are a tremendous number of them. It is estimated that there are something like twenty million in all the world, and I should think that is probably a conservative estimate. There are twenty million people who to some extent believe in the possibility of communication with the dead, and who no doubt practise the various methods which they believe in to that end.

There is an enormous variety, an almost endless variety, of psychic phenomena that could be described and discussed; but so vast is the field that it would take not one lecture but many, many volumes — days and weeks of time — to describe all the possibilities of variety in psychic phenomena. They are indeed endless, and therefore tonight we shall have quite enough to do to examine that sphere or field of psychic phenomena which is

possible for us all to examine somewhat; and I refer therefore principally to the field which has been brought to the notice of the world through the activities of these same Spiritualistic communities. That is the subject which we want to consider for a little while; and we want to understand, if we can, in the light of the Ancient Teachings, what is the real nature of these phenomena. We want to see whether the interpretation that is usually put upon them can possibly give place to a better interpretation — to a different one, if you will — and so let us consider really what is the purpose and the possible use of psychism and psychic phenomena today.

I will tell you that from the Theosophical point of view they have two possible uses, both of which are somewhat qualified by results. But two things this interest in phenomena has done. One is that many people have become convinced — as we think, on quite insufficient evidence, but nevertheless convinced, in themselves — that the survival of man's individuality, his Soul (call it what you will) is a fact. Now for those people no doubt it is useful if it has, as it were, raised their thoughts at any rate to the extent of believing or discovering that the material existence is not the only one. Probably that is the best that can be said of psychic phenomena. It is the object with which most people investigate, and I think that many Spiritualistic communities would tell you that their main purpose in carrying on their meetings and activities, is to give a demonstration, as they call it, of the facts of survival. Then you have a corollary of that, which is that many people who have lost those that are dear to them have sought comfort, if they were able to find it, in the revelations of the seance-room; and we are told on excellent authority that these people *have* felt comfort, that they have derived a great deal of satisfaction from the various messages and supposed communications that they have received from those who have

passed on.

That is one aspect of it, and we want to go rather more deeply into these questions, and examine them, and discover their real nature, and to see whether in reality these people have received something by means of those psychic experiments which has led to nobler living; which has taught them, as they used to say, to die grandly; which has given them a philosophy of life that embraces the whole of Nature, leaving out no part of it; which has given them a strength for their inner spiritual needs that can only be regarded as the Bread of Life. Now we want to see. I mentioned those few words simply because if those experiments do not bring that result, well then, really, they are empty shells, husks, which do not feed the inner Spiritual Being in man at all.

Therefore let us first of all examine what is the nature of mediumship. There are no psychic phenomena, as we understand the term today, without mediums, and you will find the principal characteristic of mediums is that they make no bones about the fact that they have a peculiar, abnormal, and unusual faculty of, shall we say stepping aside, paralysing their mechanism of consciousness, their body and normal faculties, and that they are then taken possession of, or controlled by, some force or entity outside themselves. They speak of this familiarly as their 'guide' or their 'control.' This for them is a fact of considerable importance, and they consider that by the mere fact that they are being controlled and guided by this mysterious unseen entity, therefore the results of that activity will be more useful to their fellows than if they were doing it in some way by their own conscious direction. A medium, in other words, is a passive instrument of forces which control and guide him.

That is the definition of mediumship, and I want to show you for just a minute (I believe you will agree with me) how it is a

misunderstanding of a very wonderful truth in Nature. There is always a light and a dark side to everything. If you see one side of a medal you can also see the other side. The medium has got something in his idea. He has got the notion that if he steps aside, so to speak, and lets something motivate and activate through him, he is going to be useful in some way.

Let us turn to what we Theosophists call the Light, the Wisdom-side of that picture, and what do we find? We find that the definition of the Adept in Arcane Knowledge is as different from the definition of a medium as light is from darkness. The Adept in Arcane Wisdom is one who is able, by the self-conscious powers of his own spirit, to do under the direction and control of his own will every single one of the phenomena — and an infinitely greater series — that the mediums do unconsciously to themselves. He knows how he does it and why he does it; he merely makes use of certain occult laws in Nature with which he has learned to cooperate by the understanding of the powers of his own being.

Take another further development of that idea, and you will find that those Adepts of Knowledge work in the world by means of certain disciples — if you like to use the term — certain individuals who are connected with them, under their instruction, and who at certain times are able to transmit to their fellows ideas of spiritual value. Possibly, if one had had a great acquaintance with Spiritualistic views and teachings, it might be thought when such Adepts in knowledge work through one of those individuals in the world who are their disciples, that they do it in a similar way to the medium and his guide or control; but, friends, it is not so; and this is where I am going to suggest to you that there is, so to speak, a shadow of truth in the idea that has perhaps given rise to the idea of the value of mediumship.

Actually a great Master of Wisdom will not permit himself to interfere with the conscious control of any individual who may be under his instruction. On the contrary, when such an individual is performing a task under the direction of a Master of Wisdom, what happens? Why, the inner spiritual nature of the disciple is so energized that the actual connexion between the inner spiritual real man and the body he works through is ten times, a hundredfold, stronger than in the ordinary man and woman of the world. *Adeptship is in every way the opposite of mediumship.* Such an individual is ten times more positive and non-mediumistic than his psychic brother. What he is taught is not to get out of his body, if he can, and give it up to some extraneous entity. On the contrary, he is taught to forget himself in the service of the race to which he belongs; and as he lays aside the personal idea of himself and raises his consciousness to the realization that the Great Soul — the Great World-Soul as it is called in this philosophy — is actually that of which he himself is an integral part; as he begins to manifest in his daily life the powers of that infinite Universe by forgetting himself, why! as he forgets himself, all power and knowledge and the infinite love and wisdom and compassion that lie at the heart of Nature itself, because of his self-forgetfulness, begin to manifest through him.

Do you see what a different picture it is; how entirely different that conception is from the idea of the medium who is negative and who allows some other entity to disinherit him of his divine potentialities?

What is it that those Ancient Teachers of the race have to say upon this whole question of psychic phenomena? We said that we should have to limit ourselves this evening to a very brief consideration of the phenomena attending a Spiritualistic seance; and in order to understand the problem I want, by a series of comparisons if possible, to make the Ancient Teaching clear to

you simply for your consideration, to show which is more reasonable. Every psychic phenomenon that I have ever heard of is certainly susceptible of two explanations: one according to the accepted Spiritualistic theories, and the other the teaching of the Arcane Knowledge upon that particular fact in Nature. And get this one point clear: that no Theosophist, no occultist, no mystic, would ever deny the facts of Spiritualistic phenomena. He knows for a certainty that they happen, that they do exist.

You can go to the Queen's Hall, to the Grotrian Hall, you can go to a dozen places this very evening, and see demonstrations of these psychical happenings; and, now, in order to understand the comparisons which will be drawn, in a few moments let us very briefly consider what happens to man after the death of his physical body; because after all, friends, it all turns upon that.

If there is any reliable source of information to which we can go to find out what actually is the Law of Nature operating at the time of the death of the physical body, we can learn a lot and save ourselves a great number of mistakes; we can save our feet from wandering from the spiritual path altogether; and that teaching very briefly is this: in the case of the average normal individual who lives an ordinary, everyday life — neither very good nor very bad — such an individual comes to the natural term of his life say around about sixty or seventy years of age, and passes on. The body dies, and immediately the body, the framework upon which it was built, and the life which energized it, begin to fall to pieces. The body is either burnt under cremation, or it goes into the grave and begins to disintegrate. So much for the body.

Do you remember that a little earlier this evening it was mentioned that man consists not only of that body, but also of his emotional and passional nature, his lower thoughts and desires? Everybody has that constitution to a greater or less degree. Then

you have the higher thoughts, the higher spiritual emotions and aspirations that go to make man what he is as a human being with a human soul: and over and above you have the immortal brooding Spirit. It is the human being in the man, the thinker, the conscious entity that we all love, that we have affection and reverence for. I think that you will all agree with me that it is not the animal part of our friend that we have any affection for. We say to ourselves, "Well, we are all human," and we just accept that as a necessary evil; but it is really the truly human-divine qualities which show through the outer casing that go to make up what we love in any human being; and therefore it will come as no shock to us at all when we realize that the animal nature is destined to immediate disintegration after the close of the earth-life.

As long as life persisted, the emotions, the passions, the lower thoughts, were all in a state of constant flux; but directly the life is closed, that inner, real man falls into a state of unconsciousness. Gradually that human soul is separated from its animal nature, and directly that separation is complete, the individual begins to regain his consciousness and wakes up to the ineffable bliss of that spiritual world wherein he will reap fruition of all those causes of a spiritual kind that he generated in the life that has just closed. Take that as a broad idea for the general run of humanity. There are certain exceptions, and we cannot touch upon them more than to say that the exceptions concern those who have been shot forth from this life as a result of accident, suicide, murder, or something of that kind — anything which cuts short the life so that there is a premature death. Then the individuals concerned go into the Great Beyond in a state that is not really death. They retain their consciousness in a way that the average individual does not.

