



THE THEOSOPHIST

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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The Theosophical Society is composed of students, belonging to any religion in the world or to none, who are united by their approval of the Society's Objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms and to draw together men of goodwill, whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths and to share the results of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideals, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow but as a duty they perform, and they seek to remove ignorance, not punish it. They see every religion as an expression of the Divine Wisdom and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to proselytism. Peace is their watchword, as Truth is their aim.

Theosophy is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guide its evolution. It puts death in its rightful place, as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the Science of the Spirit, teaching man to know the Spirit as himself and the mind and body as his servants. It illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions by unveiling their hidden meanings, and thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths, and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high, and to work perseveringly, is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

The Illumined Mind

TIM BOYD

WE have descended, we have ‘involved’ ourselves into matter, and now we are at a juncture where something is changing. I am going to try to focus on where we find ourselves now, and pick it up from that point of the arc. What does that mean, and how do we respond to this particular stage in the cycle? Part of my title is about illumination; often we think of it as a specific moment when something occurs and suddenly we find ourselves, like a light-bulb, illumined. That is accurate. However, it is also a process that brings us to this particular moment of awakening. Often in theosophical terms we think of human transformation as a sudden instant, which, again, is correct, but there is also a process that is involved in arriving at this time.

Where do we find ourselves now? What is our situation? When I was younger I would listen to my father or uncles tell a story and, after they were just a few words into it, I would realize this was the same story I had been hearing all of my life. I would have to pretend as if the story was brand new, even though from the start I would know where it was going to end. As time goes on, they say that we become our parents. In my theosophical thinking I find myself arriving at a place that seems to have great importance for me, that until

I can grasp this particular point, everything else around it seems to be just information. This information may be interesting, or metaphysical, and if you say it in the right place you may impress somebody and they will think you are profound. But, beyond all that, it is just more information until we find the context that gives it meaning.

The main idea is that for us as human beings there is an essential problem. If we could resolve it, then all other things would fall into place. There is a place where we lose ourselves. It begins with something that H. P. Blavatsky talked about in her three fundamental Propositions. She spoke about the pilgrim soul and an obligatory pilgrimage that must be made. It is through reincarnation — the repetitive cycles of birth, death, and rebirth — that this pilgrim soul evolves. The process is where we lose our way. The attempt to provide some direction in this process is the basis for all of the world’s religions, for the profound teachings of Theosophy. What do we do to interrupt this cycle of repetitive births and rebirths, of different varieties of suffering in this life, different bodies in which we put so much effort into figuring out ways to cause harm to ourselves and others?

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The process begins for us when a soul comes into a body. Some of us may be familiar with the Egyptian story of the coffin that Seth built for Osiris. It fit Osiris' body exactly. Seth tricked the god Osiris to enter into the coffin, closed it around him, and removed him from the royal house. On one level the story describes the soul's entrance into a body. Once we enter, it is very much like entering into a coffin in the sense that we become cut off from something — the Divine, our spiritual Source. Life after life we find ourselves incarnating in this way, but what happens thereafter is where we become perplexed. The problem we face as spiritual beings working through a material body is one of false identity. In this process of birth we take on not just one, but multiple false identities.

A soul is without gender, nationality, political party, or religion, but at the time of incarnation the first thing that is declared is the gender. 'It's a boy', or 'It's a girl.' From that moment forward there is an expectation for a limited range of self-expression, and if you want to try to act differently, in whatever culture you are from, you will face severe restrictions: In Western societies if one is born a boy, he should not play with dolls. To express his gender properly, he should be holding a toy gun, playing war games, and pretending to kill somebody. This embodied soul also gets a family, it is assigned whatever religion that family practices, a nation, and so on. Layer after layer of identities become impressed upon it. To be more accurate, these identities do not

get impressed upon the soul, but on the vehicles through which it functions in this world, creating a barrier between the soul and its Source. This is the process.

Soon we find ourselves accepting these identities. It is no longer people saying 'You are a Christian' or 'You are a Muslim', but *we* point to ourselves and say 'I am a _____.' That is when it gets to be a problem. Going further, we try to expand this identity. We do not want to be just a Christian, we want to be a 'good' Christian. We do not want to be simply a theosophist, we want to be a profound theosophist. We want to be the international President! The process goes on and on. It is endless. When you find yourself in a world with seven billion people behaving in this manner, we can expect problems of the kind we see every single day. Everyone is trying to carve out their corner to try to satisfy what they believe are their desires in competition with the other seven billion. This is the essential problem.

Thus incarnation has its consequences. The first is that we take on, and then accept, a variety of identities. The good part about it is that this ever-expanding 'I' has certain limitations. Inherent in this process is the experience that one could describe as dissatisfaction. We just cannot get enough to be happy. We cannot be rich enough or loved enough. And that is the beauty of it, that there will necessarily come a time for every person when an intense dissatisfaction becomes the characterizing frame of mind that plagues the heart. This is a good thing because out of

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that dissatisfaction comes the necessary next stage where we now find ourselves. Having realized that the particular path we have been following is not going to lead us where we want to go, something else begins, and that could be described as a search. We become seekers for happiness, for Truth, for something that we call by many names.

In the initial stages, what we are really seeking is something to fill our sense of emptiness that will stop the feeling of dissatisfaction. Often it expresses itself as a desire for freedom. Somehow or other we feel enclosed, limited by this world that we have accepted so profoundly. It begins with a sense of freedom. The undeveloped approach to freedom most often is something where we are looking to be free *from* one thing or another. We want to be free from those things which we feel plague us: free from illness, from unkind people, not having enough money, and so on. This is all based on the idea that we are incomplete, that we are compelled to search, to find that particular piece that is missing inside of us, and that when we find it and fit it into place ‘all will be well with the world’. This is an initial approach, but obviously one that cannot take us very far.

Because this is a process, it is something that necessarily unfolds, and what begins as a ‘freedom from’, grows into another sense of freedom, a ‘freedom to’. This becomes the experience in normal human living — a freedom to love, to be kind, to be open; these are the ones that seem to have some lasting meaning. They are the freedoms we experience briefly.

These momentary experiences of higher states have such a profound effect on us that they become the touchstones for everything else that we do in life. They are part of the unfoldment that takes place, that we all experience, and that has its roots we don’t know where, and its limits also we don’t know where. At a certain point we start to realize that there is a way of behaving, of turning our minds, that seems to lead towards the experience that we described as happiness.

One of the fundamental ideas of Buddhism is that every sentient being is searching for happiness, whether it is an ant or a mountain lion. We all are. There are some things that give very short inputs, not lasting, but as we mature and develop we start to realize that there are certain experiences that can lead to a happiness which can be repeated.

In 2011 the Dalai Lama visited with us in Chicago. One of the blessings that came with having him visit us was that I had a couple of days of being around him. In conversation about his lifelong practice and deep education in Tibetan Buddhism, one thing he said impressed me. He made the comment that one of the results of his training and practice is that now, *most of the time*, he is quite happy. To me this statement was remarkable in its simplicity. To be happy most of the time does not seem like such a demanding goal. Here we have something we can attain. And this happiness can be repeated as we embrace certain ways of being. After so many years involved with theosophical study, practice, thought, and then trying

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to live it, very often it gets synthesized into certain essentials.

One of the essentials is the approach we have taken to happiness. We recognize that it is our state of mind and behaviours that bring it about. One of the things that theosophy gives to us, is a wonderful roadmap — a map of the landscape of the inner human terrain. This is extremely valuable. We are not talking about just our physical body, but the various components that comprise what we call a human being. From an occult point of view this is simple to define. What is a human being? As defined by H. P. Blavatsky, it is highest spirit and lowest matter, linked by the mind. This is simple, but profoundly important. If we ever gain some understanding of this definition, then it becomes clear where it is that our work in this life must take place. It takes place in this linking ground — the mind. This bridge of mind linking the poles of spirit and matter is what makes us human.

It is important for us not merely to understand technically what our mind is, but to understand practically. What is the mind? First, it would be helpful to discard the contemporary scientific definition of the mind which lumps together sensations, thoughts, feelings, and intuitions into a process of cognition that is thought to be generated by the physical organ called the 'brain'. No brain, no mind. That is the theory. Now, toss it away. It has value in a certain sense. Take the example of a television set. Our TV is the physical instrument that, when turned on, all kinds of wonderful programs, and not so

wonderful ones, will be shown. Nobody in the twenty-first century is so unaware as to think that somehow this television set, this physical organism, produces the many TV shows. That is being done elsewhere, in studios in New York and Hollywood. The brain is the TV set; the mind is that field from which the television set draws its images, sounds, and stories. If you apply this analogy, it may be helpful.

