



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 Challenge of Life

RADHA BURNIER

AFACT which we all have to face is that life presents us with a challenge at every level. At the non-human level of animals and birds, insects and fish, the challenge is that of simple survival. The challenge exists individually as well as collectively. For the individual, the problem is that of prolonging his life as long as possible. Collectively, it is to perpetuate the species to which the individual belongs and to compete successfully with other forms of life.

A vast design is being worked out by the forces of nature through the evolutionary process, in which the challenge met by the individual plays its part; there is growth towards perfection on all levels of life. This design — this drama — is accomplished through countless ages, through what in India is called *sarga* and *pralaya* — the vast cycles of existence which are like the night and day of Brahmā. As the individual faces his challenge and lives through his particular period of time, and as the species works out its destiny upon earth, consciousness breaks through matter. It blossoms through experience and reveals itself in many different ways. It manifests itself in greater and greater measure in the evolving forms of life; it displays new and extraordinary powers; there is a growth in sensitivity through the

development of the brain and of the nervous system.

The whole process is that of consciousness revealing itself through, and obtaining mastery over, matter. At the non-human stages of life, meaning is to be found in the process itself. There may be a struggle to find nourishment and to survive but there is no desperate striving for fulfilment. There may be pain but there is no sorrow or despair and no inward misery because of failure to find a meaning in life. Life itself is its own fulfilment. It has its own meaning and joy, and at this stage, to be is enough. No animal, bird or fish has to seek entertainment or create amusements for itself as man does. Having met the challenge of survival, every creature at the non-human stage is not only content but full of vitality and the joy of life, relaxed and at peace with itself.

In the process of meeting the challenge of physical survival, various physical powers are developed. So there is the marvel of great speed in the cheetah, the strength of the elephant and the agility of the monkey. And in the collective consciousness of the animal are built up non-physical qualities such as ingenuity and intelligence. The individual animal may not be very intelligent, but there is

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an intelligence in the species itself which teaches it what is necessary for its own existence. Hence, the tailor-bird knows how to stitch its nest and migrant birds find their way through the vast unmapped regions of the sky.

At the human level, the challenge of life is met in quite a different way — by the development of the powers of the mind, not merely in the collective consciousness but in the individual. By using these powers, which include all the processes of rational thought — the capacity to make inferences, to relate facts and to draw conclusions based on those facts — man mastered his own environment and made possible his conquest of all other species. Every other form of life is at his mercy; the environment is also partly shaped by him and made to suit his convenience and minister to his comfort.

When faced with the power of mind, the might of the animal world proves inadequate, leaving man in a position to exterminate every other creature upon the earth. Many animal species have died out because man has destroyed them and their environment. He changes the course of rivers, he levels and raises mountains, he modifies his surroundings to suit himself. Now man, having vanquished all his enemies and conquered nature faces a new challenge to himself.

The craving for variety

The mind of man has given an extended meaning to physical survival and has enlarged the meaning of basic necessities such as food and shelter. Man is not

satisfied with merely feeding his body; he has lost the instinct which enables the animal to know what and how much it should eat. Food has become a great problem and a vast industry. Man no longer finds satisfaction in a few foods that are good for him; he craves endless variety. He builds restaurants and hotels and to prepare and present the various dishes he has invented, he needs different kinds of gadgets and all shapes and sizes of vessels. The manufacturing industries, which have to produce these, give rise to vast organizations dealing with advertising and publicity. There ensues intense competition and the evils that go with it.

Similarly, while a dwelling is needed for the purpose of individual and collective survival, man is not satisfied with simply sheltering his body. He imagines that he needs to occupy a vast area — perhaps a palace with a hundred rooms — and he collects objects with which to fill it. He designs various types of furniture and spends large sums on interior decoration.

Clothing, too, is necessary for the body but man has created a huge sphere of activity in order to have textiles and materials; he has invented fashion and devised ornaments. Great organizations — industries, markets, banks, means of communication — have emerged like cancerous outgrowths from the simple needs of the body. Man lives in his own complications and is isolated, lost and frustrated among the objects and organizations that he himself has created.

Man is no longer concerned with the mere perpetuation of the species; sex and

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food have developed into 'pleasurable experiences'. Pleasure has become an idea — a thought in the mind. And because it is an idea, Man has created various forms of pleasures and, once again, great industries to provide them, including cinemas, night-clubs and magazines.

In the process of searching for pleasure, of devising amusements and entertainments, there is an absence of joy, because it is in inner restfulness that joy really exists. So when the mind is anxious to find pleasure, when it grows tense in its search, it misses the joy which can be found in a simple life. The growth of human needs is the primary source of conflict in the world, because these needs (which were primarily those of food, shelter and sex) have now become ideas in the mind and hence the basis for tension and conflict. At the national level, this had led to great world wars, to the movement of populations and to the cruelty and misery that we have witnessed for decades and centuries. In personal life, who has not known of the pain caused by a brother and sister who quarrel, by friends who fall out, by husband and wife who feel isolated from each other?

Therefore the Buddha taught that man must come to understand that birth is pain for man; that death is pain; that living also is pain. Everything becomes a source of pain. And in the present conditions, created by the mind of man, there seems to be no solution to the suffering.

Desires lead to conflict

This is the situation that mankind has

'created for itself. It has eliminated nearly all the former sources of danger, but it has, created new and terrible ones which it is unable to control because it is impelled by the animal instinct for survival. The desire for survival has itself now become a source of danger. Therefore, since whatever it does is a source of danger, we may assume that the mind of man has reached the end of the road and can proceed no further. Before the challenge which is presented to it in the present-day world, it has become as impotent and obsolete as brute strength when mind developed.

The present situation presents us with a new stage in which the intellect appears to have become helpless in the face of powerful challenges. And in this situation there are few people who ask what other powers life holds within itself. Is there only the power of the mind, or is life, in this vast process, revealing other powers heretofore neglected? Because the mind of man has been so enamoured of itself that it has believed in its own invincibility, it has rarely faced this question seriously. There have, of course, been a few exceptional individuals who have examined life in greater depth in order to discover whether the reasoning mind is all that it has to show as the culmination of aeons of evolution. And if the mind is to discover what life has to reveal further, it has also to examine the question of whether the challenge before it is really one of survival at all.

Man has acquired his 'survival reflex' from his past and has not yet succeeded in freeing himself from its imaginary compulsions. But life is urging him to seek

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for new powers of consciousness which as yet lie hidden within and which will, in time, assume the leading role just as the mind itself came to triumph over mere physical force.

In the *Bhagavadgītā*, Arjuna is faced with a distressing dilemma — he has to choose whether to fight or to withdraw. It seems to him an impossible situation because he feels that whatever he decides to do will be wrong. On the one hand there are his teachers, his elders, those whom he loves and with whom he is now called upon to battle. On the other hand there is loyalty to his brother and the need to do what is right. And floundering in the necessity of choosing, he falls into despair.