Now think just for a moment: you have that inner, real man in the

ineffable bliss of that heaven which in the language of the Ancient Knowledge is spoken of as Devachan; you have in the region of what the Roman Catholics call Purgatory (the region of Kama-loka as they call it in the East) the material remnants of the being that was, disintegrating, but still for a considerable period hanging together — remnants or characteristics of the material man that was, in life. This is a tremendously important thing to remember, because in terms of the gross living of the departed entity will be the persistence and longevity of the remnants of his material life in the shape of his passions, his desires and his lower thoughts.

Let us turn to an examination, very briefly, of the phenomena that take place at the Spiritualistic seances. You get a tremendous number of supposed messages from the individuals whom you have known who have departed this life. According to the Ancient Teaching it is quite impossible for a normal average human being to communicate with this earth's sphere once he has passed into the state of unconsciousness and entered the bliss of that period which lasts between earth-lives, and it is impossible for a particular, definite and beneficent reason. It is mechanically impossible from a psychical point of view; but let us look at it from the moral point of view.

Which, friends, do you consider is wiser, grander, more just in every way, to the being that was? He has done his day's work, has he not? He has passed through the tribulations of earth-life. He has 'done his job,' and of necessity that human soul needs rest, needs peace, needs spiritual refreshment before taking to the toil of earth-life again. What kind of rest would it be to you if you were forced to look down from a purely mythical heaven and see the sorrows, the trials and tribulations of those that you had left behind — if the bonds of sympathy and love were very great? I do not need to pile illustration upon illustration, but I think that you

can recognise for yourselves that it certainly would not be a period of unalloyed rest and bliss; and this is quite a sufficient reason to understand that Nature in her great mercy does not permit such a disturbance of the peace of the soul that has passed on.

Actually where do these messages emanate from? They are sufficiently genuine, they are sufficiently accurate, they bear what is called 'evidential value' of their source; so much so that if you have ever attended a Spiritualistic seance you will always find a number of people who will immediately testify to the fact that what the clairvoyant or the medium has told them — the description that has been given them of their father, or their mother, or their sweetheart, or something of that kind — is perfectly just and accurate; that moreover the medium described characteristics that were so peculiar to that individual that they could not possibly doubt. Then where have these come from?

The mediums have a faculty, by virtue of their peculiar constitution, of doing a number of interesting things; and one of the faculties of the mediumistic nature is that they have a power of attracting the remnants, the left-off clothing if you like to call it so, of the emotional nature of the beings that were — to attract them: that is all. They can get it, so to speak, into the sphere of their own magnetic influence; and having done so, that bundle of memories, of thoughts and feelings, of emotions, is galvanized into a state of activity, very much as a gramophone record is made to play an old tune, and the tune it will play will be in accordance with the particular memories evoked by the thoughts and memories in the mind of the individual in the audience at a seance with whom they are connected; and therefore since those molecules and atoms which compose those bodies contain a complete record or memory of all the incidents that happened in that past life, they are able to say a whole lot of things which only

that person knows about. One of the peculiar characteristics of the evidence which they always advance is: "It was such a remarkable thing that that medium said to me, because I had never been there before, she did not know who I was, and yet she said that particular thing that I knew about." *Precisely*, that was why the medium was able to tell them.

Friends, not only does Nature herself have a great and marvelous record and memory, a great picture-gallery preserving the record of every event that ever was; but each individual one of us has what is called an 'atmosphere' — a surrounding aura or sphere in which is recorded every slight thought and feeling and action that we have ever done. Is it not natural that those we have loved — ay, and those we have hated, too — will have left a clear imprint and picture, not only in our own atmosphere but in the corresponding memory of Nature? Again, the mental and emotional relics that we leave behind us when we pass on will also bear that same connexion with the memory of Nature and with the magnetic sphere surrounding our friends that we have left behind.

It is a fact that a competent, good medium is able to read the magnetic sphere that surrounds us all. He is able to read there all that took place between you and the departed entity, tell you the names, give you an accurate description, because they are all in front of the medium — he can see them there. Do not think that by that statement I mean to suggest that the medium is in any way deceiving you. Not at all. Mediums do not know how they get their results, and one of the most curious phenomena is that of the photograph — of what is called a 'spirit-photograph,' when an extra face appears upon the photographic plate in the background. You have all heard or seen illustrations of it. It is a very interesting fact. What is called a 'photographic medium' gets to work and takes your photograph, and sure enough there on the

plate you have a picture of somebody you have lost.

Lady Conan Doyle in today's *Sunday Despatch* gives a description of how a scientific friend went to the British College of Psychic Science — and he went with a perfectly open mind to see what he could find out about the 'spirit-photograph,' as they call it. The medium was leaving the ball when he arrived, but he asked him to come back and take a photograph for him and he did, and to his (the friend's) great delight he found a perfectly accurate representation of a daughter he had lost, a far better photograph than had been done in life. Well, friends, where did it come from? You can understand that anybody who had not a knowledge of the ancient teachings, the ancient laws inherent in Nature itself, would be deceived by such a phenomenon. He would say, "That girl is alive, conscious, and I have not lost her at all; survival is a fact," never dreaming that it was possible by means of that peculiar characteristic of mediumship to evoke from the memory of Nature or from the memory of the individual, or however you like to put it, the exact image, to densify that image and produce what is tantamount to a materialization that it is possible to photograph; but that is the process.

Do they question it? Not at all. They are mediums. It 'just happens,' from their point of view. For them it is a wonderful power, and it is a remarkable faculty — you cannot get away from it — and to them it is a very spiritual and significant event in their lives.

I will give you one other illustration that Lady Conan Doyle gives in this same journal. It shows this more clearly yet. As you know, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle died some considerable time ago — I do not know when: possibly it was not so very long ago — and since then they have been holding Spiritualistic seances, and Lady Conan Doyle is completely satisfied and convinced that her

husband is communicating with her definitely and in fact. She gives one illustration which she says is a very homely one, but she considers it very comforting. I will tell you what it is and you shall judge for yourself what this thing is, stripped of its sentimental value.

These were the facts: just before her husband died she had put into their country-house a new sort of glass in the windows. It was that particular kind of glass which does not interfere with the ultraviolet rays of the sun. She did it as a gift to him, hoping it would strengthen him when he went down there in the summer. He never lived to see what she had done; he never knew anything about it in fact. Now they had a communication from an excellent medium. She said the late departed Sir Arthur took control of the medium and had communication, and among other things said that he was constantly in the house and benefitting from the ultra-violet rays that came through the windows! ! Now she said, "The critical will say 'How trivial!' but," she adds, "it is very comforting to think that he knew about it."

Well, friends, what is the explanation, the interpretation, from the Theosophical point of view, from the point of view of facts in Nature? That had made a very great impression on Lady Conan Doyle's mind, the record was there in her own mentality; and it was the simplest thing in the world, and perfectly natural, for that medium quite unconsciously to reflect that fact from her consciousness, and it appears in conjunction with the literary remains of Sir Conan Doyle in the form of a 'spirit message' which to her is very convincing. But, friends, has it any real spiritual value at all? I think we must admit, since we have no sentimental connexion with this case, that it has no value at all. It is a very interesting psychic happening, and that is about all you can say for it.

Every one of the different psychic phenomena that occur — I do not care what they are — is susceptible of a different interpretation from the one that is put upon it. I am not going to take time to illustrate for you the innumerable instances that have occurred in the fifty years since the coming of Madame H. P. Blavatsky. They are almost endless, but if anything you have heard has stimulated your interest to the point of realizing that after all there may be another side to the question, then, friends, I say, Go to work with a book and learn for yourselves what are these laws in Nature, and you will develop a background of knowledge for your investigation of the hidden powers of Nature which you will never get in any of your Spiritualistic seances.

I want to leave one main idea with you, and it is this: in going to work in the particular way that the Spiritualist does he actually denies himself the power of direct spiritual perception. He denies to himself the grand realities of the priceless knowledge of himself as he essentially and divinely is in his own innermost nature. Try to get at the meaning of that state, because Spiritualists are people who in the majority of cases are tremendously sincere; they want something more than they can materially contact and get from the materialistic point of view, and because of their past Karma, if you will, perhaps owing to a slight development of mediumistic faculties in past lives — I do not know what it might be — they are led to believe that the next stage in their spiritual development is to open that back door of their consciousness into these unseen realms of Nature.