Often in spiritual literature 'the mind' is depicted as a mirror. In *The Voice of the Silence* it is described as a mirror that can become covered with dust, requiring 'the gentle winds of soul wisdom' to clean it. It is a beautiful image. The mind, the mirror, has a couple of aspects: when it is turned downward and reflects all the things from the material world, we call it the lower mind. But because we have this capacity to influence the direction in which it is turned, it can also be turned upward, in which case it reflects the sky, the sun, the heavens, everything above — the higher mind. It is the same capacity for reflection. It is just a matter of how we engage it. So the mind is where the work must be done.

Probably all of us are familiar with at least the basics of the story of the cave-dwellers in Plato's *The Republic*. It is one of those stories that appear in slightly different forms across cultures and traditions. It relates to the mind. In dealing with this mind we begin to recognize that there is a need to unfold its powers through a hierarchical process. As part of this process, there are people that we think of as teachers who come into our lives to aid

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at each of these levels. At the beginning level, when we start to recognize that something is wrong, that something needs to be done, the initial need we have is for information: ‘What is this world that I am starting to discover something about? How is it described, what are the forms? ‘Name and form’ is one of the aspects that is emphasized in Buddhism. That is the introductory level. The people that we meet at that level as teachers would be called pundits or professors, who can describe, point to, and name. That is the need of this stage of development.

As our unfoldment continues, information starts to aggregate and take on the quality of knowledge. It is no longer just isolated atoms or facts, it starts to form together into something much greater, so we start to have a knowledge of the world. Then we begin to form beliefs, sets of concepts that we start to accept as reflective of this knowledge we have gained. The teachers at this level are the priests or politicians. Always our beliefs are wrong and temporary, but at this stage they are necessary. There are people who believe so deeply in Jesus Christ, in Allah, in the various gods of the Hindu pantheon, that because of these beliefs it is justifiable to kill somebody who does not share those beliefs! Obviously, these belief systems have limitations. We as theosophists have our own sets of beliefs. They are good, but when any of them no longer serves the purposes of the growth of our consciousness, it is just the most recent idol that has to be discarded.

So, there is information, knowledge,

belief, and then we come to something that starts to speak of this quality of illumination — understanding. Genuine understanding is not a product of thought. It is the product of a mind that becomes illumined. Illumined by what? In technical theosophical terms we would say *manas* illumined by *buddhi*. The Sanskrit term for this illumined mind is *manasa taijasi*. The mind that is illumined reflects understanding. Thus we have the spiritual teachers — great beings who are able to speak to us from this level of illumination — and we find ourselves drawn to them. The pinnacle of this progressive unfoldment, which would be beyond information, knowledge, even beyond understanding, would be wisdom, the direct perception of what *is*. It would not be someone’s description of it, not a sense of it, not a thought, but the experience: ‘From the unreal lead me to the Real.’ The Real is the realm of wisdom. At this level the teachers become scarce. They might be described as the Masters of the Wisdom, or the Self, not the personality or the ego.

Let us describe the mind and the unfoldment leading to wisdom in terms that Plato has provided for us. The setup for the story is that there are these people in a cave who are chained and have always lived underground. All they can see is the wall in front of them. They cannot move their necks or see anything behind them. Thus they cannot turn around and see that there is a way leading out towards the light and the open air above. Plato further elaborates this picture by saying that there is a large fire burning behind them, casting

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shadows on the wall. There is also a low wall between them and the fire, and there are other people carrying things, who are continually walking behind them. So when they walk by, let us say, carrying a basket on their shoulder, the shadow is cast on the wall. The chained people see only the silhouette of something, and they start naming it. Further, the people carrying things may be talking and the echo reflects off the wall in front of them, so it appears as if these shadows are talking. What occurs is that among the chained people looking at the shadows, there are the ones who each one would point to and say: ‘Ah, this is the wisest among us because he can look and is able to predict which shadow is going to come next, so this is a wise one!’ That is like economists today! This is the scenario that Plato describes.

Then Plato asks the question: ‘Let us suppose that someone comes up to one of these people who has been chained all of his life, takes him away, and leads him to the fire. What would be the effect on that person?’ Obviously, his eyes would be dazzled by the light, temporarily blinded by firelight. Then if you were to ask him which of these is more real, the fire or the shadows that he has been used to seeing, due to force of habit the shadows would be his choice. Gradually he would get a bit more accustomed to this firelight. Then Plato adds: ‘Let us imagine that now you take him away from that fire and lead him gradually up to the surface, where the sun is shining, then what is the effect?’ He would be totally blinded, it would be so

bright that he could not see anything. He would be confused, but gradually he would become accustomed to this lighted world. At first he could not look up because it was too bright, so he would start looking into little puddles of water to see the reflections of trees and other things, ultimately even the reflection of the sun. With some time being exposed to this new environment, he would reach a point where he actually could look and see the sun, and in some way he would reason for himself that *this* is the source of all of these lesser lights. This sun is what gives life and meaning, what pervades this world.

The difference in this man — when he was in front of the shadows, and later when he could look at the sun — although it is the same body, is enormous. To conclude the story, Plato persists: ‘Now that he has been up in the light, let us take him back down. When he gets there, he is seated with his former fellows, but it seems so dark to him in this underworld after being accustomed to the bright light that he cannot see anything. All of his friends look at him and say: “Look at him! before he left here, he was a normal, reasonable man, now he comes back and he cannot see anything, he is talking about some delusions he has about something he calls light, claiming that these shadows are unreal, that they are projections of something happening behind us — this man has lost his mind!” And so the next thing they say is: “The next person that comes and tries to drag one of us away to this light, we’re going to kill him! Out of our deep compassion, kindness, and level

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of understanding, we're not going to allow our people to be treated this way." ' That is the way the story develops. It is an interesting scenario and story, but what is it talking about? It is not talking about some people hidden somewhere in a cave in Athens. It is talking about us and the nature of the unfoldment of our capacity to reflect what is already present within us — this brighter Light.

The effects of the theosophical movement have taken place on many levels. Obviously there was an initial need to put before the world certain concepts about the nature of the human being and the universe, about our capacity for choice and self-responsibility. That work has not been completed, but it has been successfully done in many ways. Many groups can repeat some small part of what we call theosophy, sometimes better than we do. The purpose of the worldwide theosophical movement and of the process in which we find ourselves engaged in the name of Theosophy, is really more along the lines of self-transformation. This means to become transformed individuals, not just because it will help us feel good in our quiet moments, which it will, but because we are units within a greater life, within a greater consciousness — 'the great humanity' — and the life and energy that we contribute to that greater life affects all of the units within it.

We are fond of thinking about ourselves as relatively powerless small beings. It is a convenient way to think in the sense that it relieves us of a certain responsibility — the responsibility to fully

engage in this process of unfoldment. This unfoldment is good for you, for the planet, it is the reason why we are here. Human regeneration is the profound reason why the Theosophical Society came into being — not just to introduce some new concepts that can be polluted like so many other concepts have been — but with the hope that there would be individuals who could actually trace their way, climb the ladder of these concepts, think them through, practise them, until they actually go beyond a practice and an effort, to an experience. The experience of Oneness, Brotherhood, the Masters of the Wisdom, the name does not matter. The experience is what matters, because that is what spreads. That is what first takes hold of us and simultaneously finds its way into the world.

The times that we come together face-to-face are wonderful opportunities for all of us. Often we find ourselves attending meetings because we are looking for that one more thing that we feel we are lacking, or because we feel more comfortable when we are in the presence of others who think like us. One of the hidden purposes of these meetings reaches far beyond those things. Most often we are not even aware of it. Moments occur, sometimes just the briefest of moments, when our pre-occupation with ourselves drops. It is *only* at that time that we become truly usable in this world. There is something very great that is looking to make its presence known in this world. We study about it, and from time to time we feel its influence. What prevents it from manifesting fully

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is the lack of openings. *We* are those openings. That *something* can only make its presence known when we stop blocking our availability with the almost ceaseless stream of our wants, desires, thoughts, and plans — the endless laundry list of who we think we are. Those things can be dropped, and we know they can because we have all had that experience.

We have an opportunity that, fortunately, recurs in every single moment. None of us needs new information. In the countless details that we call our life, the

busy things that we are all involved with — we should try to never lose sight of the fact that there is something much more profound lying on the other side of that. There is something which brought us into this world that lies on the other side of these details. The problem for us is we cannot reach it unless we attend to these details properly. The only thing I would do is to encourage you, as I encourage myself daily, to remember what lies beyond. Everybody has seen it, and felt it, just remember. That is enough. ✧

Let there be spaces in your togetherness. And let the winds of the heavens dance between you. Love one another, but make not a bond of love: Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,

Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music. Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping. For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.