The truth of sorrow

This is perhaps the situation of all of us today. We are faced with a crisis which is forcing us to ask what is the true purpose of living — whether that purpose is mere survival or whether it is something radically different. We are all like reluctant students; unwilling to enquire into life too closely, we examine its crucial questions only when faced with a crisis. Even then, the impact of the shock is soon lost and we too often resign ourselves to a thoughtless wandering down the path of least resistance.

The Lord Buddha said that the first truth Man has to recognize is the truth of sorrow. If Man begins to examine life seriously and study how best to conduct himself it may be that he will not have to meet sorrows and crises. But because, individually, he has ignored the lessons

of nature and nature's laws, mankind as a whole has been driven to the point of crisis before which his mind stands helpless. It requires great sensitivity to discover life's meaning. Man must acquire an entirely different perception which he does not have at present and which he cannot have as long as his mind is consciously or unconsciously concerned with mere survival. Surely the point has been reached where a right-about turn must be made! It is time for Man to set himself firmly on the Nivritti Mārga, renounce the primitive will to survive and, as Madame Blavatsky puts it, learn a new alphabet in the lap of Mother Nature. In order to learn this new alphabet, he must set aside the earlier knowledge with which he began.

Illusion and reality

Vedānta literature teaches of the different levels of reality perceived by consciousness. It is only when one has passed totally from one dimension of reality that it is possible to become aware of a greater one. As long as the mind of Man is concerned solely with survival and its extended meaning he is living in an illusion.

In the well-known Vedānta teaching the coiled rope is a rope to the clear-sighted and a snake to others. Their reactions vary according to their level of perception. Those of a timid temperament are frightened and run away. Those of an aggressive nature, looking to destruction rather than escape as the remedy, go boldly forward to kill the snake. The latter experience the emotion of violence and the former of fear, but both these forms

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of reaction arise from the same basic error in perception. For those who see clearly and who know the object to be no snake but merely a rope, both these forms of action are impossible. Thus, actions which were previously indulged in become meaningless when there is a new perception.

When a man recognizes that he need be concerned no more with a false conception of survival, he discovers a new mode of action and a new meaning to life. This 'right-about turn' must be radical. There are those who are seeking new values and, at the same time, cling to old modes of action. They search for gurus and try out various meditation-techniques hoping by these means to discover the secret of life. But as long as the forms of action in which they indulge are those arising out of the mind which gives meaning to survival, the truth about life can never be discovered.

If a person is dreaming, he can experience only dream events. When he awakens to a different reality and perceives the facts of waking life the dream has ended. Until the dream ends, he cannot experience the waking state. It is as impossible to experience dream events and waking events at the same time, as it is to be concerned with the illusions connected with the processes of survival and the new understanding that life can offer. In the teachings of Yoga it is asserted that the mind must become totally silent in order to

find new meaning. For the mind to renounce its favourite preoccupations and to become unconcerned with the 'me' and the 'mine' is to end the dream in which we all live. This is the transformation which must take place in the present-day world wherein Man must recognize a universal force working for the good of the many and not for the good of the individual or of the few. The mind of Man has given an exaggerated importance to his personal will which he seeks to impose upon all with whom he comes in contact. But that self-will has to be surrendered to the greater life before its meaning can be understood.

This, then, is the challenge that life offers — that man should consciously learn to understand and to receive its message, as non-human life learns to receive it unconsciously. It has been said that in the vast design which nature is working out, there is a movement from unconscious perfection to conscious imperfection and that from conscious imperfection one has to move forward to conscious perfection. Conscious perfection can come about only when we learn to work in harmony with the design of life itself. Life demands that the mind of man should renounce its own desires, its own impulses, instincts and reflexes, so that a power which is greater can unfold and reveal itself, not in accordance with man's will but in obedience to divine laws and the will of nature. ✧

The first thing to realize is that the desire-nature is not our Self but an instrument fashioned by the Self for its own use; and next, that it is a most valuable instrument, and is merely being badly used.

Annie Besant

The Essence of *The Secret Doctrine*

RICARDO LINDEMANN

IN true philosophy, the essence of a system of thought is contained in its premises, obviously because the rest is corollary or deductions which only make explicit that which is already implicit in the premises. Therefore, the essence of *The Secret Doctrine (SD)*, which is Madam Blavatsky's greatest work, is contained in its major premise, which is the first proposition of the proem:

An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought — in the words of *Māndukya Upanishad*, 'unthinkable and unspeakable.' [Verse 7]¹

It has been compared by Dr Taimni as a number zero which contains all numbers or an Ultimate Principle that 'must be a perfectly harmonious synthesis of all possible opposites and must contain in an integrated form all principles, qualities, etc.'² It seems to be like an Absolute Ocean potentially containing all possibilities and maintaining its horizontal equal level or

an Universal Accountancy in which all summations comes to a great zero.

A very important and practical conclusion derived from that Omnipresent Principle when the Universe comes to manifestation is the Law of Karma, also known as the Law of Cause and Effect or Law 'operating in the realm of human life and bringing about adjustments between an individual and other individuals whom he has affected by his thoughts, emotions and actions.'³ As Dr Taimni also comments: 'this law of compensation is not a law which governs only limited spheres of life or natural phenomena but is universal in its application. And it is universal and inviolable because it is the expression of the fact that a perfectly balanced Ultimate Reality which we refer to as the Absolute lies at the core of manifestation. It is because the universe is rooted in the Absolute and is an expression of the Absolute that compensation rules every sphere of life and Nature.'⁴

Madam Blavatsky adds in sequence important commentaries that identify this Omnipresent Principle with Parabrahman of the Vedantins, as follows: '... there is one absolute Reality which antecedes all

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manifested, conditioned, being . . . Parabrahman (the One Reality, the Absolute) is the field of Absolute Consciousness, *i.e.*, that Essence which is out of all relation to conditioned existence, and of which conscious existence is a conditioned symbol.⁵

From the zero, therefore, comes the one as an infinitesimal point, as Dr Taimni also comments: ‘. . . There must exist eternally an ideal Point in the unmanifest state of Reality from which all kinds of manifestation start . . . So the Space to which reference is made in *The Secret Doctrine* is that aspect of Reality which balances the Point and thus maintains the perfectly undifferentiated condition required in that highest state . . . It is not that the ideal Point *appears* when manifestation is to take place. It exists eternally and simultaneously with the Ultimate Space and is the vehicle of the Nirguna-brahman (Impersonal God⁶), the Reality which comes between the Absolute and the Śiva-Śakti Tattva (Father-Mother in *The Secret Doctrine*⁷) and which corresponds to number 1 in the series of numbers . . .’⁸

Therefore, if all existence is derived from that Omnipresent Principle through the Unity or *laya* Centre, the essential practice of the spiritual life must be a perception of that unity manifested in all life and a harmonious behaviour according to it, as it is implicit in Madam Blavatsky’s main ideas for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*:

(a) The FUNDAMENTAL UNITY OF ALL EXISTENCE;

(b) That THERE IS NO DEAD MATTER;
(c) Man is the MICROCOSM;
(d) Fourth and last basic idea to be held is that expressed in the Great Hermetic Axiom. It really sums up and synthesizes all the others. As is the Inner, so is the Outer; as is the Great, so is the Small; as it is above, so it is below: there is but ONE LIFE AND LAW; and he that worketh it is ONE. Nothing is Inner, nothing is Outer; nothing is GREAT, nothing is Small; nothing is High, nothing is Low, in the Divine Economy. No matter what one takes as study in the SD, one must correlate it with those basic ideas.⁹

The Mahatmas also prefer to give emphasis to their concept of One Life, for example, in the famous letter 88, saying: ‘When we speak of our One Life we also say that it penetrates, nay is the essence of every atom of matter.’¹⁰

Coherently, the Mahatmas could not accept the concept of a God who was not really omnipresent but immaterial and outside the Universe, as Mr Allan Octavian Hume tries to sustain in his ‘Preliminary Chapter on God’¹¹, intended as a preface to a book he was writing on Occult Philosophy. The Mahatma KH said, also in the letter 88: ‘It is evident that a being independent and omnipresent cannot be limited by anything which is outside of himself; that there can be nothing exterior to himself — not even vacuum, then where is there room for matter? . . . We are not Adwaites, but our teaching respecting the one life is identical with that of the Adwaites with regard to

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Parabrahm. . . . Parabrahm is not a God, but absolute immutable law, and Iswar is the effect of Avidyā and Māyā, ignorance based upon the great delusion.¹²

In other words, the spiritual ignorance (Avidyā) or lack of self knowledge, according to the Yoga-Sutras of Patañjali, is the cause of the illusion of the separated self (Asmitā), or creates the illusion of separateness or the illusory perception that Íswara or the Logos is outside oneself. The Adept or Mahatma transcends these limitations of perception, as the same Mahatma KH also points out: ‘The adept sees and feels and lives in the very source of all fundamental truths — the Universal Spiritual Essence of Nature, ŚIVA the Creator, the Destroyer, and the Regenerator.’¹³

So, the perception of that unity manifested in all life is considered, in a very practical way, by the Mahatma H. to whom is attributed the real authorship of *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, summarizing and simplifying this subject in one of the three truths: ‘The principle which gives life dwells in us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.’¹⁴

In that letter 88 (received September, 1882), the Mahatma KH wrote in a more emphatic way because Mr Hume was, indeed, already warned in the letter 67 (received July, 1882): ‘. . . say with the Adwaites (Subba Row is one) that Parabrahm plus Māyā becomes *Iswar* the creative principle — a power commonly called God which disappears and dies

with the rest when pralaya comes.’¹⁵

As a consequence Íswara or the Logos, as anything in the realm of manifestation, has its limitations and is also submitted to the periodical law or principle, which pervades all manifestation, and the law of karma, which preceded it. Even the Logos cannot overcome the law of karma, as the Mahatma in some way reminds: ‘the slightest *cause* produced, however unconsciously, and with whatever motive, cannot be unmade, or its effects crossed in their progress — by millions of gods, demons, and men combined.’¹⁶

This must be clear also to avoid the egotistic demand of God or gods for miracles and superstitious interest on magic, animal sacrifices, etc., as the Mahatma also points out: ‘when they come to realize that the old “divine” phenomena were not *miracles*, but scientific effects, *superstitions* will abate. Thus the greatest evil that now oppresses and retards the revival of Indian civilization will in time disappear.’¹⁷ ‘Remember the sum of human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of Truth, morality, and universal charity, the altars of their false gods.’¹⁸

The importance of *The Secret Doctrine* to give a philosophical and cosmological context to the teaching of the Mahatmas, therefore, becomes more evident if it can be seen as above and understood that even the lay chelas who received the letters, probably due to the Christian conceptions of their original environment, were not grasping the basic concept of the Creative Principle according to the Mahatmas.

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Bishop Leadbeater, as a Buddhist and also a founder of the Liberal Catholic Church in 1916, seems to discern more clearly the concepts of the Absolute and the Logos even in Christian terms, as follows:

‘As for *Parabrahman*, the Absolute, He is not personal in any way; He is not what we would call an existence. Of the Absolute nothing whatever can be rightly said save He is not this, He is not that; He cannot be defined on any plane that we have ever imagined or thought. As the Buddha puts it, “Look not for Brahman or the beginning there.” However earnest the seeker, he can never be grasped. “Veil after veil may lift but there must be veil after veil behind.” It is useless to speculate; *Brahman* can be understood only on His own level. . . . When we speak of God we mean, for all practical purposes, the Logos of our solar system. The Logos is more comprehensible than the Absolute because He has risen by slow degrees from our own humanity. The physical matter in the sun and in the planets of our system forms His physical body; the astral matter within the limits of the system is His astral body; the mental matter is His mental body. Thus we are all part of Him.’¹⁹ Such idea is also in the Bible: ‘For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.’²⁰ So, in due time (astronomical time), we are to become eventually a Solar Logos, as Christ said: ‘Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?’²¹ ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’²²

The Mahatma KH also made a comparison with Christian terms: ‘Speech or *Vach* was regarded as the Son or the

manifestation of the *Eternal Self*, and was adored under name of Avalokitesvara, the manifested God.’ ‘This shows as clearly as can be that Avalokitesvara is both the *un-manifested Father* and the Manifested *Son*, the latter proceeding from, and identical with, the other; namely, the *Parabrahm* and *Jivatman*, the Universal and the individualized seventh Principle, — the Passive and the Active, the latter the *Word*, Logos, the Verb. Call it by whatever name, . . . the real *Christ* of every Christian is the *Vach*, the “mystical Voice.”’²³

Madam Blavatsky adds on the process of manifestation: ‘But once that we pass in thought from this (to us) Absolute Negation, duality supervenes in the contrast of Spirit (or consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object . . . The “Manifested Universe”, therefore, is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its EX-istence as “manifestation”.’²⁴

Patañjali, in the *Yoga-Sutras*, also seems to have found practical use for this duality or Universal Principle of Polarity in his practice of Yama suggesting meditation in the opposites as a Raja-Yoga essential technique: ‘When the mind is disturbed by improper thoughts constant pondering over the opposites (is the remedy).’²⁵ Some western hermetists authors, in 1908 published *The Kybalion*, probably influenced by *The Secret Doctrine*, based also their practice of alchemical mental transmutation on the Principle of Polarity: ‘Everything is dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites; likes and dislikes are the same; opposites are

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identical in nature, but different in degree; extremes meet; all truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled.²⁶ Indeed, a lot of practical meditation can be based on this Principle of Polarity that can be seen also as a therapeutic principle to reestablish the original harmony and unity, which is beyond duality. The Mahatma KH also considers: 'Nature has an antidote for every poison and her laws a reward for every suffering.'²⁷ Dr Taimni comments how all the universe is naturally preserving the equilibrium through the law of compensation: 'Like a gyroscope which has been tilted to one side it immediately tends to come back to the position of equilibrium automatically. In fact the whole phenomenon of manifestation is the result of this tendency to regain equilibrium; . . . the perfect harmony and equilibrium of the Absolute which has been disturbed by this manifestation.'²⁸

H. P. Blavatsky also made a summary, as follows, about the essential teaching on the Absolute and the Logos, to 'afford a clearer idea to the reader.