Remember that they are opening the door into the realms of the emotional and the passional nature, the realms inhabited by nature-spirits, by elementaries, by spooks, by ghosts, by the *relics* of all that we have loved and lost, as we think. By stepping aside from the conscious control of their own mechanism of consciousness they are actually turning their back upon the light

that lighteth every man in the world if he will only look for it in the right place.

That is a very terrible thing. It is a mighty serious one, too, believe me, friends, because an increasing number of human souls are being drawn into the vortex of mediumship and psychism.

The whole object of the Theosophical Movement, and the work that we are doing here, is to state over and over again, in different ways, in differing aspects, that at the heart of every living thing the Divine Light exists, pulsing, burning brightly, and if you look and search into the innermost depths of your being it is possible to discover that Light. Not only that, but in the discovery, provided your motive is selfless, true and sincere, you will find that those Great Beings who have passed along the path of human evolution ahead of us, are there waiting, watching, for every single one of us who lights the Divine flame in his own heart by that search for truth, by sincerity, and by his desire to place his whole being, his whole nature, at the service of the human race, once he has discovered that Light and that it is a matter for him of conscious knowledge. Have no fear; once the Light is seen by those distant watchers, friends, it will not be allowed to go out — it might flicker but it will not be allowed to go out. It will be tended and helped and made to burn steadily and more brightly according as we act in terms of that higher nature within us, and provided we do not abdicate to any agency outside of ourselves. That is the message of Theosophy upon this great subject.

Theosophy and Christian Science

In the Theosophical Society we make it a practice to hold out the hand of friendship to every religious body, to every body of students who are working along lines, different though they may

be from our own, which nevertheless have ultimately for their aim and purpose the spiritual elevation of mankind, to some degree at any rate. It is this very attitude we hold to the movement known as Christian Science, and also to the individuals in that great movement, including in its ranks, as it does, some millions of people. Therefore anybody who comes to hear what Theosophy has to say about the particular doctrines which are believed in and practised to a very large extent by Christian Scientists, will please understand that we examine these views very impersonally, very sympathetically, and purely with the object of trying to understand what the ancient Wisdom-Religion of mankind that today we call Theosophy has to teach about the particular science which Christian Scientists claim to practise.

As a matter of fact I have personally had many conversations with Christian Scientists, and it has been my experience that in many ways they are an extraordinarily open-minded body of people; and I think it is just to say that for those who take it seriously the spiritual life is for them the main thing. The sincere among them are seeking the religious life, and the way they go about it certainly brings results to some degree. At any rate they are decidedly not a materialistic body; they do care for the things of the spirit, and what we are going to examine tonight is how their ideas and their philosophy and their so-called metaphysics work out in practice.

The ideas of Theosophy, the ideas of the Wisdom-Religion, upon the whole question of metaphysical healing, as indeed upon other questions, are not the ideas and speculations of any single individual, but they are the great Truths that have been stated and restated by all the great Sages and Seers of antiquity. You will find them in the teachings of the great Buddha; you will find them in the teachings of Confucius and Lao-Tse; you will find them in

the teaching of Plato and Plotinus; and in the teachings of the Syrian Sage Jesus. Therefore do not think that these ideas have sprung from any limited personal viewpoint. Not at all. They are a statement of the very laws and fundamentals not only of our own nature, but of the relationship of man to the Universe of which he is a part. Understand that to be in brief what the great doctrines of Theosophy are. Therefore the first thing that we have to grasp in connexion with Theosophical teaching is this: that it is primarily a metaphysical and ethical system which is designed, by bringing about a purification of the lower nature of man, to inculcate right thought, right living, and, as a consequence, that correctness of action which ultimately results in liberation from not only all physical disease, but from all suffering.

WHAT IS TRUE IN CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

We may well ask ourselves: Is there anything of real spiritual value in the teachings of Christian Science? Well, unhesitatingly, as a Theosophical student I would say decidedly there is. Its adherents have many of the great Theosophical truths, which they not only believe in but which they practise to a considerable extent. As said, it is always one of our objectives, not merely to seek differences between the Theosophical viewpoint and the viewpoint of other people, but by comparative study to strive to see what there is of truth underlying the ideas of other religions. We strive to apply the principle of the Buddha as declared by the Emperor Asoka, the great Buddhist Emperor of India: that there shall be no decrying of other sects, no depreciation of others without a cause, but a rendering of honor to whatever in other sects is worthy of honor. It is in this spirit that we shall approach our subject of study.

In asking ourselves what there is of value, let us apply the old Christian teaching "*By their fruits shall ye know them.*" It is a fact

that today many of our most efficient business executives in England and America are Christian Scientists. There are many people all over the world in high positions who, without saying much about it, actually believe in the doctrines of Christian Science and practise them. It is a curious but interesting fact which I have myself observed, that in the lives of these men there are certain spiritual factors. I have noticed that they believe first of all that the great life of commerce and business is not something which should operate on the principle of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth — not at all. They believe that the life of commerce and business is primarily an activity of service on the part of each business organization to the whole as a unit. They believe that in the conduct of their business affairs, if they do not treat those with whom they are entering into business relationships in the same manner in which they would like to be treated themselves, they realize, I say, that one day it will come back to them. They realize the wonderful truth of the Sermon on the Mount: that if you would have men act towards you in a certain way, you must act in that way towards them. They practise it in their business, and they will tell you that as a result they are phenomenally successful. The accounts they give of their success are absolutely amazing. They will succeed where another man will starve.

I have often heard from them similar stories to this one: "Yes, you know, I was finished, down and out. My business had gone to pot, and I had no religion. I had had a big business and I held a big position; but I always believed (and I took a pride in it) that if I could put the other fellow out of business — well, I should be doing something. I put many of my opponents out of business, and finally I was put out of business myself. That was the result; and when I was finally down and completely out, somehow the great ideas of Christian Science came to the rescue, and I got up

and I began to apply those principles in my business. Then a great change came over my attitude, and I gained a certain faith, a certain strength, a certain security of outlook; and the result was that little by little those men I had fought in commerce became my friends; we worked together, and I found business where previously I had found nothing." Thus they built up little by little even their material business without injuring anybody; conducting honorably and fairly all their enterprises, and the results were good in every way.

I think if Christian Science produces that profound effect in people's minds, there must be a certain amount of good in it. That same good is to be found in the lives of those who really practise the great truths of Theosophy; for remember, the ethics in every religion are practically identical. They are presented in a different form, but that is the only main difference. I have related that story simply to illustrate to you that we do not look upon this problem from an unsympathetic point of view.

WHERE THEOSOPHISTS DIFFER FROM CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS

Now I want to turn to our understanding in the light of Theosophy of this whole problem of metaphysical healing; for we do differ from the Christian Scientists upon certain rather fundamental things. We agree with them in many things, but we differ from them in others; and it is absolutely essential (and we should not be doing our duty if we did not do so), from time to time to make it quite clear what those differences are. I do believe this: that Christian Scientists would be probably the first to have an open mind and to listen to the ideas of the Wisdom-Religion upon this subject. Certainly one Christian Scientist friend of mine said to me: "By Jove! what wonderful ideas there are in Theosophy; there are beautiful things in it; I wish I knew more about it." And he said: "You know, if you could show the Christian

Scientists a better way to do what they are doing now, they would be the first to take it up."

We differ from them upon the question of the application of the mind to the healing of the diseases of the body; upon the whole question of affirmation and denial; and to some extent on their attitude to money and the taking of money in connexion with healing processes that they claim to be spiritual. What is the teaching of Theosophy upon the cure of diseases of the body by the influence of one mind upon another? First of all we must consider the cause, according to the ancient teachings, of the diseases of the body. Primarily, they are rooted in the mind, they are rooted in wrong thinking, they are rooted in wrong action, because wrong action is always the result of wrong thinking.

Immediately I can hear my Christian Scientist friends saying: "Well, but that is exactly what we say." It is true, they do say it, Wherein then is the difference? First of all, just think for one moment and you will probably be able without any difficulty to remember many cases of invalids who have been born with mortal or chronic diseases; at least they have acquired them so early in life that there cannot be the slightest doubt that these individuals, as children, did not do any wrong thing to bring upon them such diseases. Moreover often they cannot be traced to the parents, because there are many cases on record of physically sound and particularly high-minded and good parents who produced such an unfortunate child. Here you have one example where the Christian Scientist's idea of all physical disease being caused by wrong thinking is not explicable by their science, but is nonetheless explicable in the light of Theosophy. We say that the disease of the baby is caused in the long past by wrong thinking, and the truth is that so-called right thinking, even spiritual thinking and spiritual living here and now, is quite incapable of wiping out the more serious physical effects of wrong thinking

and living in past lives. In other words our present physical diseases,* and in particular the malignant ones, are not amenable to treatment by altering any thinking process here and now; because the roots, the seeds, of thought which have eventually come to fruition in the disease of the body actually were planted or sown in the long past, in preceding lives. Theosophy, remember, teaches the evolution of the soul through a long series of reincarnations, from body to body: that is the way that the soul gradually learns the lessons of life, rising step by step to perfection.