And stand together yet not too near together: For the pillars of the temple stand apart, and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

Khalil Gibran
The Prophet, 'On Marriage'

There is No Psychological Evolution

PABLO SENDER

THE scientific idea of evolution as we understand it today was quite new when the modern Theosophical movement started. To put it in context, H. P. Blavatsky met her Master for the first time about eight years before Darwin published his theory in 1859. This idea of evolution applied not only to the physical world but also to the intellectual and spiritual realms — would eventually become one of the main doctrines that the Theosophical Society introduced to modern spirituality.

It is natural then, that when some years later J. Krishnamurti stated repeatedly that ‘There is no psychological evolution’ some students of Theosophy felt he was denying a central tenet of the Esoteric Philosophy. But was he? In this article we will explore the esoteric teachings as regards to evolution and how they relate to the psyche, which in Theosophical literature is technically called *kāma-manas*.

Constitution of Human Beings

Esoteric Philosophy states that the cosmos is far more complex than the model presented by modern science. It is not a mere physical machine, but has different dimensions that transcend the

reach of current scientific technology. Man, in its turn, is a ‘sample’ of the universe, reflecting in him every element that exists in the cosmos — both at the physical and non-physical levels.

Mme Blavatsky generally described human beings as composed of seven Principles or fundamental elements, namely: *ātman*, the universal Self in us; *buddhi*, the source of spiritual wisdom; *manas*, the origin of mind and self-consciousness; *kāma*, the passional elements; *prāna*, the individualized universal life; *linga-śarira*, the ethereal model of the last and densest Principle — the physical body or *sthula-śarira*.

Since these Principles usually work in association with each other, there are many ways of arranging them depending on the aspect of the Esoteric Philosophy under study. For our present purpose, we will organize them in four categories according to their functions, as follows:

| | |
|---|--------|
| <i>Ātma-buddhi</i> (the Monad) | Spirit |
| <i>Manas</i> (the higher ego) | Soul |
| <i>Kāma-manas</i> (the personal ego) | Psyche |
| <i>Prāna, linga</i> and <i>sthula śarira-s</i> | Body |

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The Monad (especially in its ātmic aspect) is one and universal. It does not belong to any particular human being but pervades all, giving existence to everything. Its reflection in a human being through *buddhi* is what we could loosely call *his* Spirit.

The higher ego or soul is our true Individuality, the reincarnating ‘entity’ that is beyond life and death.

The psyche is a reflection of the soul expressing through the body. It is heavily conditioned by the limitations imposed by the physical organism and mixed with the passions and biological instincts represented by *kāma*. This is the psychological nature of man, that is, his mental and emotional aspects. It constitutes the lower or personal ego.

Finally, we have a living body that during life is the vehicle of all these Principles on the physical plane.

Keeping this classification in mind, we can now pass on to examine the Theosophical teachings about the evolution of this complex entity that is a human being.

Schemes of Evolution

The Theosophical teachings present a cosmos immersed in a vast movement of evolution. According to *The Secret Doctrine* there exist in Nature three separate streams or ‘schemes’ of evolution going on at three different levels that could be described as the spiritual sphere, the archetypal plane,* and the physical world. Man, being a reflection of the *whole*, is the only entity actively evolving on these three levels. In other words, these three

separate schemes are in him ‘inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point’. Mme Blavatsky described these schemes as follows:

1. **The Monadic** is, as the name implies, concerned with the growth and development into still higher phases of activity of the Monad in conjunction with:

2. **The Intellectual**, represented by the *Mānasa-Dhyāni-s* (the Solar Devas, or the *Agnishwatta Pitri-s*) the ‘givers of intelligence and consciousness’ to man and:

3. **The Physical**, represented by the *Chhāyā-s* of the lunar *Pitri-s*, round which Nature has concentered the present physical body. . . .¹

Before moving on it is important to note that Blavatsky frequently uses the word ‘intellectual’ in a particular way. She follows the fashion of ancient Greek philosophy, where the word ‘intellect’ is a translation of the term *nous* — the Pure Reason. Therefore, she does not refer to the brain intellectualism but to the source of spiritual intelligence in man, the *mānasa-dhyāni* in us or human soul.

Now, if we arrange these schemes of evolution in connection with the Principles they affect, we have the following:

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--------|
| Monadic Evolution | <i>Ātma-buddhi</i> | Spirit |
| Intellectual Evolution | <i>Manas</i> | Soul |
| — | <i>Kāma-manas</i> | Psyche |
| Physical Evolution | <i>Prāna, linga and sthula śarira-s</i> | Body |

As we can see, here we have represented all seven Principles but one: *kāma*,

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in its association with lower *manas*. In other words, what is absent in this threefold scheme is the evolution of the psyche. One might think that the latter is represented in the Intellectual scheme but, as we said, that scheme is related to higher *manas* as an entity (the reincarnating Soul) and not to its perishable reflection in the body during the period of incarnation. Thus, according to *The Secret Doctrine*, our personal 'I' (that is, the psychological identity in which the vast majority of humanity has centred its consciousness) is not in a process of evolution.

What is the meaning of this? What are the implications? To understand this we have first to examine the main features of these evolutionary schemes.

Spiritual evolution. The *universal* Monad is a purely undifferentiated spiritual essence which, being homogeneous, is unconscious on the planes of differentiated matter. The first step in awakening its latent consciousness is to pass through several stages of experience animating the lower kingdoms of nature (elemental, mineral, vegetable and animal). This evolution is not self-conscious — it is guided 'from the outside' by the forces of Nature.

Once this part of the journey is accomplished, the next step for the Monad is to gather experience *personally* and *individually*. In other words, the universal Monad has to experience the cosmos as a self-conscious entity — a human being. For this purpose, in its previous journey through the lower kingdoms the One Monad shows 'a gradual tendency towards

segregation into individual Monads', a process that comes almost to completion in the animal kingdom.² But it is only when arriving at the human stage that the universal Monad is individualized into many 'human monads' that act as distinct entities in this world of illusion.

The aim of the human monad or Spirit is to develop spiritual self-consciousness, that is, a clear awareness of itself as a centre of consciousness which, nevertheless, is an *inseparable* part of the whole. In order to accomplish this aim the human Spirit needs a suitable tabernacle through which it can experience the cosmos in a self-conscious way.

Physical evolution. While the universal Monad gathers experience in the lower kingdoms, Nature is busy at work striving to develop more and more complex organisms. As the forms evolve from minerals to vegetables and then on to animals, they become increasingly more aware of, and responsive to, the environment. Animal forms, with an ever perfecting nervous system, are gradually developed until the process reaches its goal — the creation of an organism with a brain complex enough not only to be highly aware of the environment, but also to be aware of itself as a particular entity. This is the birth of the primitive human being.

Thus, at the beginning of human evolution we have a physical form that is animated by an individual Monad or Spirit and has the ability to host self-consciousness. However, primitive human beings still remained as 'senseless forms'. Why? This is because *i)* the Spirit, being

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too pure and undifferentiated, does not have the quality of self-consciousness in itself, and *ii*) the physical evolutionary power is unable to develop the non-physical quality of self-consciousness. An additional stream of evolution is therefore needed to join the efforts to produce a complete human being.

Intellectual evolution. The universal mind is the source of *ahamkāra*, that is, the feeling of 'I am' or self-consciousness. Once the primitive human forms are ready to develop mental consciousness, the Spirit is helped by the Solar Devas or *mānasaputra*-s (the sons of the universal mind) to create a dwelling place on the archetypal plane — the *causal body*. This marks the birth of the human soul, which is itself a Solar Deva in the making.

At the beginning of its human evolution the soul is in a state of slumber, much as in the case of a newly-born baby. The aim of the first part of its journey is to gradually awaken its dormant self-consciousness, which takes place by going through the cycles of reincarnation.

The soul, being too spiritual an entity, never fully enters the body. When the time for incarnation comes it sends 'a ray' of itself endowing the baby with the potentiality for reason and self-consciousness. As the baby grows, the stimulation that comes from the outside awakens these latent faculties and the soul's ray develops into the psyche or personal ego. It is by this means that the soul passes 'through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated Universe'³ and gradually realizes itself as an individual entity.

Now, once this aim of awakening is reached, a new movement becomes necessary. The soul, which so far had been focusing on the psyche and body, must be united with the Spirit. In other words, the soul has to strive to transcend its identification with the personality (through which it awakened to self-conscious life) and endeavour to realize its true identity — a human Spirit dwelling on the archetypal plane and expressing itself on the physical plane. With the attainment of this goal the Spirit becomes self-conscious on all levels of the cosmos and the aim of human evolution is accomplished.