(1) The ABSOLUTE: the *Parabrahman* of the Vedantins, or the one Reality, SAT, which is, as Hegel says, both Absolute Being and Non-Being.

(2) The first manifestation, the impersonal, and, in philosophy, *unmanifested* Logos, the precursor of the "manifested." This is the "First Cause", the "Unconscious" of European Pantheists.

(3) Spirit-matter, LIFE; the "Spirit of the Universe", the Purusha and Prakṛti, or the second Logos.

(4) Cosmic Ideation, MAHAT or

Intelligence, the Universal World-Soul; the Cosmic Noumenon of Matter, the basis of the intelligent operations in and of Nature, also called MAHA-BUDDHI.²⁹

Then comes the second proposition of the proem dealing with the periodical law of the manifested universe: 'The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane: periodically "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing", called "the manifesting stars", and the "sparks of Eternity." "The Eternity of the Pilgrim" is like a wink of the Eye of Self-Existence (Book of Dzyan). "The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb, flux and reflux." This second assertion of *The Secret Doctrine* is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.'³⁰

So, as here the manifestation is already in course, there is mention of the Pilgrim, which is the Monad, during its cycle of reincarnations (because the universe is periodical, man as a microcosm has also a periodical manifestation), also called the Spirit, the Atma, the Purusha, 'the only immortal and eternal principle in us.'³¹

As well, the periodical manifested Universe could be described by a scientific

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analogy, as an ocean of energy or light, symbolizing the fundamental unity of all, once Dr Einstein discovered the mutual convertibility of energy and matter [$E=mc^2$]. To perceive this ocean of light is enlightenment. In this immense ocean of light or energy, we could be perceived as living forms of condensation of that energy, like fragments of ice floating in an ocean. We are temporary differentiations within that immense ocean of light. In this analogy, ice could represent our body, liquid water our soul, and vapour our spirit, different condensations of the same thing. Madame Blavatsky was able in some way to anticipate Science when she published, in 1888, in *The Secret Doctrine*, a similar idea that Matter is a condensation of Spirit:

These beings are the 'Sons of Light', because they emanate from, and are self-generated in, that infinite Ocean of Light, whose one pole is pure *Spirit* lost in the absoluteness of Non-Being, and the other the *matter* in which it condenses, crystallizing into a more and more gross type as it descends into manifestation.³²

The Bhagavadgītā wonderfully symbolized that periodical clothing of the spiritual Pilgrim in material bodies: 'As a man, casting off worn-out garments, taketh new ones, so the dweller in the body, casting off worn-out bodies, entereth into others that are new.'³³

This is also summarized and simplified in another of the three truths of *The Idyll of the White Lotus* linking the second and the third propositions in the periodical

process of evolution, as follows: 'The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour has no limit.'³⁴

In *The Secret Doctrine*, HPB summarized the expression of the Law of Evolution in the third proposition of its proem, particularly referred to the progressive enfoldment of that spiritual Pilgrim as follows:

The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul — a spark of the former — through the Cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle — or the OVER-SOUL — has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyāni-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.³⁵

So, here again there seems to be a link

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between the third proposition and the third truth of *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, which summarizes and simplifies the subject in practical terms, as follows: 'Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment. These three truths, which are as great as life itself, are as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.'³⁶

Though the Divine Wisdom or primary Theosophy corresponds to a level of absolute truth (*paramārthika satya*) and therefore is beyond the level of the mind,

perhaps the three propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*'s Proem and the three truths of the *The Idyll of the White Lotus* represent the essence of Theosophy in a relative truth (*vyāvahārika satya*) in their own level of complexity, as H. P. Blavatsky was quoted above 'As is the Inner, so is the Outer; as is the Great, so is the Small; as it is above, so it is below: there is but ONE LIFE AND LAW; and he that worketh it is ONE. Nothing is Inner, nothing is Outer; nothing is GREAT, nothing is Small; nothing is High, nothing is Low, in the Divine Economy.'³⁷ ✧

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‘THE PRESENT IS THE CHILD OF THE PAST; THE FUTURE THE
BEGOTTEN OF THE PRESENT. AND YET, O PRESENT MOMENT!
KNOWEST THOU NOT THAT THOU HAST NO PARENT, NOR
CANST THOU HAVE A CHILD; THAT THOU ART EVER BEGETTING
BUT THYSELF? BEFORE THOU HAST EVEN BEGUN TO SAY “I AM
THE PROGENY OF THE DEPARTED MOMENT, THE CHILD OF THE
PAST,” THOU HAST BECOME THAT PAST ITSELF BEFORE THOU
UTTEREST THE LAST SYLLABLE, BEHOLD! THOU ART NO MORE
THE PRESENT BUT VERILY THAT FUTURE. THUS ARE THE PAST,
THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE, THE EVER-LIVING TRINITY
IN ONE — THE GREAT ILLUSION OF THE ABSOLUTE IS’.

From The Stanzas of Dzyan

The TS Team

PEDRO OLIVEIRA

THE expression ‘forlorn hope’ means ‘persistent or desperate hope that is unlikely to be fulfilled’. The *Oxford Concise Dictionary* states that ‘the phrase originally denoted a band of soldiers picked to begin an attack, many of whom would not survive’. In a letter to A. P. Sinnett, Mahatma K.H. compares the fledgling TS to a forlorn hope:

What I meant by the ‘Forlorn Hope’ was that when one regards the magnitude of the task to be undertaken by our theosophical volunteers, and especially the multitudinous agencies arrayed, and to be arrayed, in opposition, we may well compare it to one of those desperate efforts against overwhelming odds that the true soldier glories to attempt. You have done well to see the ‘large purpose’ in the small beginnings of the T.S. Of course, if we had undertaken to found and direct it in *propria persona* very likely it would have accomplished more and made fewer mistakes, but we could not do this, nor was it the plan: our two agents are given the task and left — as you now are — to do the best they could under the circumstances. And much has been wrought. Under the surface of Spiritualism runs a

current that is wearing a broad channel for itself. When it reappears above ground its effects will be apparent. Already many minds like yours are pondering the question of occult law — forced upon the thinking public by this agitation. Like you, they are dissatisfied with what has been hitherto attainable and clamour for better. Let this — encourage you.