*For the sake of completeness it should be emphasized here that modern psychological research has demonstrated that many real physical diseases such as the common cold, lumbago, rheumatism, pneumonia, etc., can be the result of a deep psychological neurosis. Such manifestations are an exception to the general rule above mentioned. Cure the neurosis and the recurrence of these physical symptoms disappears.

You will see that once you get the idea that the joys and sorrows of our present life are the fruits very largely — not entirely but very largely — of the thoughts and actions of a previous birth, it immediately throws a different light upon the cure of physical disease, because the Theosophical teaching is that those physical diseases that we see manifested in our own bodies here and now, are the results of this wrong thinking working downward and out of our system for ever. It is the final demand and retribution of the karmic law: "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." Those actions of disharmony or wrong are evil, and inevitably they will work out, not only in disease but in other ways. Therefore when they reach the final stage, which is the physical, they are in the nature of a purgation and you will get rid of them. The actual pain, the suffering, and the discomfort, are all things that to the man with

the spiritual point of view can in a very real sense be accepted and welcomed in a truly Theosophical spirit, because he knows he is getting rid of the evils; they are on their way out; he is clearing a debt to himself and nature.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE

Now then, let us look at the other side of the picture: What happens and what is the effect of the practice of so-called mental healing upon the diseases of the physical body? We may put ourselves in the hands of the Christian Science practitioner, or one who practises mind cure, or mental healing, or hypnotism: whatever the different categories may be, they all come back to the same main method and principle. First of all, then, we have to consider the effect upon ourselves of treatment by another — a practitioner — and then the application of the same principles to ourselves. When we put ourselves in the hands of a so-called mental healer, what happens? He applies his psychological power of suggestion and will to the mind of the patient, and to the inner or astral body of the man, which is an exceedingly sensitive mechanism, the frame-work upon which the body itself is built. This astral body retains its structure and remains throughout the whole of the life with practically no change at all, whereas the physical body is constantly changing and in a state of flux. It is through the astral body that impressions and thought are actually conveyed to the human brain. In it and through it play the life currents and nerve forces which feed the physical body with life and heat and energy.

It is upon that astral body, by the action of thought, that the Christian Science practitioner, unknown to himself, begins to work; and the first thing that happens is that by conversation and by his own mental practice, which is called I believe "absent treatment," and by similar methods, he actually teaches the

patient to deny the reality of the diseased condition of his mechanism; and not only for some particular disease, but he teaches him to deny the reality of the material element of his being altogether. The practitioner says that matter has no existence at all; that it is pure illusion of our senses and is therefore evil; that the only reality is Spirit, which he calls God or Good; and he quotes and interprets many passages of the Christian Science scriptures to show that all bodily ills and all the ills of the flesh were never meant to be at all, that they are all resolvable by simply identifying ourselves with this principle of good, and denying the existence of what we all know to be a fact.

We have bodies; there is not the slightest doubt about it. Look out in the solar system and you see the great planets and stars, and you know that there is a material Universe. It is built of matter. The great Theosophical teaching is that matter and spirit are one substance; they are only different in their different degrees of manifestation, and only during manifestation. The ultimate root substance is one; but during the whole period of a manifested universe there are three factors, three principles, that we cannot get rid of. One is Spirit, another is matter, and the third factor, friends, is consciousness or intelligence; and remember that consciousness or intelligence would be unable to function and to know itself as I-am-I without that same despised matter, which the Christian Scientist denies.

This statement of fact which you will find in the great religions of antiquity is one that carries with it a corollary, namely, that the mind or consciousness in man is dual in character and nature. It can identify itself with the material pole of its being, or it can identify itself with the spiritual pole. As it identifies itself with the higher, the lower is transformed and raised into divinity. As it identifies itself with the lower, man becomes more brutal, more animal, more selfish, more separate. Matter is a fact; and in every

atom, in every point of boundless space, matter exists, even though you cannot see it; and in every point of that boundless infinitude pulses the great rhythm of life, the Great Breath as it is called in the esoteric philosophy. That Great Breath, that Spirit of Life, which pulses in the heart of you and of every created thing, pulses likewise in the very core of every atom of this vast Universe: even so-called dead matter is radiant with life.

Therefore good and evil are purely relative terms. They are purely relative to our consciousness; and that which we call evil is merely the activity, the pull, of the material pole of our being: that material substance which is absolutely necessary to the divine consciousness as a means of expressing itself in this material world. In order to contact this material universe we have to have a body of flesh and blood through which to act, and that body is composed of lives and atoms which have not been raised to the level of conscious thinkers as we have ourselves. They have their own nature, their own existence; but while recognising that the animal nature is good and right and proper and necessary for our activities here, we can identify ourselves with the spiritual nature in us, and shall thus be able to separate ourselves in consciousness from that material thing in us so that it has no power over us.

That is the truth that the Christian Scientist is trying to get at. He denies all power to what he calls mortal mind, or the material aspect of his being, and he strives to identify himself with the spiritual pole of his being. To the extent that he is successful in merging his intellectual consciousness with his own Divine Spirit, he is living in terms of the Theosophical philosophy; he is living in terms of the highest ethics that have been taught by the Sages and Seers, but — and here is where the rub comes — in striving to perfect himself spiritually and physically he says to himself, "Well, it may be that my body is an illusion, but I have a very

diseased body, and it does not suit me. I am not going to endure it; it is all wrong. God is good; I am trying to live a spiritual life, and I am going to get rid of this disease." So what does he do? He gets to work with his mind — or the practitioner does for him! — and he denies the diseased condition. He says that it is no longer there, and he goes on denying it, and any manifestation of pain he denies. He says: "No! Away! This body is perfectly sound; it has no reality at all really, and I am going to be well right here and now." And he continues this in such a concentrated fashion that if he has a successful mental practitioner, and if he is determined himself, the result is, friends, that even a malignant disease may disappear.

Now you may say: "But, surely, that is what we want." Well, now, is it? This is the secret of the great attraction of Christian Science for humanity. What do we want out of life? We want health and the material needs of existence to make life worth while; and therefore if someone will come along and say, "This is the very thing, you will get all the money you want and lose all the disease that you have," it must be a very attractive proposition if you have never heard of any other teaching — most attractive. That is the secret of its success. But what happens in this process of mental healing? The mind actually seizes upon that inner sensitive mechanism upon which the body is built, the inner mind of man, and the actual physical effect is forced back — so strong is that mental force — it is forced back where it came from. It is forced back to the germ of thought from which it originated and it is replanted in the mind as a thought of evil, as a thought of disharmony, of disruption, carrying with it also the evil and selfish intention of the individuals concerned therein. Now that is a mighty serious matter.

On the other hand, a little patience and the original disease, with the help and assistance of a competent physician, would probably

have eventually worked out of the body. Do Theosophists believe in doctors or medicine, shall we say? Why, if good physicians, decidedly yes; in a good system of medicine, yes; and in fact we advocate most decidedly that the diseases of the flesh should be treated by physical means; and the object of every good physician should be to find a means to guide and help the body to throw off the poisons which are the root of the disease. It has reached its last stage; the cause of it has already left the mind and is present in the body.

THREE TYPES OF HEALING

You may say to me, "It is all very well, but healings do occur." It is quite true — they do; and they occur in three categories. The first is by means of this process of inhibition or damming back, which is a replanting of the diseased condition for future births — and remember that those seeds of thought will come to fruition in this or a succeeding birth plus compound interest of course. It is very like putting your finger upon the end of a garden hose-pipe with the water turned on: you know how the pressure gets greater and greater, and eventually the water comes out with added force. That is what happens in the case of damming back the disease.

There is another way that healings do take place, and we must say this in justice to the Christian Scientists. There are many diseases which are actually caused in this present life very largely by imagination. So powerful is human imagination in its effect upon the human body that it can and does actually cause the derangement of the life forces; and many ills, many nervous troubles, can actually be cured by directing the thought of the patient to higher things, by the practice of the ethics of all the great religions, by a forgetting of self in the practice of kindness, tolerance, brotherly love, sympathy, compassion. Any good physician will tell you that the effect for good upon the bodies of

his patients of these human qualities is enormous. If you can get people's thoughts off themselves, and get them to study the great Theosophical philosophy, you will immediately begin to do something for them. Healings do occur in that way, and it is a perfectly legitimate healing there is no damming back. Take yourselves: you may have all sorts of ailments — dyspeptic and general derangement, that you suddenly begin to find mysteriously leave you when your mind becomes energized with spiritual things. Now actually do you think about your body under those conditions? No, you don't. You forget yourselves in the service of the human race. You raise the mind to its spiritual pole; you study the great teachings of all the great Sages; and little by little you find that this mortal self of yours becomes purified and translucent, and the many troubles that you had disappear. Your whole being and mind begin to open, begin to expand; you begin to widen your sympathies, and the result is enormously beneficial. But don't confuse that method of healing with the other one of deliberately denying and damming back the cause of the disease — that is a different matter.