The fate of the psyche. As we just said, the psyche is a 'fragment' of the soul expressing itself through the body; a tool to interact with the physical world during life. But what happens when the body dies? At first, consciousness centres in the psyche, which survives physical death. Then follows a process known as 'death struggle', where the selfish elements in the psyche are separated from the spiritual ones. Anything that was egoistic or of a material interest is discarded, forming a kind of psychic corpse or 'shell' that will eventually dissolve. But the impersonal and spiritual essence of the psyche follows the soul to *devachan* — a state where this essence is assimilated and becomes a permanent part of the soul. It is by means of this assimilation that the latter gradually unfolds its self-consciousness and other potentialities. When *devachan* is over and a fresh incarnation begins, the soul sends a new ray to the forming body that will develop into a new psyche.

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This psyche will be completely different from the previous one. It will have different capacities, depending on what particular aspects of the soul are chosen to be expressed more prominently in the present incarnation. The new psyche, being developed in a new body, family, country, time, etc., will have different personal experiences, memories, and qualities, even though there may be a general continuity of habits and inclinations from the former life due to the *skandha*-s.

But one could ask — will the new psyche be an improvement of the previous one? The answer depends on several factors. If the experiences of the previous incarnation were mainly directed towards selfish and materialistic aims, the new psyche will tend to show an even more marked materialistic or selfish tendency. From a spiritual point of view, we could say that the psyche gets worse. This, however, does not mean that the soul is not evolving. The latter is gathering experience about the lower planes, which will eventually lead it to realize that this road fails to bring about anything productive. If, on the contrary, the experiences of the past incarnation contributed to the awakening of the soul's potentialities, the general tone of the next psyche may be more spiritual, because the new ray sent to the body will reflect the soul's growth in wisdom from one life to the next.†

As we can see, the psyche is not an enduring Principle but rather a shadow of the real — a transitory tool to be discarded after each day of labour. Thus, although the psyche plays an important role in the

soul's journey, there can be no evolution at the psychological level.

Now, what about the psychological 'improvement' that we may observe within one life-time in a person that is leading a spiritual life? Couldn't we say that this is a kind of psychological evolution? In order to understand this we need to examine another important aspect of the psyche.

The Sense of Separateness

As we said, the soul is the source of self-consciousness; the feeling of 'I am.' This self-consciousness can exist in different forms, from the spiritual and impersonal to the material and selfish.

The original self-consciousness of the soul is a pure and unqualified sense of '*I-am-ness*', an impersonal consciousness of just being. When the ray is sent to animate the body in a new incarnation and self-consciousness begins to awaken in the baby, it gradually identifies with the body, with its name, with its personal experiences, etc. In consequence, the originally pure feeling of 'I am' turns into the sense of 'I am — *John Smith*.' This is the psyche. A natural result of the identification of the impersonal consciousness with the personal *vehicles* of consciousness is the sense of separateness, because when one says 'I am John Smith' one is also saying 'I am not Mary Brown', or anybody else.

This sense of personal identity has a fundamental flaw — it is false. Although the soul is a particular Individuality, it does not feel separate from the rest. On its own plane, the soul has an inherent omniscience, and stands beyond life and

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death. The psyche, on the contrary, is mortal. It feels isolated and alone, and its perception and understanding are very narrow, limited by the bodily senses. But as the soul becomes more and more engaged with the personal experience it gets confused and regards itself to be the corporal, emotional, and mental aspects, thus forgetting its divine origin. This identification with body and mind is the source of suffering.

In the first part of the evolutionary cycle the sense of separateness and selfishness associated with the psyche is necessary to awaken the soul to a consciousness of itself as an individual entity. But once this is accomplished the psyche becomes a limitation; just as the walker that helped the baby get strong eventually becomes a hindrance for his walking. What the soul needs now is to reassert its true nature and strive to be united with its source — the Spirit. For this, it has to overcome the fascination for the material world and break its identification with the temporary psyche. In Mme Blavatsky's words:

Eastern Philosophy — occult or exoteric — does not admit of an 'I' separate from the Universe, objective or subjective, material or spiritual — otherwise than as a temporary illusion during the cycle of our incarnations. It is this regrettable *illusion*, the 'heresy of separateness' or personality, the idea that our 'I' is distinct in eternity from the Universal EGO, that has to be conquered and destroyed as the root of selfishness and all evil, before we can get rid of rebirths and reach Nirvana.⁴

This is an important point to be grasped by the student. All mystic teachings point out that spiritual awakening depends on the progressive 'death' of the personal 'I' as a centre of consciousness: 'the man must die before the saint can be born' says a Dervish proverb. For this to happen a purification of the self-consciousness is necessary. Let us examine this in more detail.

In most of us the seat of self-consciousness is not higher than the psyche. We know we have thoughts, emotions, and a body, but we are not aware of our higher nature, even though we may know about it through study and reflection, or even dimly perceive it through flashes of inspiration. If, through spiritual practice, we can raise our self-consciousness to the level of the soul, we will begin to be aware of that aspect of our nature that is immortal and impersonal. A natural consequence of this will be a progressive weakening of the attachment to body and psyche, which are not regarded as our real self anymore.

But what happens to the psyche in this process? We could say that it gets united to the soul. In other words, the psyche, now devoid of its sense of 'I am this particular body and mind', becomes a passive instrument for the expression of the active soul. As a result of this the person begins to gradually express in his life the powers of the soul — wisdom, love, compassion, peace, joy, etc. This is the key to explain the 'psychological improvement' that one can observe in a person who is successfully treading the

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spiritual path. It is not that the psyche with its separate ego is improving; on the contrary, the psyche gradually stops being an independent centre of consciousness and becomes a vehicle for the expression of the self-aware soul.

Once this is accomplished, the next step in the evolutionary journey is to raise the seat of self-consciousness even higher, from the soul to the Spirit, in what can be regarded as the union of both Principles.

Since the Spirit is beyond any limitation, even the impersonal sense of being an Individuality is transcended. Now there is the sense 'I am — the one All', and the person has the ability to become, in consciousness, anything that is around, whether animate or inanimate. This is the experience of union of any real mystic and occultist, one in which soul, psyche, and body have become the vehicle of expression of the fully conscious Spirit. ✧

Footnotes

* The term 'archetypal' is used here to refer to the higher mental plane of Theosophical literature.

† However, we need to keep in mind that karma, which regulates all this, may produce 'unexpected' effects at the personal level in any given incarnation.

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Everyone has in him something divine, something his own, a chance of perfection and strength in however small a sphere which God offers him to take or refuse. The task is to find it, develop it, and use it. The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use.

Sri Aurobindo

Sustainability: The World's Biggest Challenge — II

DR R. K. PACHAURI

An unequivocal finding is the warming of the world climate. Since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented. The atmosphere and oceans have warmed, the amount of snow and ice have diminished, and the sea level and concentration of greenhouse gases have increased. These greenhouse gases consist of carbon dioxide and other gases, leading to the warming of the planet.

Each of the last three decades has been successively warmer at the Earth's surface than any preceding decade since 1850. This is completely in contrast with what happened before 1850. In the northern hemisphere, 1983–2012 was likely the warmest 30-year period of the last 1,400 years. This is the extent of deviation from a reasonably stable pattern of temperature experienced on the surface of the earth.

Ocean warming dominates the increase in energy stored in the climate system, accounting for more than 90% of the energy accumulated between 1971 and 2010. It is virtually certain that the upper ocean, that is, 0 to 700 m below the surface, warmed from 1971 to 2010, and it likely

warmed between the 1870s and 1971. The warming of the ocean has serious repercussions for marine life at that depth and this warming is going to go down further because it takes a long time for the oceans to transmit the heat on the surface to a deeper and deeper level. When that happens at even lower depths, clearly marine ecosystems will suffer.

Over the last two decades, the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets have been losing mass, glaciers have continued to shrink almost worldwide, and Arctic sea ice and Northern Hemisphere spring snow covers have continued to decrease.

The rate of sea level rise since the mid-19th century has increased because of warming of the ocean with thermal expansion and the bodies of ice across the globe, including glaciers in the Himalayan range melting very rapidly. This has resulted in the increase of water magnitude that flows to the oceans, leading to sea level rise. Over the period 1901 to 2010, the mean sea level rose by 19cm, or 0.19m globally.

The atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide

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have increased to levels unprecedented in at least the last 800,000 years. This is the extent to which, in a short period of time since industrialization, we have changed the composition of the planet's atmosphere. Carbon dioxide concentrations have increased by 40% since preindustrial times, primarily from fossil fuel emissions and secondarily from deforestation and other factors. The ocean has absorbed about 30% of the carbon dioxide emitted by human activity, causing ocean acidification. Before industrialization the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was 280 parts per million. In May of this year we have exceeded 400 parts per million.