It is not quite accurate that by having such minds in the Society they would be ‘under conditions more favourable for observation’ for us. Rather put it, that by the act of joining other sympathisers in this organization they are stimulated to effort and incite each other to investigate. Unity always gives strength: and since Occultism in our days resembles a ‘Forlorn Hope’, union and cooperation are indispensable. Union does indeed imply a concentration of vital and magnetic force against the hostile currents of prejudice and fanaticism. (Letter 8)

Several points made by the Mahatma in the above mentioned letter deserve consideration. The first is ‘the magnitude of the task to be undertaken by our theosophical volunteers’. Put it simply, their task was to work for the spiritual

Mr Pedro Oliveira, member of the Australian Section of the TS, has worked at Adyar and elsewhere.

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regeneration of humanity by presenting the ageless Wisdom Teaching and illustrating its transformational character.

Another important point refers to the ‘multitudinous agencies arrayed, and to be arrayed, in opposition’. They included some Spiritualists who disliked Madame Blavatsky’s criticism of their beliefs and practices; Church missionaries, particularly in India, who felt threatened by the presence and active work of the TS and its Founders; the Society for Psychical Research in London, which accepted unquestioningly Richard Hodgson’s version about phenomena which had taken place at Adyar, presented in his report; and materialistic science which was quick to categorize Theosophical teachings as delusions.

In view of the above difficulties it is no wonder that the Mahatma should say that ‘we may well compare it [the TS] to one of those desperate efforts against overwhelming odds that the true soldier glories to attempt’. He also mentions ‘the “large purpose” in the small beginnings of the T.S.’ Perhaps the Society’s first Object — Universal Brotherhood without distinction — which was insisted upon by the Mahatmas time and time again, is a very essential aspect of that purpose.

In another passage of the same letter we read that ‘by the act of joining other sympathisers in this organization they are stimulated to effort and incite each other to investigate’. TS work does encourage effort and investigation as the Society grants to every one of its members freedom of thought and enquiry. At the end of the

passage quoted above the Mahatma notes other essential points for the work of the TS: ‘Unity always gives strength: and since Occultism in our days resembles a ‘Forlorn Hope’, union and cooperation are indispensable. Union does indeed imply a concentration of vital and magnetic force against the hostile currents of prejudice and fanaticism.’ In these words the Master is perhaps delineating the essential qualities for the TS Team.

The word ‘team’ denotes, among other meanings, ‘a set of players forming one side in a game’ and ‘two or more persons working together’. Even a cursory look at the beginnings of the TS makes it clear that it was meant to be a team. Although it has, like every other association, rules and constitutionally elected officers, what impels people to work together as a team in the TS is not an official decree but a willingness to serve the purpose for which it was started. And it is nothing short of extraordinary that, in spite of strong opposition from without and periodical disturbances in the team, the Society is set to become 138 years old this coming November. How did it arrive in the twentieth century?

The essential keynote that has guided the TS Team has come to us through the work and the vision of every successive President. They have articulated it for their own time and helped the members worldwide to gain a renewed understanding of the possibilities and strength of the Society’s work. And the hands of each President were strengthened in their turn by the members who elected them.

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Col. Olcott, in his Inaugural Address, said: 'We seek, inquire, reject nothing without cause, accept nothing without proof: we are students, not teachers.' He was thus reaffirming a foundational policy of the TS which was enshrined in the Preamble to its Bylaws:

Whatever may be the private opinions of its members, the Society has *no dogmas to enforce, no creed to disseminate*. It is formed neither as a Spiritualistic schism, nor to serve as the foe or friend of any sectarian or philosophic body. Its only axiom is the omnipotence of truth, its only creed a profession of unqualified devotion to its discovery and propagation. In considering the qualifications of applicants for membership, it knows neither race, sex, colour, country nor creed.

Our President-Founder thus made clear the uniqueness of the Theosophical Society at that time, which was one of growing religious orthodoxy, assertive scientific materialism and a widening Spiritualistic movement claiming validation for psychically transmitted messages from the other world. From the very outset the Society affirmed its non-dogmatic nature as well as its non-ideological stance in the search for truth. This naturally became important qualities in the TS Team: we are all students sharing a journey of discovery of truth for the betterment of humanity, not teachers telling people what to believe and what to do.

In his article 'T.S. Solidarity and Ideals' (*The Theosophist*, November 1894) Col. Olcott presents his view of the TS Team:

One thing that will help our good resolutions is to throw more of our strength into the Theosophical Society, instead of giving it all to our personalities. By forgetting ourselves in building up the Society, we shall become better people in every respect. We shall be helpers of mankind a thousand-fold more than by any other plan. When I say the Society I do not mean a branch or a section, that is to say, a small fragment or a large piece of it. I mean the Society as a whole — a great Federation, a large entity, which embraces us all and represents the totality of our intelligence, our good-will, our sacrifices, our unselfish work, our altruism; a fasces composed of many small rods that might be separately broken, but which, bound together, is unbreakable.

Every TS member who has ever served in a committee will know, by direct experience, how the personality can sometimes become an impediment in TS work. The personal nature not only tends to be strong in us but it also, through subtle forms of uncanny persuasion, will try and convince us that *our* opinion is the best, that *our* suggestion should be adopted and that the others' opinions and views in the end matter very little indeed. Therefore, Col. Olcott's advice, 'forgetting ourselves in building up the Society', should perhaps be taken to heart. It has been suggested that we can make a beginning in this direction by learning to listen to others in our common work for the TS. Genuine listening builds and strengthens the TS Team by lessening our self-centredness.

Annie Besant followed Col. Olcott as

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the next President of the Society and presented another important aspect of the TS Team in her article 'The Theosophic Life' (*The Theosophist*, March 1909):

The Theosophic Life must be a life of service. Unless we are serving, we have no right to live. We live by the constant sacrifice of other lives on every side, and we must pay it back; otherwise, to use an ancient phrase, we are but thieves and do not repay the gift. Service is the great illuminator. The more we serve the wiser we become, for we learn wisdom not by studying but by living.

The first part of her statement presents service as a natural moral imperative: 'We live by the constant sacrifice of other lives on every side, and we must pay it back.' When we are able to look at it free from the bias of self-interest, the wholeness of life is seen as a delicate web of service and sacrifice, without exception. To assume that we can only take from life without ever giving back is a form of soul illness. One of the positive developments in today's world is the increasing number of young people offering to work for non-governmental organizations that assist the poor, the refugees as well as animals in distress. Looking at the TS, it would not be an exaggeration to say that it is still here in the world thanks to many generations of members who worked for it as a form of selfless service. Service goes to the very core of the TS Team.