The third category which we must mention is that of the healing that took place by the agency of the great Saints — a Buddha or a Christ. There are records in the New Testament of how Jesus, for example, did heal many diseases, many sick people. Do you ask how that is possible if these other things spoken of are true? Well, friends, many things are possible to a great Sage that are not possible even — shall we say — to a Christian Science practitioner? Show me anybody today of the stature of Jesus of Nazareth, and show me his healings, and I will believe when I see. Actually a great Master of Wisdom is alone capable of knowing the inner causes that have led to any particular condition of any individual. He is a knower of the law of Karma; therefore where he has in authenticated cases completely healed one who was

blind from his birth, where he has raised the sick, cured the lame, and so on, there are two things to bear in mind. One is that he can know when that original cause has reached its final stage, and then he can by the application of his own knowledge of the laws of nature hasten that process; and you will find in the Theosophical philosophy that it is nearly always by physical means that he does it; by a transference of physical energy. You remember the case — I think it was a woman — in the New Testament, who tried to get near to the Christ, and finally touched the hem of his robe, and he knew that something had happened, because he perceived that virtue had gone out of him, as he said. Well, it is merely a transference of the physical life energies, and no interference with the mind at all.

Those are the three categories of healing. So you see it is both true that "healings" occur and it is not true. It is true that there is something that looks like a healing, but actually is something which is more potent for evil than the original disease — in fact the last stage of the man who is healed by the damming back process is far worse than the first.

THE MESSAGE OF THEOSOPHY

And so we come now finally to the message of Theosophy to those who, whether by disease, whether by poverty, whether by any of the circumstances of life, need help, who feel that they have reached the end of their tether and that there is nothing to be done. Well, friends, Christian Scientists would say that the condition of anybody is not hopeless. Theosophy says exactly the same thing. Both have remedies and they are very similar in some respects. Both appeal to the spiritual nature of the individual; but you will probably find that ultimately the Theosophical appeal is the nobler one, because it is founded upon an absolute knowledge of the laws of every man's own being. It is

founded upon a knowledge of the laws of the relation of man to the Universe, and therefore we would expect that Theosophy would be able to give something vital, give something practical, to everybody under all conditions of life: that it would have a solution, in other words, for every problem; and, friends, it has. There is not the slightest doubt that if you go about it in the right way, if you look for the light of the Universe, the light that lighteth every man who cometh into the world; if you look for it where Christ the Galilean Sage told us to look, namely within our own hearts, you will find something.

You remember that marvelous Sermon on the Mount. You remember how Christ drew attention to the facts of Nature: to the birds, to the growing things, to the beasts of the field, and so on; and he pointed out how their needs were supplied by nature; and then he said, "Ye of little faith, do ye imagine that your Father in Heaven [your own spiritual higher nature] does not know that ye have need of these things?"

Theosophy first of all is the quintessence of duty, and the living of the spiritual life is first and foremost the performance of duty in your own place, the doing of that task which lies next to the hand of every individual in the sphere of life in which he was born — not the neglect of it, not the running away from it, but the effort to perform every aspect of duty that he finds before him simply from day to day in the light of the spiritual nature within him. I will venture to say that the man so living never will find himself "down and out"; and I would say to the man who is down and out: let him get the spiritual point of view; let him get a new mind; let him turn his material mind toward the Higher Nature within himself. He will be amazed at the result. He will set forth in the morning with that complete confidence that having performed every known duty that he has to the very best of his ability, that which he needs will undoubtedly be forthcoming; but he has to

work for it — it won't come miraculously. He has to do the simple things in the simplest way with that faith in his own higher nature that will illumine every step of the Path he takes in his day's work. Friends, it is a simple thing, but it is a profoundly true one. It is possible of practice to each one of us. It works as a living benediction in the lives of those who practise it and it can be brought about by invoking the aid of the Higher Self, that Spiritual Self in us.

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A Bond of Spiritual Kinship

It is the inspiration of the true Theosophist to be able to pass through the entire world, finding in every country some at least whose hand he can take in genuine friendship, in the recognition of a common search for spiritual realities and that bond which transcends all barriers of mere brain-mind opinions concerning forms of religion and philosophy; because that which energizes the heart to kindly deeds, to a soaring aspiration towards truth wherever it may be found, is "the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and which, coming from the Heart of the Universe itself, links all into the indissoluble unity of all that is. No, no, my brothers, the basis for brotherhood is not to be found in books, however exalted, but in the spiritual realization of life, the One Life that energizes the tiniest infusoria up through

all the hierarchies of being, to man and to the gods in the spaces of Space. It is obvious that a comprehension of the sublime teachings of the Theosophical philosophy is impossible to one whose heart does not burn with love and pity and compassion for the race of which he is a part.

Every Lodge-Room a Temple

Whenever we assemble together in our Lodge-room, let us remember that we are gathering around the ancient hearthstone of Theosophy: that hearth on which we may rekindle in ourselves the fire of the ancient Wisdom of the Gods that nowadays we call Theosophy. Wherever we are privileged to meet together in united study is for us a Temple, dedicated to that search for the age-old Truth which made so divine a thing of life in the ancient world.

Keysto a Cosmic Philosophy

You can gain enormous insight into the teachings of the New Testament from the keys that H. P. B. and the Masters have given to us. I dare to say this, that if anyone will have the patience to read only one or two of our Theosophical books, such as *The Ocean of Theosophy* and *The Key to Theosophy* if no more, and then re-read your New Testament, you will be amazed to see what you get out of it. Theosophy gives you keys, it gives you fundamental concepts of truth, philosophical principles, that you can apply to the understanding of any and every problem.

There is an aspect of this question of Christian teaching to which I would like to draw attention, and it is this: I have heard it stated that if we take the ethics taught in the New Testament, and live them, we shall then be Theosophists. True, because H. P. Blavatsky defined a Theosophist very simply as one in whom the

higher self predominates over the lower, which means the man and woman of the world in whom the spirit is more active than the lower man. But, here is the point I want to suggest to you: that be you never so wise in the understanding of the ethics of the New Testament, you cannot get out of it what is not there; and you won't find there a cosmic philosophy, complete in all its parts, covering the whole range of life on this planet, its relation to the solar system, and man's relation to the planet on which he lives — it is not there. We find there the ethical principles which, if we live them rightly, will give us that preparation of life that will help us to understand the doctrines when they are presented to us. But if we expect the Christian New Testament to give us the complete philosophy that H. P. Blavatsky gave to the Western world we shall be disappointed.

Thoughts on Devachan

Many years ago the late A. P. Sinnett was feeling a bit anxious as to what the state of his soul would be after death, doubtless having in view some of those passages in his life's diary which the Master K. H. so delightfully referred to as having been inscribed with Mr. Sinnett's reddest pencil. He referred his questionings on the after life to the Master, who assured him that he need have no doubt that he would be reborn in the Devachan, because even a few short years' study and application of the Teachings of Theosophy would be quite sufficient to bring about such a result.

It seems to us that this incident discloses a most inspiring incentive to spread abroad the Message of Theosophy wherever men and women are willing to listen to it. It amounts to nothing less than this: enough spiritual food is taken into the mind of the average human being by a few years' study of Theosophy to rescue them from the dread possibilities of extinction — for it should be known that for the millions of the profane (those who

have never wakened from their material sleep to the recognition of the higher spiritual nature), the next step forward in their souls' evolution will be to insure that when they pass into the Kama-loka. after death they will have enough spiritual stamina to give them birth in the Devachanic state. Devachan is an illusion only for those who are able to perceive a greater reality, but it is an absolute necessity for the great majority of the human race; and if the study of the Teachings of Theosophy and the life after death will give to them the priceless boon of the discovery of the higher part of themselves, there is certainly no need to make any apology for inviting their attention to these age-old Truths. No amount of dabbling in the psychic realms of spiritualism and mediumship can possibly generate those purely spiritual energies that bring the soul to birth in a higher state of being. On the contrary, the greater the inclination to psychic phenomena and the worship of the dead, the greater the risk of having a long spell in Kama-loka, with the attendant possibility of being attracted into the mediumistic vortex through Kamic affinity.