Human influence on global climate is very clear. This is evident from the increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere and the extent of radiation that falls on the surface. Part of the sun's heat that falls on the land and oceans of this planet is radiated back. When you have a higher concentration of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere, in a sense it acts like a blanket when you go to sleep. The heat inside the blanket remains trapped inside: Part of reradiated heat that goes out, instead of going into outer space, comes to the earth's surface. This is not a case of slow and steady warming. It is a real disruption of a delicately balanced climate system, leading to all kinds of other negative impacts.

Climate models have improved, and they now reproduce continental-scale surface temperature patterns. We have powerful supercomputers in which all the scientific phenomena that determines the

climate in different parts of the world can be easily simulated. Those models can be run to give a clear assessment of current and future temperature patterns.

Human influence has also been detected in warming of the atmosphere and oceans, in changes of the global water cycle, reduction in snow and ice, global mean sea level rise, and in changes in some climate extremes. This evidence of negative human impact has grown since the 2007 Assessment Report. It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century. 'Extremely likely' means we are assigning a probability of over 95%. So, if scientific evidence points to over 95% probability, it is our responsibility to see that we solve this problem. This situation is creating a substantial amount of risk to all ecosystems on the planet, to human life and the wellbeing not only of this generation but generations to come. If we get a very clear assessment of some risky proposition, most of us would avoid the risk which is going to cause a major threat to our lives and wellbeing.

We have four different scenarios on the basis of which we have made the following projections. In the first scenario, human beings make no attempt at all to reduce emissions, and we allow them to grow, more and more fossil fuels will be burnt, more and more deforestation will take place, and we continue to produce and consume the way we have been doing in the past. Then there are three other scenarios, and the last one is where human

beings decide that they are going to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases.

In all but the last scenario we project a temperature increase by the end of this century of over 1.5°C, and in the first one we would get a temperature increase possibly as high as 4.8°C. And if that happens, clearly, we should be looking for another planet to move to.

Changes in the global water cycle in response to the warming, over the 21st century will not be uniform. There are some parts of the globe which will have more rain, others will have less. The contrast in precipitation between wet and dry regions and wet and dry seasons will increase, although there may be regional exceptions.

The global ocean will continue to warm during the 21st century. Heat will penetrate from the surface to the deep ocean and affect ocean circulation. It is very likely that the Arctic sea ice cover will continue to shrink and thin and the northern hemisphere spring snow cover will decrease during the 21st century as global mean surface temperature rises. Global glacier volume will further decrease.

We have projected that if we do not do anything about this problem, by the middle of this century September Arctic sea ice is likely to vanish. September is the month when you have the lowest amount of sea ice in the Arctic because during summer months melting takes place. However by the middle of this century this could reach a point where you will have no ice cover at all in the Arctic region in September.

Global mean sea level will continue to rise during the 21st century and under all

the scenarios the rate of sea level rise will very likely exceed what we have observed in the last four decades due to increased ocean warming and increased loss of mass from glaciers and ice sheets.

It is important for us to get quantitative assessments of what the future impacts will be. Sea level rise is one of them and others are agriculture, availability of water and human health. In recent years Delhi has experienced cases of dengue fever, in the autumn. This was because of temperature changes and also because we have been negligent in terms of allowing bodies of water all over the place in which mosquitos that cause dengue fever will breed. When we are talking about adaptation measures to deal with these impacts of climate change we may have to do some very simple things. One of them would be early warning systems that are far more effective.

This year, there was a terrible cyclone which hit Orissa, but the government handled that extremely well because they had early warning and they took early action to see that people were moved to positions of safety. If, let us say, we are going to have reduction in availability of water then we necessarily have to use water resources far more efficiently than we have been doing in the past and perhaps intensify the effort that fortunately this state government has taken in water harvesting, because we will have to collect every single drop and make the best use of it. There are other parts of the world even in southern Europe and Africa where water scarcity and water stress is going to be a serious problem in the future.

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We have found that extreme events are also on the increase as a result of climate change, and these will become much worse in the future. For instance, heat waves are on the increase. And those heat waves which currently take place once in twenty years, if we do nothing about climate change, then by the end of this century will occur once in two years. Similarly, extreme precipitation events are on the increase. Therefore, in several parts of the world much of the rainfall will dramatically increase. Even in cases where the average rainfall reduces, we would find that most of it will occur in the nature of heavy downpours, which create their own problems and threats.

Some of these extreme events can also have very serious economic impacts. Estimates of annual losses from various disaster events have ranged since 1980 to 2010 from a few billion dollars to above 200 billion, with the highest value in 2005 as the result of Hurricane Katrina, which hit the city of New Orleans and surrounding areas. These loss estimates do not include many impacts, such as loss of human lives, cultural heritage, and ecosystem services, which are difficult to value and monetize, and thus they are poorly reflected in monetary estimates of losses.

There is a high probability that droughts will intensify in the 21st century in some seasons and areas due to reduced precipitation and increased evapotranspiration. This is depressing news. What should we do about it?

The good news is that there are enormous opportunities by which we can

move towards the sustainable use of energy. That is, we now use fossil fuel-based energy far more efficiently than we have been doing in the past, moving towards greater use of renewable sources of energy. In fact, the International Protocol for Climate Change brought out a Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation, in which we found that in a number of applications renewable energy is already economically viable. For example, my institute has launched the programme of 'Lighting a Billion Lives'. This is essentially in response to the reality that 1.3 billion people worldwide have no access to electricity and possibly over a period of three generations they will not get electricity. Even if they get a connection, the reliability of power supply will be extremely poor.

Thus we have launched a programme which has now covered over 3,000 villages in this country and other parts of the world, particularly in Africa. What we do, for instance, is to train a woman in a village to install a solar panel on the roof, she charges solar lanterns which we have designed, which are very efficient, light weight, low cost, using LED. They also have a plug-in arrangement whereby they can charge cell phones, mobile phones, and so on. They rent out the lanterns at night, get them back the following morning, and the whole cycle repeats itself. This has transformed the lives of people who otherwise would be using kerosene lamps or candles.

Technology, if it is properly implemented and through the right kinds of

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institutional arrangements, can give us opportunities by which we may bring about a solution to this serious problem. We are also developing micro grids. In other words, we have a small little grid in a village and we supply power from a solar power panel, and this is something where an entrepreneur gets involved. Let us say he invests Rs.80,000 to supply a small amount of power to 20 households. Each household pays about Rs.5 a day for this service totalling Rs.3,000 a month, i.e., Rs.36,000 a year. Therefore, the Rs.80,000 investment can be paid back in less than 2½ years. So there are opportunities to bring about substantial improvement in the use of energy through higher energy efficiency and greater use of renewable energy sources. These are opportunities we need to exploit.

To reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases we also find a number of so-called co-benefits; because if we reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, it will improve the local environment. Thus air pollution will be reduced and energy supply improved. Rural areas will have access to electricity from renewable sources which they otherwise would not have had. What we really need to do is think out of the box. We do not necessarily have to repeat what

the rest of the world has done. Their circumstances and conditions were very different. Ours have been distinctly different from theirs, and still are. We have to think in terms of what suits our situation.

Gandhiji was once asked by a journalist, 'Wouldn't you want India to become as prosperous as Britain?' His answer was 'It took Britain to use half the resources of this planet to reach its level of prosperity. How many planets would a country like India require?'

We really need to think in terms of what suits a country of 1.2 billion people. Does it require that we follow exactly the same pattern of development that the rest of the world has established? Or can we use our collective wisdom, our traditions and values, and the opportunities that modern technology gives us by which we can strike out a distinctly different path? In the 21st century it is the power of performance that is going to make a difference. If we perform well then the rest of the world will follow us. There is no reason why India cannot be a leader in this movement to reach a totally sustainable pattern of development. As Mahatma Gandhi believed in and articulated several times, we need to 'Be the change you want to see in the world.' ✧

Only two kinds of people can attain self-knowledge: those who are not encumbered at all with learning, that is to say, whose minds are not over-crowded with thoughts borrowed from others; and those who, after studying all the scriptures and sciences, have come to realize that they know nothing.

Sayings of Ramakrishna

The Cosmic Weft

PRADEEP TALWALKER

SCIENCE tells us that all matter in the universe is held together by gravitation. The smallest of particles attract *all* other matter, their range of attraction is infinite. The pull exerted by the tiniest bit reaches the other end of the universe. There is no repulsion in this force, as in electromagnetism, only attraction. Nothing whatever can neutralize or control this force, science admits. What gravitation *is*, however, has not been figured out by science. Science could only measure and describe it. Any number of theories, concepts, models, constructs, hypotheses, could not satisfactorily tell the cause or mechanism of gravitation. All we can say is 'He willed it so'. He has everything interconnected.