The other part of Dr Besant's statement is equally significant: 'Service is the great illuminator. The more we serve the wiser

we become, for we learn wisdom not by studying but by living.' She points to a deeper, spiritual dimension of service: the cleansing of our minds and hearts that can lead us to wisdom, a natural purging of what is unessential in our consciousness, giving way to an understanding that in fact we do not live for ourselves but for others. This wisdom, born of selfless service, is an important foundation of the TS Team.

Dr George Sydney Arundale succeeded Dr Besant in the Presidency of the TS. In one single expression he was able to express the very essence of his vision for the Society as well as a very vital aspect of the TS Team: 'Together differently.' It has been suggested that this could be indeed one of the true interpretations of our first Object, Universal Brotherhood without distinction. Life can only manifest through individual forms which are, essentially, different. And yet life in its own essential nature is one, indivisible. GSA's wonderful expression seems to sum it all: we can all be different and yet stand together. The Theosophical Society has benefited from the very beginning by having in it profoundly different individuals who were deeply committed to work together for it, and who knew when to sacrifice pride and self-importance so that the Society could progress and grow. 'Together differently' is an integral part of the TS Team.

Brother Raja, as C. Jinarājadāsa was affectionately known, assumed office as the fourth President of the TS on 17 February 1946. He brought to that office

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a charismatic personality, devotion to the Society's ideals as well as scholarship in the fields of art, religion, philosophy, together with a keen interest in science. In his Inaugural Address he expressed his vision of the TS Team:

Suppose in addition, every Theosophist in every Theosophical Lodge were to say softly to himself as he meets friend or stranger, 'THAT art thou, the Vision of God that I seek, the goal of Mukti which I long for, art *thou*.' All our Theosophical studies then are a mere accompaniment, an elaboration in harmonics, of the glorious chant of unity which rings throughout the universe linking angel and man, beast and plant, in one joyous embrace.

His is a stupendous vision of Universal Brotherhood without distinction for it embodies a direct insight into that Ground of Being where our true identity lies, the I-Thou relationship taught by Martin Buber. In its depth it evokes a mind that has gone much beyond the differences that very often hinder human relationships. As suggested again and again in the Wisdom Teaching, only the eyes of the soul can see such timeless realities for the eyes of the personality are often blinded by the illusions which emanate from the activities of the personal self. Brother Raja's vision is reminiscent of the teaching from the Upanishads: to see the Self (*Atman*) in all beings and all beings in the Self. Such a vision inspires and reenergizes the TS Team.

It was in February 1953 that N. Sri Ram became the President of the Theosophical

Society. He had an enduring influence on many members around the world, not only because of what he shared with them but particularly because of who he was. As someone remarked after his death, the word 'self-effacement' did not properly apply to him as there was very little self to be effaced.

In his article 'Why Theosophy is Left Undefined?' (*The Theosophist*, October 1964) he wrote:

The Truth, or the Wisdom, cannot be known except by a mind which is completely open to it. It is only when the mind is clear of every idea, every colouring wish, every element of self, that it can discover the Truth. That truth is reflected in such a mind; there is no need to go after it. The truth then comes to the person. He discovers it in his heart. It is only in absolute freedom of mind and heart that truth in its absoluteness can shine and manifest itself. Therefore, in the Theosophical Society we try to maintain that freedom which is the open way or space. That is the reason why Theosophy is left undefined.

There were a few members who in spite of their great admiration for Sri Ram did not agree with the particular view expressed in the above mentioned quotation. Some of them suggested that, coming as it did from the President, it could discourage people from studying Theosophy. However, when one examines his statement on its own merit its intrinsic significance becomes clear.

In his statement reproduced above Brother Sri Ram was expressing, in his

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own words, the same spirit which is present in the Preamble to the Bylaws of the TS, approved in 1875, mentioned before, when the Society was being organized: the Society has *no dogmas to enforce, no creed to disseminate*. To have defined Theosophy, officially and institutionally, would mean to abandon that spirit and to change the very nature of the TS for good. Theosophy, however, is tentatively defined in many books and articles by many different authors and their views and contributions can be studied by those who are interested in such a study. Sri Ram himself explored the nature and scope of Theosophy in his books, dealing with subjects as consciousness, the mind, karma, reincarnation, evolution, the spiritual path and inner transformation, among others.

In various traditions Truth, Wisdom and Goodness are considered, in their essential nature, to be ineffable, 'too great to be expressed or described in words'. In *The Secret Doctrine* Madame Blavatsky suggests that the Ultimate Reality is 'unthinkable and unspeakable'. Perhaps this helps to indicate that the fundamental realities of life cannot be the object of discourse, analysis and explanation, but something to be known in the depths of one's heart, when the sense of separate self has ended and consciousness is established in its own essential nature.

Sri Ram's unique contribution to the TS Team was to remind us, through his profoundly gentle approach, that as long as our minds and hearts are open we will find that Path that leads to the heart of

existence and thereby find an enduring and transforming inspiration.

John Coats succeeded Sri Ram as President. He suggested that every member should become an 'ambassador of Brotherhood'. He also encouraged youth to take an active part in the Society's work. He wrote (*The Theosophist*, April 1974):

The practice of brotherhood implies that we have the highest principles active in our lives, principles of compassion, justice, chivalry, consideration for the feelings of others, and a constant attention to what we are doing to the people around us. The strength and usefulness of our organization depends on this understanding of differentiated brotherhood. It depends on our ability to cooperate, on our understanding of the law. Without all this, the nucleus cannot work; it can neither attract nor can it transmit.

Brotherhood cannot be enforced and the TS does not attempt to regiment people in order for them to practice Brotherhood. But the fact that the Society has arrived in the twenty-first century is perhaps proof sufficient that within every generation that has worked for it, from the very beginning, there have been men and women for whom the principle of Universal Brotherhood was a reality. On a practical level, it means relating to others by listening to them, sympathizing with them, helping them. As Annie Besant eloquently puts it: 'What are we here for, save to help each other, to love each other, to uplift each other?' Brotherhood is the life of the TS Team.

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Radha Burnier became the seventh President of the TS in July 1980. In her Inaugural Address (*The Theosophist*, August 1980) she said:

As time passes, generations change. Every generation faces the basic problems of man in terms of a changing environment. No teaching, no philosophy can be of adequate aid to any generation if it is converted into a mere idiom or tradition. But the Wisdom of a truly religious mind can speak the tongue of any generation and communicate its own quality of significance.

The word ‘tradition’ comes from the Latin *tradere*, ‘deliver, betray’. A tradition is what is transmitted from generation to generation, exemplified in the different religious traditions in the world. Curiously, the etymology of the word admits the fact that in the very process of transmission betrayal can take place. The examples of betrayal in the religious world are just too numerous to mention. Its history has shown that the Theosophical Society has not been free from such a danger. Mrs Burnier’s statement seems to echo the warning given by HPB in 1889 (*The Key to Theosophy*, Conclusion):

You must remember that all our members have been born and bred in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biased by some or all of these influences. If, then, they cannot be freed from such inherent bias, or at least taught to recognize it instantly and so avoid being led away

by it, the result can only be that the Society will drift off on to some sandbank of thought or another, and there remain a stranded carcass to moulder and die.