Awareness in the Moment and the Day

All the great Teachers have laid stress upon the importance, not of envisaging an enormous period of time before you to do the difficult things of the spiritual life, but to pay attention to the little passing moments, the minutes and hours of each day. Therefore they taught: Fill the day full; watch over it, guide it; regard each single day as if it were the last day that you knew you were going to live. It has a wonderful effect upon the inner spiritual life, if we live each single moment with that awareness, that watchfulness, which has the feeling in it that after all we would not wish to leave an inharmonious impression upon those with whom we are associated, if at the close of the day we were leaving them not to return. It is an idea that is worth remembering and bringing to

bear on every single moment and every single hour of the day.

A Theosophist's Attitude to Book-Learning

I have heard it said that some members are very critical and unhappy about what they call 'books and book-learning' and all that kind of business. I think there is some misconception there. If you want to study a subject and know something about it, well you have *got* to study it. It is not sufficient to say, "If you want to learn mathematics, well, you have got it all inside yourself." No! You have to go to school, open the books and study the whole thing so that you may know what is there. And besides, I would like to suggest that there are three main activities going on in this search for knowledge. There is what we call the line of knowledge, which is the gathering in of new intellectual and spiritual food. That is one process, and you will find it going on within you if you observe yourself all the time.

The next phase is one of practice. You then proceed to work out your theories, or try to, in practice. This results in what? Growth. And when a given amount of knowledge has resulted in action — and action has produced growth, then comes again a new cycle of gathering knowledge. Thus it is not *only* a question of book-learning.

I distrust these people who complain about book-learning. Perhaps they have not done very much along those lines themselves. The books are well worth studying. Some kinds of mind find a more easy approach through books than others, but the thing to remember is that we do not have to accept a single statement that is made anywhere in our literature or by any person in our Movement and swallow it. Test it! If its results in your life are good, then hold fast to it. The great Buddha himself laid great stress upon this truth. He said: "Don't accept anything

because of tradition, nor because any great Sage has taught it." Isn't that good enough for us?

I would very cordially recommend to your attention the book on the *Bhagavad-Gita* by Sri Krishna Prem, because he there points out that these Eastern systems, excellent and approved in their day, have come down to us through three or four thousand years, and any part of them which we study may have been misinterpreted or mistranslated. It should make us be more cautious and not swallow all things wholesale. We have to stand on our own feet and test; and when you have found something like H. P. B.'s philosophy that holds water, that you can't knock a hole in, that brings to life the higher part of your being, that enables you to help others, you recognise it. Be thankful for it and take it to others.

The Inner Divine Companion

The right background and basis for all our Theosophical work and studies will be found in the mystical union with the Self. Where it is present there is inspiration, brotherhood, harmony, peace and understanding. Only those who live the Life can understand the age-old doctrines correctly: That in every man which *knows*, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life; it is the man that was that is, and will be, for whom the hour will never strike." — *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 31

Holding to these things in the silence, let us seek the solution of all difficulties in the daily and hourly guidance from this inner Divine Companion, for only in that way can we realize the true Internationalism and Brotherhood we preach.

Questions and Answers

The Ego Of A Mentally Deficient Person

QUESTION: In *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume 1, page 224, in connexion with the functions of Jiva, H. P. B., quoting partly from a work on Occult Embryology, says: " ' . . . in man, the germ must receive the fruition of all the five [principles of the Spirits of the Earth]. Otherwise he will be born no higher than an animal'; namely, a congenital idiot." Can the Ego of a mentally deficient person progress and after several incarnations become normal, or will it remain eternally deficient?

ANSWER: The question is not easy to understand: I would like to put it to you in this way: What is the cause of idiots, of people who are born into the world mentally deficient, and what hope is there for them? Why are parents called upon to bear the karma of the suffering associated with bringing such children into the world, and is the condition one which may be said to be due to the extreme youth or the very early stages of the evolution of the entity imbodyed in the condition of an idiot?

The answer of Theosophy is that evolution itself produces normal people. In other words, if you could observe the first incarnation of an entity after it had emerged from the animal kingdom, it would not be an idiot! Certainly not. It would be a man, and it would be a normal man — as normal as any one of the members of a savage race at the present time. It might not (and would not) be highly developed from an intellectual or spiritual point of view, but nevertheless it would not be a congenital idiot, or anything approaching it.

Therefore we come back to the question: What has happened to an entity that it should lose all the higher directive processes of the mind so that it is virtually irresponsible in this life? I must say at once that there can be more than one reason, obviously, but that in the majority of cases there is no ego — that is no

reincarnating Ego — associated with the congenital idiot. This is an important point. In other words there are certain entities who are bereft of their higher spiritual principles, who, as a matter of fact, reincarnate until finally they disintegrate altogether; but this is not a normal process of evolution at all; it is a disintegrating process, and the entity concerned will not improve. That is as I understand it. There may be — and I must cover this one point — there may be cases where a reincarnating Ego has done so many things against the laws of harmony of the Universe and against his fellow-men, committed in fact so many crimes that there comes a time when the retributive Law is so heavy that in a particular incarnation he may have such an impaired mechanism as to be very close to something that is called mental deficiency. But, it would not be true, in such a case, to say that in later incarnations it is impossible for him to improve, because if the Ego has a modicum of control over its vehicles of consciousness it can work through this condition; pay, as it were, a great debt to Nature by its suffering; and in the next incarnation, free of a large measure of its burden, it can go ahead and make progress.

QUESTION: An incarnation of the Ego would be simply lost?

ANSWER: Not in the case last spoken of, but in the case of the congenital idiot, born as such, then I suggest to you that there is no reincarnating Ego at all.

QUESTION: In an article in *Lucifer*, July, 1933, it is said that idiocy is usually the result of evil done in the past, and that when that incarnation is finished the Ego will be reborn in a normal body in the next life, but probably very low in the human scale.

ANSWER: The Ego will be reborn low in the scale of life. Why is this so stated? If you will put this statement side by side with the explanation I have tried to give you, I think you will find that it is

the *Monad* (which is never destroyed) which is reborn low in the scale of life. This will be very difficult for those who hear Theosophy for the first time to understand, so I must try to give you just a very brief picture of what man is. We have a spiritual pole of our being — that which we call the *Monad*; we have an intellectual part, the real man; and we have the material body. Now it is the middle principle which suffers in human life, which is, as it were, crucified upon the cross of matter, and which is endeavoring to purify itself and rise into union with its own Divinity — the spiritual part of its being. Now then, the normal man, the physical body and the personality, are over-shadowed by the spirit which is all the time illuminating it, directing it. But where, as a result of evil living this higher spirit is forfeited, then you may get a degenerating condition which results in the birth of a congenital idiot. What happens to the Divine *Monad*, the spiritual part of that entity? One of these days it reincarnates, and it is this that Dr. de Purucker refers to as beginning once again in a low state of the human family. I think you will find that to be the explanation.

THE NATURE OF 'SPIRIT' COMMUNICATIONS

QUESTION: In the case of so-called spirit return, must the entity necessarily be entirely of a personal character and unlovable? Supposing anything in that return represented something of a human characteristic that was superior to that of the materialistic on this plane, would you change your theories to fit the facts or the facts to fit the theories?

ANSWER: There is no necessity for a Theosophist to seek refuse in either of these dubious alternatives. It is simply a question of being able to apply the appropriate esoteric law to the understanding of any particular psychic phenomenon. There are various types of spiritualistic phenomena, and there are cases in

which it is possible for a higher type of spiritual communication to result. It must be stated, however, that the majority of cases of so-called spirit return will be found to be mere spooks, the lower personal parts of ex-human entities. But there are important exceptions, such as those who suffer death prematurely by accident or violence. Some of these can be made to communicate, and may produce a more human document. You will remember that another category is when a pure sensitive is able to raise his or her consciousness to that of the spiritual part of the departed entity. I will venture to suggest to the questioner that one of the superior type of communications that bh refers to can be and often is the result. But there are a variety of such communications, and I will go further and warn you that the number of different categories of spiritualistic and psychic phenomena is legion — you can never come to the end of them. For this reason we can only cover them all in a general way in trying to understand them from a Theosophical point of view; but if specific accuracy is required, then each case has to be considered in detail with all the attendant circumstances.

Neither the spiritualistic medium nor the psychic researcher is in a position to be able to prove with certainty the nature and identity of those who communicate. They masquerade under all sorts of names — generally high-sounding ones — but who can prove that these people are the entities they claim to be? It is generally accepted by spiritualists that frequently there is considerable evidence of personal identification available. It is in fact sufficient to convince the *sitters* that they are in contact with the person they knew in life. Spiritualists for the most part are entirely unwilling to concede that the spook is capable of giving *just that kind of evidence* of personal identity under the psychic stimulus of the medium.