But this pull acts only on matter: the *physical* universe. Gravitation takes no cognizance of things imponderable: desire, mind, health, intellect, and such. On these levels 'Love' does the job. Although physical sciences are not aware of Love, psychology has inklings of it. The importance of a loving attitude is well-acknowledged. Treatment coupled with 'tender, loving care (TLC)' can be far more beneficial than just medicines. The 'magic' of unselfish loving prayer has also been

proved. We all have heard of prayer-groups functioning in the USA and elsewhere. The groups go to hospitals and pray for patients. Comatose patients are not even aware but the Thought works — even on skeptics. Love is good for both sides: the person being loved, *and* the person who loves.

Love strings everything together through Unity. This Love is not of the *love-hate* duality (which is but one of Maya's 'pairs of opposites'). It is an unconditional Divine attribute. The love of the love-hate kind is only in the name — in reality it is just another face of self-centredness: a sentiment extended only to near-and-dear ones. Real Love has the entire Creation at its heart. The Love one would have for one's child would also be there for a beggar, a criminal, a mangy or rabid dog. Love-hate duality is like the attraction-repulsion of electromagnetism. Real Love, like gravitation, exerts only limitless attraction. Gravitation is in proportion to mass: in Love, the power depends on the depth of feeling. Unlike gravitation, Love is not limited by the 'inverse square law' — it can be transmitted in its original intensity over unspecified distances. It will have its effect anywhere in the world.

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We know that Theosophy is the ultimate science of all sciences. What psychology is *now* learning about Love, Theosophy has always known, that and much more. The Healing Ritual we perform in our Lodges is much older than prayer-groups. This of course is not to play down the importance of prayer-groups or TLC; all these are strides in the same direction. Prayers are as old as humanity. We are talking here of recognition by medical science.

Love is a potent active force. Theosophy tells us that the Mahatmas engage themselves in projecting Love all over the world. They want able helpers. We want to be conduits of their Love. It is a unique opportunity of serving the world from the comfort of home. But, we must maximize our conductance and quality. If a pipe is clogged, water cannot flow properly; if it is soiled, water will be dirtied; a narrow pipe cannot convey enough water. In the same manner, to be a good conductor of Love, the heart must be broad, free of defilements. Self-doubt, half-heartedness, anxiety, agitation, fear, will not do.

Fortunately, as conductors our class is far higher than pipes. A pipe does not have its own water supply: it only carries water from a tank. But even as we conduct Love, a ready reservoir — an unfathomable lake of Love fills up in our heart. This treasure does not run out by spending, it increases. In the bargain, our own mind is rendered peaceful and is cleansed; life becomes easy, healthy, joyful. A powerful aura of Love builds around us. No negative force can come near. A sphere of Love is created wherever we go. Small and big

deeds simply get done through us *without* our effort. *With* our effort, the success is wondrous. Our own progress is faster when we forget ourselves, and work for others. Higher Powers take exquisite care of us when we need — without even being invoked. We can *feel* it. We have not a worry in the world!

The Love or hate we give to others is multiplied and given back to us. If we plant mangoes, we get an orchard of mangoes; if we plant poison weed, we get a field full of *that*. We must decide what we want to harvest. Any person in his right mind will not find the decision hard. But a decision merely in principle is of no use; it has to be put into practice. We have to put in unceasing effort to keep sowing the good seed and shunning the bad one. Unaffected cheerfulness is of the essence. A depressed man unwittingly spreads depression. He may not himself be doing a bad deed, but his gloom spreads like smoke and robs cheer from others. Masters have warned us. This must not happen. We must be constantly aware of our blessings. Gratitude gives durable joy and Love for everyone. As a *contagion* starts an epidemic, so does radiant, infectious Love instill joy and enthusiasm in everyone around. If we become zealous soldiers of Love, we are bound to form an army of Love around us. We can thus organize our effort.

The effect of organized effort will be far greater than scattered individual endeavour. It will wipe out negative thoughts. Negativities like insults, jealousy, greed, bigotry, and vanity have caused most

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wars. The classics as well as history are full of it. Had Shoorpanakhā not been mauled and insulted, the war between Rāma and Rāvana (and other tragedies in the *Rāmāyana*) would have been averted. Had Duryodhana not been ridiculed in the Mayasabhā, the chain of events leading to the *Mahābhārat* war would have been nipped in the bud. Had vanity not been raised in Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite, there would have been no Trojan War.

These are old epics. But even looking at recent history, what do we see? Germany, jealous of the British and Dutch empires, started off World War I. And the Treaty of Versailles at the end of WWI heaped such outrageous terms on Germany that the seeds of WWII were already sown. Hundreds of thousands of families were shattered in just two wars. Millions of innocent persons lost their lives. *Why?* What did *any* nation gain from these wars? More recently, the Western nations waged one-sided wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, wantonly leading to collapse of the two societies. What did *anyone* gain in the whole sequence? Not fought overtly any longer for capturing territories, there are no victors in modern major wars — only losses and bereavements on *both* sides.

Had there been no paucity of Love and joy in the world community, no war would ever have been fought. We would have had egalitarian, just, and healthy societies; taking care, not advantage, of the weak. There would not have been any wicked person around, peace would have reigned. Jesus would not have had to commit his supreme sacrifice.

Of course, this too is just another day-dream. The egos recently evolved from the animal kingdom into the human kingdom *are* going to display remnant brutish tendencies in many earlier human incarnations. Gradually, very gradually, as an ego begins to feel more poignantly the need to improve the quality of life, it will evolve into a better and better person. This is inevitable — all a part of the training an ego has to undergo before reuniting with the Source. Even the Masters had to go through it. If we feel we are ahead in the ‘curriculum’, it is our job to help those in the lower grades to come up.

This evolution can only be realized with our unconditional Love and mutual dignity — not by oral didactics. We would carry out the responsibility only if our hearts are filled with pools of Love. To strive for such a pool, driving out hatred and other negativities, making room for Love, is part of *our own* curriculum.

Our attention will have to be turned outward. The self-centred attitude steeped in us over the ages (the source of all our woes) will have to be made global, cosmic. This cannot be done with a magic wand. A proven way is to help others: such as getting into social work — although reluctantly at the start. All may not have the ability to notice needs and launch new projects, but it is always possible to join an ongoing project and lend a hand. As our awareness goes up, as we notice the wants of society, new projects will come up in our minds, too. Soon we will be engrossed. Love will start filling up. Our personal woes will vanish. If our personal

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sorrows are seen in the context of society as a whole, we realize that we have been making mountains out of molehills. There are many, many, less fortunate ones who need *our* help. We become empathetic and discern a common thread: a rivulet, a Divine Stream, passing through *all* beings. We are fused with the universe

before we know it. We lose individuality, and become cosmic. Sweet fruition of a long journey!

Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno — One for all, all for one — was the motto given by Alexandre Dumas to the Three Musketeers. So, too, is it the Motto of the Cosmos. ✧

The multiplicity of religious beliefs would be an advantage, not an injury, to religion, if the religions were a brotherhood instead of a battlefield. For each religion has some peculiarity of its own, something to give to the world which the others cannot give. Each religion speaks one letter of the great Name of God, the One without a second, and that Name will only be spoken when every religion sounds out the letter given it to voice, in melodious harmony with the rest. God is so great, so illimitable, that no one brain of man however great, no one religion, however perfect, can express his infinite perfection. It needs a universe in its totality to mirror him, nay, countless universes cannot exhaust him.

Annie Besant,
The Brotherhood of Religions

Let Us not Settle Down

DOROTHY JINARĀJADĀSA

ON a very still day in mid-ocean the sea lies flat and shining all round the ship — no movement on its surface — with the appearance of having been oiled, calm peace and hypnotic rest over the waters which reflect every gorgeous colour of the clouds above and the lines of the ships sailing over it. But beneath this coloured, placid, smooth surface, extends down and down the depths of the ocean, full of life and death, seething activity, potential power. And only the whisper of a breeze is needed to skim over the surface of the ocean and all the calm, reflecting placidity is gone and life is stirred, movement ripples from horizon to horizon, activity and power are manifest above and below.

This picture to a certain extent represents the Theosophical Society today, and by the Theosophical Society I do not mean so much an organization as the great corporate body of individuals that make up the Society. For is it not true of very many of us it may be said that we have been as a placid glassy ocean surface, reflecting without knowledge what we have been told, getting our thinking done for us, our beliefs, our doctrines, our ideas,

our expression from above, from those, maybe, with much more wisdom than ourselves, but it is *their* wisdom, not our wisdom, *their* revelation not our revelation, *their* statement of an idea, *their* seeing of a vision, and it is not *ours* until we ourselves make it so, when from our own intuition, our own centre of Truth and Reality we can affirm. This I know to be true. But now over the surface of our secure, reflecting soul, life is blowing the wind from heaven.