In the spiritually-charged seminars on Human Regeneration she conducted at the International Theosophical Centre in Naarden, The Netherlands, in July 1990, the President shared her essential vision of the work before the TS:

We have created divisions by our thinking, we have been conditioned into it. If we could free ourselves from that conditioning, we would be radiating peace and harmony. So universal brotherhood without distinctions is not an idle phrase, a commonplace thing. It is the main work of the Theosophical Society. When we convert it into something ordinary, we feel we must go around finding other things to do. But there is no difference between such brotherhood and regeneration, for it calls for a totally new mind, a mind without divisions, distinctions, comparisons, and evaluations.

The above statement echoes, in its deep significance, HPB’s remarks from 1889 (*The Key to Theosophy*):

In every conceivable case he himself must be a centre of spiritual action, and from him and his own daily individual life must radiate those higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellow-men.

Inner, spiritual regeneration — a mind without divisions — is perhaps the greatest challenge for the TS Team.

Theosophical teachings suggest that

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the TS Team did not come into existence in 1875 when the Society was formed. In all likelihood it has been going on for centuries in many countries around the world. This is what one of the Mentors in the Team wrote to Francesca Arundale in 1884:

Think you the truth has been shown to you for your sole advantage? That we have broken the silence of centuries for the profit of a handful of dreamers only? The converging lines of your Karma have drawn each and all of you into this Society as to a common focus that you may each help to work out the results of your interrupted beginnings in the last birth. None of you can be so blind as to suppose that this is your first dealing with Theosophy?

The world today is very different from the world in 1875 when the Theosophical Society was started. It is a world shaped in almost every one of its activities by rapidly evolving technology and fast communications systems. The Society is

learning to adapt this new reality and making use of the new technologies it offers. The newly found enthusiasm for the environment of social media in its many formats has given way to a more cautious approach, as it has been seen that the presence of just one individual with selfish and narcissistic tendencies can compromise the harmony of a group which includes sometimes more than 500 members. And yet useful group discussion and interaction can still take place provided there is focus on what is really important.

Outer instruments may be useful but they, in themselves, may not create the conditions which are necessary for the TS Team to fulfil its purpose. A truly spiritual connection remains much more important than an electronic one and such connection is made possible when a self-effacing outlook starts to govern our lives. Then, no matter where you are in the world, you are part of a Team that has been charged with a sacred task: 'to bless and save humanity'.

The waters of the Spirit will flow along any channel open to them. But the channel must be provided. It is our task to provide that channel, keeping what is good and useful in what is there, but ruthlessly clearing out what is obsolete and useless. That applies both to our own minds and to that projection of ourselves which is the Society. Shall we live up to our opportunities? Only time will show. But the opportunity is here, *now*, and for each one of us.

Laurence J. Bendit

To be a Living Fire

BREDA ZAGAR

WE all know the Three Objects of our Society. What is Brotherhood? The word is very much misunderstood and misused in the world and even among members of the Theosophical Society. So many articles were written about brotherhood, from so many different aspects in order to help the mind of the readers to grasp the deeper meaning of the term but it seems almost in vain.

It is said that the Great Teachers of humanity have endless patience and waiting for their younger brothers to evolve to the point where they can assimilate at least some of the teachings given but they also know that there are a few souls who are capable of understanding some spiritual laws. Because of them they are sent to the world their dedicated disciple Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. In *The Voice of the Silence* HPB wrote: *Dedicated to the few.* If *the few* would understand and live the spiritual life which is nothing else but altruistic life, brotherly life, then the whole of humanity would be benefited. The Teachers told us all life is one, therefore humanity also is one and if one person does a good thing, the whole of humanity is benefited and vice versa. If we fully

grasp this truth we become responsible. So what Krishnaji said is true to the letter: 'You are the world.' From this point of view we can easily understand also the old statement: 'Change yourself if you want to change the world.'

Materialism today is even worse than at the time of HPB; money is the king and greed his first minister everywhere. Even many of the members of our TS seem to think that it is enough to pay the subscription to be a member in good standing. They do not feel it necessary to attend lodge meetings and get involved in the service to the Society. Such an attitude is pure materialism and is in direct opposition to the purpose of our Society. The characteristics of a member in good standing are quite different: in the first place he must understand the purpose of the Theosophical Society and must feel responsible, pay the subscription and attend lodge meetings regularly in a spirit of brotherly cooperation with dedicated heart. To listen, to learn, to give something of himself or herself, to ponder over in order to put the teachings into practice in such a way is to help all humanity must be the aim of a member. To study the teaching

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is a preliminary prerequisite; otherwise of what benefit would be HPB's writings. First we should be grateful and humble and realize that to become a member of the Theosophical Society is the greatest opportunity to mould oneself into a real server of orphan humanity. When we have sympathy in our hearts — everything is possible as from sympathy comes courage and good will.

The teaching that we all are brothers is not an empty phrase. It is actually the symbol for something holy. If there is only one Absolute, one Principle, one Light, one Love 'which embraces all in oneness', then every one of us is a part of that Love, actually we *are* that Love, which is hidden in everyone of us, and only from this point of view we can understand the meaning of real brotherhood. Then brother is not somebody separate from us, brother is not somebody 'other', brother is actually we ourselves and therefore one and the same life, one and the same light in our hearts. From inner point of view brotherhood really means — oneness, unity.

And from the standpoint of oneness we can understand our brother and help him much more efficiently. The word brother has nothing to do with sex, it is symbol for inner spiritual entity which is sexless. So when we address people as dear brothers, it means also brothers who are in female bodies.

If the first Object of the Theosophical Society is rightly understood then the Society would flourish — but not only by hundreds of books, not by thousands of articles on the internet, by an example of

brotherly, harmonious, spiritual members. The first Object says: to *form a nucleus* of the Universal Brotherhood. . . . To form a nucleus we should work *together* otherwise it is impossible to form such a nucleus as the Masters had in mind.

What attracts people to join our Society are not merely books but our spiritual radiation, good will, kindness and sympathy. We should be lighted candles as only a lighted candle can light another candle. Can a computer light a single candle? A loving and compassionate person unconsciously spreads invisible fragrance to all and everything around himself or herself.

HPB said what really matters is — our motive. To study the teachings in order to teach our brethren in turn is the only right motive which will bring us nearer to all sentient beings. And for this we need a humble and clean heart so that the teaching and practising of it can invoke in us our true nature which is love, life and light. We would become lighted candles and if such lighted candles are put together they may make a living fire as nucleus which radiates its beneficial light and warmth to all life around. May we all try to be a lighted candle and make together a living fire, a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood, to dispel the darkness of the world.