But here is the importance of the question that we are

considering. Occasionally you find something logical, philosophical, and — let us give them for the moment the fullest possible credit and say spiritual as well. How are you going to account for this kind of communication, you Theosophists? Are there not entities besides discarnate ex-human creatures? Of course there are. There are different kinds of spiritual beings across the gulf of death, and others who are self-conscious, but not necessarily spiritual, but nevertheless able to exert a controlling influence. There is no time to do more than name some of them. There are Nirmanakayas, who have been known to influence pure sensitives dedicated to a high spiritual purpose. There are Adepts of both the right and the left-hand, exerting their occult powers behind the scenes. As an example of this type readers would find it worth while to study the case of Stainton Moses in *The Mahatma Letters*, where there would seem to be ground for thinking that the "Imperator" of the early days of his mediumship was actually a living Adept who had permitted his beneficent influence to be interpreted by Stainton Moses as a Spirit guide. Again there are elementaries, i. e., self-conscious personal entities devoid of their higher principles. They are often extremely intellectual, though their influence is necessarily evil. The reader will be further repaid for referring to the standard Theosophical works for the phenomena associated with the different types of conscious beings just mentioned. Enough has been said to indicate the complexity of the subject, and the number of "theories," or as we prefer to say the number of "Laws" in the Esoteric philosophy which have to be correctly understood and applied to the elucidation of the so-called "facts" of spirit return.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHELA AND GURU

QUESTION: I have understood that the Guru takes on himself the karma of the chela. Why and how is this possible; and if

possible, is this not taking away the chela's free will and karma; and so if the chela is deprived of his karma would it not make his karma still harder?

ANSWER: This question of the Guru's being said to take upon himself the karma of his pupil can possibly give rise to a wrong conception. I believe the true understanding of this point is simply this, that when a Teacher begins to transfer to the consciousness of the pupil some of the occult truths of Nature, he becomes responsible if the pupil should make a wrong use of that knowledge to his own detriment and to the detriment of humanity in general. It is in that sense that a Teacher takes upon himself a very heavy responsibility indeed, and that is why such rigorous testing and training is demanded before it is thought safe for the Mahatma to make the close bonds between pupil and Teacher. It is not that he takes upon himself all the ordinary karma of the pupil; but on the contrary, if you look in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, page 310, it says that if we all had scavengers to go behind us and clear up the ill effects of our rashness or presumption, the path of chelaship would be altogether too easy. They only help their chelas when the chelas are entirely innocent of the causes which landed them into difficulty. If by any chance any of us get into the situation where we could misuse knowledge that had been transferred to us, then we also have a very heavy responsibility and we don't lose any of that responsibility.

QUESTION: It seems to me that the question of gurus and chelas may be considered as a relative one; sometimes the chelas may have to act as teachers, i. e., gurus, though not of the same degree as the further developed gurus. My main contention would thus be, that as soon as the higher part, the spiritual or leading part, in the nature of an individual is awakened or aroused to conscious activity by the influence of

another being, that other being is in the position of a guru in relation to his follower. Is that right?

ANSWER: This is a rather thorny subject in some ways. A great deal depends on how you use this word 'guru.' There is one sense, however, in which I can agree with the questioner, and that is the sense in which Mr. Judge described the Guruparampara-chain, that chain which even includes our school-teachers, who in this sense are part of the golden chain of teachers from whom we receive something. Now, if you want to understand it in that way, then anybody from whom you learn anything is in a position of a guru, the idea being that we should always treat such teachers with respect, so that we may learn from them in the best way. But if it is understood that anybody who is engaged in Theosophical work and who perhaps may be only the chairman of a study-class, is in the relationship of a guru to the other students — well, except in the case that has just been mentioned, the Guruparampara-chain, there seems to me to be danger in that idea. If we people who are at best what H. P. B. called pupil-teachers, those having no right to dogmatize, adopt the role of guru, then many troubles can arise in the Theosophical Movement. There are a lot of these gurus loose in the world. I think it should be clearly understood that Theosophical lecturers, whether National Presidents or otherwise, are simply transmitters of information to the best of their spiritual ability; but they do not take the position of guru. That position is reserved, and very properly so, to the Leader of the Society who takes upon himself the role of Teacher, and declares that he has been authorized to teach. The rest of us who are not so authorized, but in whom the spiritual light has penetrated to some extent the lower darkness, can also help in our own spheres and become transmitters of light to others. But there is a disease called 'guru-fever,' and it is a very difficult complaint to cure!

THE OUTER TEACHER AND THE INNER INTUITION

QUESTION: How can one give implicit obedience to the Teacher and yet keep one's own freedom of thought and intuition alive?

ANSWER: I will suggest that there is only one real way that it can be done, and that is by the recognition that the Initiator, and therefore the Teacher of every Initiate, is the Lord of Splendor and Light within, and that this Higher Principle or Self is one with any external Teacher. Therefore the answer to this problem — and it is a problem with many people — is simply that they must live in terms of, and under the illumination and inspiration of the higher part of their being, and if they do not believe that this can be done; if they think it is an impossibility; then they will lose their freedom; then they will sacrifice their intuition; and their last state I do not think will be any better than their first — and possibly a little worse.

I have seen too many instances of people being told to go and do something, merely to see what they would do in these interesting circumstances. I think it is a matter for the exercise of the highest and most constant discrimination; I think that the most important thing of all is that we should have our own light from within ourselves on any problem that besets us, and I believe that the granting of that light, the finding of it, and the preserving of it, depends upon believing in its reality; aspiring towards it; living in terms of its behests; looking for its guidance within our own heart and nowhere outside ourself; and I believe that that is, in a nutshell, the essence of the true occult Path — I believe it is verily so; and if we do that, then we shall understand what is meant by the Teacher in an entirely different way from what is ordinarily understood.

AVOIDING THE SECTARIAN SPIRIT

QUESTION: How is it possible to prevent the Theosophical Society from degenerating into a sect?

ANSWER: There can be no doubt whatever that the Theosophical Movement as originally conceived by the Masters who were responsible for it, has definitely changed its objectives. You cannot alter that fact. Read your *Mahatma Letters* — read the original objectives of the Theosophical Society, and you will find that there were the strictest possible rules laid down that even Theosophy — their own teaching — should not be the one and only thing, so to speak, that was taught. In other words that people must be left entirely free to believe in whatever religion or philosophy they choose: and any Officer in the Society in his capacity as such, who expressed or showed a preference for one kind of philosophy or religion rather more than another, could be expelled. The situation, therefore, has really changed, because today the Theosophical Society is a body of students studying one set of books and teaching. H. P. B.'s life was spent in trying to prevent that: she did not want that apparently — at least we have the evidence of the early part of the Movement, showing that Olcott and H. P. B., under direct supervision of the Masters, were constantly at work keeping an open platform, on which all men of goodwill, of any religious persuasion, could come together, express their ideas, and learn to live side by side as brothers.

Well now, of course that policy has certain grave difficulties — it is extremely difficult. It was possibly because the Theosophical Society as it originated, was so broad that it opened the door for all sorts of abuses to creep in. It is an almost impossible task to keep an open platform successfully, and the only hope of doing so is a very strongly established esoteric nucleus, who would be sufficiently highly trained, and have sufficient practical knowledge, that they could really keep the lamp of the Ancient

Wisdom alight, in the midst of that collection of men and women that constitute the main body of the Society.

Now, how are you going to prevent the sectarian spirit arising? I can only suggest this to you: by a definite recognition that there are other Theosophists in the world, of other Societies, who are at least as worthy of respect as the members of our own Society are — I go further and suggest there are many we might even emulate. I think that is the first step upon the Path to non-sectarianism. If you cannot admit that hypothesis then you are sectarian to begin with. If you do not admit that there are men and women who are just as good Theosophists as we are, and probably better — at least possibly so; if you do not admit it as a possibility, then you are sectarian. If you believe that the members of any one Church or body are the only ones who are really and truly on the right path, that is sectarian — no question about it. And I will go still further and say that there are bodies of students and instructed individuals quite outside of the organized Theosophical Societies altogether; and that a recognition of this third fact is absolutely essential if you want a non-sectarian point of view. As a matter of fact it is largely because a sectarian viewpoint insensibly grows up in the modern Theosophical Movement that makes what Theosophists like to call 'the outside world' fight shy of them, because they think that they are in some way superior; and the result is that the other people say: "Well, all right, have it your own way. Think about it as you like, but we feel that perhaps you are not doing as much in the world, and creating as great an impression, and doing what you might do, because you have this viewpoint." Remember the words of Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

In whatever way men approach me, in that way do I assist them; but whatever the path taken by mankind, that path is mine.