Krishnaji and his teachings have come to the Theosophical Society as a breeze, gently at first, then the force, the power of his message growing and swelling and rushing over our placid surface calm. Our reflected clouds are broken up, our dreams disturbed, our ship of security is tossing on the waves. The wind has made us wise, blowing over our souls.

In these days of heart-searching, many are seeking for Truth and Light and ask:

What is Theosophy? What is the work of the Theosophical Society?

With spaciousness we answer that Theosophy is God's Wisdom, and the

Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, April 1929. The author was the wife of C. Jinarājādāsa, the fourth international President of the TS.

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work of the Theosophical Society is to give to the world the knowledge of that Wisdom. Theosophists are seekers of the Truth, and Theosophy the great universe for the search. The Theosophical Society is for exploration, but not for settlement. Always the quest is our work. When a Theosophist finds a new mountain peak, or discovers an electron, or a parasite on a moss, a new god or a spiritual value, the discovery is a gift to the world, to be used or rejected as it is found helpful or otherwise. But the Theosophist and the Theosophical Society go on exploring, wondering, seeking, knowing that the whole of Truth can never be found, that the end of the way is far ahead; but continual search and inquiry reveal the ever growing and increasing splendour of the conscious knowledge of Life giving joy, hope, and peace to the seeker.

When the Theosophical Society ceases to carry out its dharma of exploration then (to my mind) it fails in carrying out the object for which it was started. Colonel Olcott once said in speaking of the Theosophical Society:

Its object is to enquire, not to teach . . . Theology meant the revealed knowledge of God, and Theosophy the direct knowledge of God. The one asked us to believe what someone else had seen and heard, and the other told us to see and hear what we can for ourselves.

But of late it has happened that when some aspect of Truth is unveiled and offered with rejoicing to the world, many Theosophists, instead of going on, have

settled themselves down, built up their huts, their creeds, their dogmas, their temples or churches, made their standards of belief the criterion in judging belief in others as true or false. They have ceased to explore, they have settled.

And it has happened that the seeker after Truth has come to the Theosophical Lodge to find the Wisdom, and it is offered to him wrapped up in a creed, free, enlightened and refreshed, but nevertheless a creed, surrounded by traditions from which with heart-searching, and probably pain of mind, he has torn himself away. Creeds, churches, temples are good and even necessary for the helping of humanity along the hard road, even dogmas and traditions may have a hoary usefulness for many; but the work of the Theosophical Society is not about these things. Its work is to bring light to the soul that is casting off the fetters of orthodoxy and theology, that is seeking for freedom, a Light that will illumine the long path that leads to Life, not as a little torchlight flickering here and there, but as a great beam that floods with radiance the vast field for the search.

Each Theosophical Lodge should be a place where every person with a big idea comes, knowing that he will be received there with sympathy and understanding, though not necessarily with agreement for his ideas.

Probably no restatement of the objects or principles of the Theosophical Society is needed, but only a renewal of the determination of every member to really apply to his or her personal life, and to

Let Us not Settle Down

carry into the life of the Lodge, the fine statement regarding what Theosophy is and the Freedom of Thought which appears each month in the last part of *The Theosophist* magazine [now on the back of the front cover]. There the purpose of the TS is summed up as teaching man 'to know the Spirit as himself'. And the summing up of Krishnaji's teaching to the world is:

Because I am Life, I would urge you to worship that Life, not in this form which is Krishnamurti but the Life which dwells in each one of you.

To lead humanity to this glorious realization is the happy privilege of the Theosophical Society; and the members of the Society, as once said the Master KH, are to be: 'Warriors of the one divine Verity.' ✧

Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached 'reality'; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya [illusion].

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

Fragments of the Ageless Wisdom

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

William Butler Yeats

Integrity and Moral Values

KALPANA H. RAWAL

ON the surface, ‘integrity’ and ‘moral values’ seem to overlap, but there is a subtle difference between the two philosophically as well as realistically, since time immemorial the concept, practices, and retribution on non-obedience of moral values have been a central part of the religious, social, and personal spheres of our life.

The modern world, which tries to blend the philosophical, moral, and scientific domains, seems to be in a confused state, devoid of focused direction on our existence and attitudes. Further, political and social ideals take us farther from the clear picture of our innate existence. Our values are changing so fast that it is difficult to grasp their interrelation with our mundane life and how to imbibe the same. Sometimes I feel that we are on our own to find out where and how we are; and where and how we should go forward. Enough said of our woes. We as theosophists should not be deterred with those challenges and cannot afford to get marooned in this vast ocean of our mortal life.

Moral values are regarded as the highest attributes among all natural values. That

is why goodness, purity, truthfulness, reverence, humility, and unselfishness rank higher in ethical terms than attributes like genius, vitality, competence, efficiency, and so on. This is not a complete or exclusive list. What is realized or shown in an act of real forgiveness, in a noble and generous renunciation, in unconditional love, in an open acceptance of all beings as they are, is regarded as more noble, important, and interminable than all other cultural values. Socrates and Plato have repeatedly stated that it is better to suffer injustice than to commit it. As the definition of ‘justice’ as propounded in Plato’s *Republic* is quite intricate, we may not elaborate on it in this session.

These moral values are not inherited, as are our physical beauty or characteristics. They need to be consciously internalized. We need to be fully aware of their importance, in the inevitable necessity of those values in our life, with a clear and fresh vision in the light of a higher dimension derived from causal or astral planes, or inner consciousness.

Let us take an example: two men are witnesses of an injustice being inflicted

Hon. Lady Justice Kalpana H. Rawal is Deputy Chief Justice, Vice-President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, and a trustee of the Nairobi TS Lodge.

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upon a third person. The one who in every situation asks only whether something is agreeable to himself or not, will not be concerned about it because he calculates that no personal damage to himself can result from the other's injury. The second man, on the contrary, is willing to take suffering upon himself rather than remain disinterested in the injustice which is about to be done to the third party. For the second man, the preponderant question is not whether something is agreeable to him or not, but whether it is important in itself. The latter behaves morally well, the first, selfishly, because he indifferently bypasses the question of values.

Only he who understands that there exist things 'important in themselves', which are beautiful and good in themselves, only he who grasps the sublime demand of values, their call, the duty to turn towards them, and to let himself be formed by their law, is capable of personally realizing moral values. Only he who can see beyond his subjective horizon and who, free from pride, and concupiscence, does not always ask, 'what is satisfying for me?', but leaving behind all narrow and selfish notions, surrenders himself to that which is important in itself — the beautiful, the good — and subordinates to them totally, only he can become the bearer of moral values.

Moral values are 'important in themselves' such as reverence to all, unconditional love, kindness, purity, truthfulness, loyalty, honesty, steadfastness, regard for Nature, awareness of responsibility to oneself and society in general, and so on. The lack of the above values results in

selfishness, total disregard for the rights and feelings of others, self-centredness, and a misconceived concept of freedom. This is the position mostly prevalent in the modern world. The misunderstanding or misapprehension (maybe knowingly) of the freedom of expression, freedom to live one's life as one deems fit, and for oneself only, are the reasons for the misery in the modern world.

Rights without awareness of their corresponding obligations are overemphasized and misused without hesitation. The propensity for the use of alcohol and drugs, self-centredness, moral despondency, and depravity are the reasons for a false notion of so-called liberty and freedom. We are being driven, by pseudo liberals and intellectuals, towards an existence which is so fragile, disjointed, and meaningless that to describe it as 'life' is insulting to the real meaning of life.

Lord Krishna ordained in the holy *Bhagavadgitā*, chapter 18, verse 32: 'That which is enveloped in darkness takes what is not the true law and upholds it as the law and sees all things in a cloud of misconceptions, that understanding, O Partha, is Tamasic.'

I am reminded of a quote from Harper Lee, the author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She writes, 'they are entitled to full respect for their opinions . . . but before I can live with other folks, I have got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience.'

How we live our life is our own choice. God has given us the gift of thinking and of choice. Think and choose for yourself

Integrity and Moral Values

— whether to be a real human being or one who eats, drinks, works for himself, and dies also by himself. To quote Marcus Aurelius (*Meditations*): ‘Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one.’

This leads us to some thoughts on ‘integrity’, which comes from the Latin adjective *integru*, meaning whole/complete. It manifests after one has grasped or actualized the concept of moral values. One is said to be a person with integrity when he has acquired and is living his life according to the values, beliefs, and principles he claims to hold.

We can hear what Marcus Aurelius said in *Meditations*: If it is not right, do not do it; if it is not true, do not say it. To be able to know what is not right or not true one needs to have moral values inculcated in him. Then one can become a person of integrity to do what is right and to say what is true. This person is then expected to base his actions on an internalized and consistent framework of principles, and everything he does is always solidly founded on his core group of values.

A person with integrity does what is morally right, and is content simply with what he has and what he is. Integrity is nothing more or less than living a good life in its wholeness; without comparison or competition, as Lao Tzu reminds us. It does not matter whether your right deeds are known to others or not. Nothing is more sacrosanct than the integrity of our own mind. Then the flippant success and failure of life shall not matter. As Abraham

Lincoln said, ‘I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have.’

In the modern era, the concept of integrity is applied also to science, law, business, and so on. Science postulates: ‘Where the results of the test match the expectations of the scientific hypothesis, integrity exists between the cause and effect of the hypothesis by way of its methods and measures. Where the results of the test do not match, the expected causal relationship delineated in the hypothesis does not exist.’

Even in electronics, the signals are said to have integrity when there is no corruption of information between one domain and another. Corrupted information is thus untrustworthy. We cannot underestimate the necessity of integrity in all sectors and stages of life as an individual person, a society, a corporation, and a state.

In law especially, integrity is interwoven with traditions of the adversarial process which assume a given set of substantive and procedural rules that both sides in the dispute will agree to respect. The process further assumes that both sides demonstrate willingness to share evidence, follow guidelines of debate, and accept rulings of the fact-finder arrived at in good faith in an effort to reach an equitable outcome. Whenever these assumptions are found to be incorrect, the adversarial system is rendered inequitable, thus weakening any given case. More importantly, when these assumptions are incorrect and truth is no longer the goal,

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justice is denied to the parties involved, and the overall integrity of the legal system is called into question. When this happens the society served by that system will experience disruption or even chaos in its operations, as the legal system will be unable to function. This is a serious jurisprudential issue, as it is always expected that the law must comply with moral values.

In short, integrity should rightly become a common thread in all stages of our life, society, governance, and the world. I shall rest with a quote from Martin Luther King Jr: 'Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness.' These are poignant words, affecting all of us and our governance. ✧

The fundamental problem, I believe, is that at every level we are giving too much attention to the external material aspects of life while neglecting moral ethics and inner values. By inner values I mean the qualities that we all appreciate in others, and towards which we all have a natural instinct, bequeathed by our biological nature as animals that survive and thrive only in an environment of concern, affection, and warmheartedness, or, in a single word, compassion.

Dalai Lama

THE 139TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The 139th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, from 26 to 31 December 2014.

All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. *Non-members may attend by obtaining permission from the President. Requests for such permission, together with a recommendation from an officer of the Federation, should be sent to the Convention Officer before 15 November 2014.*

| REGISTRATION FEES | <i>India</i> | <i>Other Countries</i> |
|----------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Members | 100 | US\$ 70 * |
| Members under 21 | 40 | ... |
| Non-members | 200 | ... |
| Non-members under 21 | 150 | ... |

ACCOMMODATION CHARGES (SHARING)

(From 24 December 2014
to 1 January 2015 inclusive)

| | <i>India (Members)</i> | <i>India (Non-members)</i> | <i>Other Countries (Members)</i> |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Accommodation with mat | Rs 100 | 200 | ... |
| Accommodation with cot | 200 | 450 | ... |
| Leadbeater Chambers (including service, furniture, and bedding, but no blankets) | 3,500 | 6,500 | US\$ 150 * |

(Half rates will be charged for children under ten. No charge for children under three.)

* (or Euro or Pound Sterling equivalent)

ACCOMMODATION

Factors considered in allocating accommodation are active membership, health, age, priority of registration, size of family, etc. Rooms and bathrooms cannot be made available for anyone's exclusive use. Non-members and young persons should be prepared to stay in dormitories. No special facilities can be provided for members who are ill or for women with babies. Mosquito nets and bedding will not be available. No kitchens are available. Ordinary medical attention will be available for minor complaints but there will be no provision for serious or infectious illness. Such cases will have to be shifted from the compound.

Accommodation is available for delegates from 24 December 2014 to 1 January 2015, both days inclusive, but can be guaranteed only to those whose registration and accommodation payments are received *before* 1 December 2014. Delegates from India requiring accommodation should send *both the registration and accommodation charges together, but not before 1 September 2014.*

Please note that in the event of cancellation there will be no refund of registration fees, but other charges will be refunded if application is received before **10 December 2014.**

All communications and remittances should be addressed to the *Convention Officer, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020.* Remittance by bank drafts, duly crossed, should be made *payable to the Treasurer, The Theosophical Society, but sent to the Convention Officer.* Money Orders should be sent only to the Convention Officer. No cheques other than those drawn in Chennai will be accepted. Please provide your details in the Convention form.

International Secretary

Theosophical Work around the World

Mexico

The Summer School of The Wisdom of the Theosophical Society in Mexico took place from 3 to 6 July 2014 at their National Headquarters in Mexico City, held by Mr Mahendra P. Singhal, former international Vice-President. Based on the theme 'Theosophical Life: Challenges and Choices', Mr Singhal talked about 'Life and Divine Wisdom', 'Human Regeneration', 'Reverence for Life', 'Theosophy as the Future Religion of Humanity', 'Service — Great Joy', and 'Challenges and Choices'. The translators were Lissette Arroyo, Maria Mengelt, and Doris Buomberger.

Everyone had the opportunity to ask questions, comment, and share experiences with Mr Singhal and also with his wife, Shashi. There was an atmosphere of happiness and harmony among the participants.

After the School Programme was over, those gathered went to the city of Puebla to visit the two TS Lodges, 'Alfa' and 'HPB'. Mr Singhal gave a talk in Puebla for TS members, and all had a very nice dinner with delicious vegetarian food prepared especially for Mr and Mrs Singhal. In both theosophical events Mrs Lissette Arroyo, the National President, and Mr Singhal gave four diplomas to new members (two in Mexico City and two in Puebla) and a Certificate to a new six-member study centre established south

of the City of Mexico. In between these theosophical events, the two guests had the opportunity to visit the pyramids of Teotihuacan and Cholula, the Museum of Anthropology, and the historic centres in Mexico City and Puebla, accompanied by some members who helped to guide them. The National President, expresses her gratitude, and that of the participants, to Mr and Mrs Singhal, the international authorities, and those who helped make their visit possible.

Ukraine

Ms Svitlana Gavrylenko, Organizing Secretary of the TS in Ukraine, reports that their Summer School took place from 21 to 28 June 2014. It was their third summer program, this time taking place in the picturesque countryside around the city of Vinnytsia. The theme, defined last year during their previous Summer School, was 'The Creative Power of the Universe', based on which Lodges and study centres presented their contributions. Because of the special circumstances in their country, the number of participants decreased this year, but 26 members still took part, representing most of the working groups. Almost all present participated actively through well-prepared lectures, round-table discussions, and practical training sessions, affectionately and generously sharing with those gathered their knowledge, abilities, and talents.



Members of the TS in Ukraine during their June Summer School in the countryside of Vinnytsia



The international President, Mr Tim Boyd, and his wife, Lily, (centre of first row, standing) with the July Gathering of the Annual National Convention of the TS in America, at their national centre in Wheaton, Illinois

Theosophical Work around the World

The Summer School started early with meditation, followed by chi kung gymnastics, breakfast, and the morning session. During the one-week programme Ms Olena Shcherbina masterfully executed classical music fragments and Ms Tetyana Yegorova assisted participants with the pleasurable study and execution of 'Dances of Universal Peace'. In addition, interested persons had the option of testing the curative influence of bees, enjoying the nearby lake, collecting healing grasses, and visiting the singing fountains in Vinnytsia in the evening. All in all, it was an unforgettable experience of a school as a practical embodiment of the idea of Brotherhood and mutual understanding.

USA

The TS in America held its 128th Annual National Convention from 18 to 22 July 2014 at Olcott, their national centre,

in Wheaton, Illinois. The theme, 'Science and the Experience of Consciousness', drew over 150 members who heard Drs Eben Alexander, Amit Goswami, Dean Radin, and Russell Targ speak on the near-death experience, psychic abilities, and recent scientific experiments in the fields of ESP and para-psychology. Other presenters included Dr Uma Krishnamurthy, who spoke on 'The Psychology of Personal Growth and Transformation', and Mr Vic Hao Chin, who spoke on 'The Power of Awareness'. As part of the convention, Dr Alexander, who is a world-famous author, gave a public program at the local College of DuPage where over 400 people heard the fascinating story about his near-death experience and how it changed his world-view. All the programs were webcast live so that those who were not able to attend the Convention could still watch the programs online. ✧

Our success as a Society working in the world should be measured by the extent to which we have been able to affect minds and hearts, and to bring about changes which allow a better world order to be gradually ushered in.

I. K. Taimni

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▲ Lodge attached to Adyar

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