HOW TO MEET TROUBLES AHEAD

QUESTION: I have recently had my horoscope read by an astrologer friend, and he predicts trouble for me in the near future extending over quite a period. I suppose this cannot be averted; but as a Theosophist could you give me some hints as to how to meet it?

ANSWER: Answering your question regarding fortunate or unfortunate cycles, as revealed in your horoscope: Very likely, if your friend was a good astrologer, he would be able to trace the prevailing tendencies correctly. I do not think, however, that it is particularly a wise thing to make such predictions. I say this because of the effect of such statements upon the individual concerned. The way I look at it is this: the prediction may or may not be correct, but I would suggest that you brush these considerations aside and say to yourself: "Well, it really does not matter whether these things are true or not." Anticipations of trouble are always deleterious, therefore wrong, and not to be indulged in. A key to this you can find in Katherine Tingley's book, *The Gods Await*, pages 155 to 162, and here is the key-sentence which the writer gives in several ways:

Let them hold to these things in the silence, and create a noble future in their hearts; going alone in the morning into the silence of Nature; freeing themselves there from their old trying memories and *from all anticipations of trouble*. [Italics ours.]

Now to deal with the matter more astrologically, and in such a way that it covers all adverse planetary influences which may flow to us at any time: It is quite true that such influences do reach us — in fact Karma works out, as I see the matter, by the influences which the Ego — the Real Man — permits to pass

through its consciousness and work out in the lower worlds. Has it occurred to you that there is, as it were, a kind of screen which the individual can erect to protect himself from such adverse influences? By anticipating dark and heavy Karma and unfortunate events and troubles at a certain epoch in the future, a way is open to them — in fact the Ego invites them, and one not infrequently finds this attitude even amongst Theosophical students. I believe it is wrong. On the contrary, bring forward in thought the truer and nobler side of the nature, and create a noble future for yourself, centering the mind, heart and consciousness in the Higher Self, aspiring towards it, having faith in it, and knowing that as you learn to live in the consciousness which is Eternal no adverse influence of any kind can possibly reach you. It simply means that the consciousness becomes so firmly rooted and poised in the higher aether of the soul's meditations that the various planetary energies which pass through it are transmuted thereby to beneficent and useful purposes; whereas if the consciousness were left unprotected because centered in the personality, then the same influences would work out in a deleterious, destructive and unfortunate way. That, as I see it, is the answer to your problem.

Memorandum

The following pages may have a certain historical interest for some readers, since they give, as far as possible, information as to where and when the various lectures of Dr. Barker contained in this volume were given. Where it was not possible to do this, the month and year of the magazine in which they appeared is supplied; and this has also been done in the case of articles. The items are listed in the same sequence as they appear in the text.

1. NEW YEAR AND OTHER MESSAGES

"The Hill of Discernment," Editorial, E. T. F. (*The English Theosophical Forum*), Dec., 1937

"The Divine Awakening and the Birth of the Year," Address, New Year's Eve, 1933, London Headquarters, T. S.

"Forgiveness and Love," Closing Address, Special New Year's Meeting, Jan. 3, 1934, London Headquarters, T. S.

"A Call to Action: Individual Regeneration and World Chaos," Address Dec. 7, 1933, Guildford Lodge, Surrey

"Ancient Ideals in the Modern Home," Address Feb. 1, 1931, London Headquarters, T. S.

2. SOLVING THE INDIVIDUAL PROBLEM

"Let Us Go Forward," See editorial note.

"Individual Responsibility," Extracts from an Address, Bishop Auckland Lodge, published in E. T. F., Aug., 1933

"Idolatry and Leadership," Editorial, E. T. F., April, 1933

"Our Immediate Work," Address, Sept. 20, 1933, London Headquarters, T. S.

"On Looking for Results," Address, Feb. 6, 1933, Manchester, meeting for members and inquirers

"On Fraternization," Extracts from Editorial, E. T. F., Jan., 1933, Vol. I, No. 1

"Further Notes on Fraternization," Extracts from Editorial, E. T. F., April, 1937

"Rising Above Desire," Editorial, T. F. (*The Theosophical Forum*), October, 1941

3. H. P. B.

"Invitation to the H. P. B. Centennial Conference," see editorial note.

"Unity Through H. P. B.'s Teachings," see editorial note.

"H. P. B. and the Masters of Wisdom," Extracts from Lecture, Oct. 13, 1935, London Headquarters, T. S.

"Theosophical Slackness," Editorial, E. T. F., June-July, 1937

White Lotus Day Meetings:

"H. P. B. as a Symbol of the Masters' Work," see editorial note.

"The Brotherhood H. P. B. Came to Found," see editorial note.

"H. P. B.: A 'Holding Center' of Spiritual Energy," unsigned article, E. T. F., March, 1937

"Was H. P. B. an Anomaly?" T. F., April, 1937

"William Quan Judge," Address, March 22, 1931, London Headquarters, T. S.

4. STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS"

"No. III Teachings on Life After Death," Address, May 12, 1935,

London Headquarters, T. S.

"No. IV Spiritualism and Psychic Phenomena," Address, May 26, 1935, London Headquarters, T. S.

"Questions and Answers: On Accidents and Suicides," Answered in E. T. F., Oct., 1935

"No. V The Psychology of Chelaship," Address, July 9, 1935, London Headquarters, T. S.

"No. VII The Problem of Evil," Address, July 14, 1935, London Headquarters, T. S.

"The Writing of the Mahatma Letters," Editorial, E. T. F., Jan., 1938

5. TECHNICAL TEACHINGS AND THEIR PRACTICAL APPLICATION

"Why Study Theosophy?" T. F., Jan., 1936

"Obstacles to Meditation," Editorial, E. T. F., March, 1936

"The occult Law of Correspondence and Analogy," Address, June 30, 1935, London Headquarters, T. S.

"The Lost 'Word,' " Editorial, E. T. F., Aug., 1935

"Destiny, Liberation, Annihilation," Address, April 15, 1934, London Headquarters, T. S.

"Spiritual Gifts and Their Attainment," Address, Sept. 25, 1938, London Headquarters, T. S.

"The Mystery of Pain," Address, (date?), London Headquarters, T. S.; T. F., Oct., 1938

"The Place of Devotion in the Life of Discipleship," see editorial note.

"The Creative Power of Thought," Address, April 5, 1936, London

Headquarters, T. S.

"Faith Versus Wisdom," Address, June 28, 1936, London

Headquarters, T. S.

"The Dual Aspect of Wisdom," Address, Nov. 20, 1936, Phoenix Lodge, Adyar T. S., London

"The Evolution of the Soul," Address, July 8, 1936, joint meeting with the Phoenix Lodge, Adyar T. S., Conway Hall, London

"The Real Man," Address, May 10, 1936, first of a series of joint meetings with the Phoenix Lodge, Adyar T. S., London

"The Destruction of Illusion," Address, Nov. 20, 1938, London Headquarters, T. S.

6. THE RATIONALE OF THE AFTER-LIFE

"The Living Dead," Address, Feb. 18, 1934, London Headquarters, T. S.

"The Mysteries of Death," Address, (date?), London Headquarters, T. S.; T. F., April, 1941

"What Survives Death?" Address, Oct. 14, 1936, with Phoenix Lodge, Adyar T. S., Conway Hall, London

"More About 'What Survives Death?' " T. F., July, 1937

"Psychic Phenomena," Address, Jan. 19, 1931, London Headquarters, T. S.

"Theosophy and Christian Science," Address, (date?), London Headquarters, T. S.; T. F., Feb., 1939

7. SHORTER PIECES

"A Bond of Spiritual Kinship," from article in *The Occult Review*, April, 1932, "Theosophical Churches and the Blavatsky Tradition"

"Every Lodge-Room a Temple," T. F., Feb., 1937

"Keys to a Cosmic Philosophy," from answer to a question at a meeting in Glasgow, Scotland, Oct. 7, 1937

"Thoughts on Devachan," unsigned article in E. T. F., Dec., 1937

"Awareness in the Moment and the Day," T. F., April, 1939

"A Theosophist's Attitude to Book-Learning," From Report of the European Convention, Penarth, Wales, Aug., 1939

"The Inner Divine Companion," from Editorial, E. T. F., Nov., 1933

Questions and Answers:

"The Ego of a Mentally Deficient Person," E. T. F., Nov., 1935

"The Nature of 'Spirit' Communications," E. T. F., March, 1936

"The Relationship of Chela and Guru," answer to a question at European Convention, Visingsö, Sweden, Summer, 1938

"The Outer Teacher and the Inner Intuition," E. T. F., June, 1936

"Avoiding the Sectarian Spirit," E. T. F., June, 1936

"How to Meet Troubles Ahead," E. T. F., Aug., 1935

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