So shalt thou be in full accord
with all that lives; bear love to men as
though they were thy brother-pupils,
disciples of one Teacher, the sons of
One sweet mother.

The Voice of the Silence

Actualizing Brotherhood Creatively

P. K. JAYASWAL

IN *Ancient Wisdom — Modern Insight*, Shirley Nicholson makes the following statements:

[The] separative view also pervades our concept of ourselves. . . . the strongest trend is to live in the midst of a self-centred sphere, holding our personal interests and benefits as of primary importance, . . . often at the expense of others. . . . which has served well for most of our history. But now we are being forced to recognize our planet as a 'global village' in which we cannot stand apart from others. . . . Yet our emphasis on distinctions — between races, nations, ethnic groups, social classes, families, individuals — is preventing us from working together for the common good, and even for survival. . . . more than ever before in history, we must realize that we cannot live isolated from one another and from Nature.

If we can learn about interconnections and be convinced of their reality, we can come to experience unity for ourselves so that the idea will take hold in us and grow creatively.

As our understanding grows, . . . What

starts as intellectual comprehension grows into intuitive insight and becomes grounded in practicality. . . . we become involved in an unending process of growth, continually creative and fresh. . . .

Brotherhood is seen not as an ideal to be achieved but a reality in Nature, an expression of the unity which pervades all life at every level. We can veil this unity with separateness and egoism, but this does not erase its roots deep in Nature and in ourselves.

We desperately need a unifying world view to help heal the world's endless fractures.

We all know that Theosophy provides such a view. It proclaims the One Fundamental Law of Unity of all existence.

Brotherhood is a fact in Nature, of which we are a part. The question is: how many see this fact as a fact? If this fact is seen as a fact, not merely as a concept which is at best a thought about the fact, then it enables us to behave in such a way which does not violate the operations of this fact, and thus paves the path of peace, harmony and progress. The violations, being the infringement of the Law of which this fact is an expression, cause

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Actualizing Brotherhood Creatively

suffering to the self and others. Is it not wise to be Law-abiding citizens of the Universe, and contribute our mite to the unfoldment of progression and perfection as per the Divine Plan?

The principle of *Kāma-Manas*, which is at present imperiously active in the world at large, leads to analytical cognition and highlights separateness. It does not perceive the background of Unity which only the principle of *Buddhi-Manas* can enable our consciousness to realize. The mystics ascend higher and higher and experience their oneness with the cosmic consciousness. Humanity is now striving hard to move in this direction. We, therefore, need practical mystics to physicalize their realizations to reduce the oppressive load of Karma of Orphan Humanity which has been generated in the past and is being generated in the present due to non-compliance with the Law of Brotherhood.

The author of *Ancient Wisdom — Modern Insight*, states that those who have explored mysticism, speak of the moral obligation that flows from the experience of union with the All. They say that this is not an experience merely for one's private expansion and enlightenment. It engenders a sense of responsibility for others. The inner knowledge of unity must have outworkings in our lives.

Gautama Buddha, the Lord of compassion and wisdom, is the most glorious example of our Humanity who exemplifies this noble truth.

Brotherhood, being the outermost visible aspect of the underlying unity of existence, implies necessarily practical responses. If it is not reflected in our rela-

tionships and conduct, it remains an empty shell devoid of its soul. Practical Brotherhood has innumerable forms and modes, being the projection of the Infinite on the finite plane, like the limitless radiant rays emitted from the Love-Diamond. It calls for getting out of the grooves of the mind, transcending the limited boundaries of the known formulae of behaviours so familiar to all of us. The technology of practical brotherhood needs to be designed creatively. Technology involves the application of the Law of Universal Love to the needs of the beneficiaries, both as groups and as individuals. It is no doubt challenging, but the spontaneity of Love makes it simple and straight forward. The light of genuine brotherhood reaches the concerned brother-beneficiary in a way and form which suits him most.

With a view to countering the impression that the Theosophical Society confines itself to mere enunciation of the words 'Universal Brotherhood', the Theosophical Order of Service was established in 1907 to focus on 'Service' as an indicator of brotherhood. Over the years, the list of the activities of service has been expanded. Unfortunately, activities requiring money occupy the most visible and publicized platform, and brotherhood is equated to charities in the public view. Extending financial assistance in some form or another is no doubt a laudable programme. However, the fact remains that the beneficiaries receive financial help only and mostly do not have the benefit of a Theosophical approach which the members of the Society are in a position to share with them. A lot of creativity can

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be displayed in combining financial service with theosophical help to enable the helped to accelerate their evolution. Let us remember what *At the Feet of the Master* says: 'To feed the poor is a good and noble and useful work; yet to feed their souls is nobler and more useful than to feed their bodies.'

Bro. N. Sri Ram considered the spiritual regeneration of mankind as of fundamental importance, because when that takes place, all else follows. He pointed out that the forces that are brought into play in the regeneration will themselves have their effect on the external condition. He said:

When you see for yourself what is the truth, you will act in accordance with that truth. You do not then need any direction, except that truth. . . . It may be that we cannot yet do all that it might be possible for us to do some day, but then we can help our fellowmen to the extent of our capacity. . . . by our own examples. . . . we will find that we are able to do more and more. . . . you begin to give of your affection to those around you, you will find there is more affection to give; you begin serving in some way, you will find that there are ways in which you can serve better. There is an infinity in each one of us out of which to give and we have to discover that infinity for ourselves by the giving, and there is no other way. If you sit in a chair and say, now I am going to discover the infinity within myself, you will never discover it. It is only by making the current flow that more can be made to flow. . . . That is an extraordinary thing to find out and discover for oneself.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, in the dialogue between the Enquirer and the Theosophist, HPB did not agree, as the Theosophist, with the Enquirer's views that the spread of theosophical teachings through study of theosophical literature does not seem to be of much practical use in helping mankind. She asserted that the right type of books does real, substantial good. She, however, made it clear that the most important way of helping others is by the example of one's own life. Living Theosophy is the best way of actualizing brotherhood.

This leads us to examine and consider the Society's first Object which is to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. The verb 'form' denotes a visible manifestation of the ensouling 'Life' of love of the Society's members — Life and form constitute the running stream of the evolutionary process. If the members succeed in constituting themselves as the nucleus, this will provide the critical mass which, in its turn, will bring about the needed change in the whole world. This is an act of regeneration — the greatest possible service to the whole of humanity. The surest way to make this happen is for the members to live Theosophy. Living Theosophy is not a mechanical movement according to set formulae of behaviours. It is the blossoming of universal love which is like dimensional space, implying creativity from moment to moment. Let us remember what HPB said: 'Even in the Theosophical Society, which has as its first Object, Brotherhood, we are seeing how difficult it is to make it a reality, due to our lack of love.' Bro. C. W.

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Leadbeater, while talking of the Future of the Theosophical Society, said: 'The brotherhood of man is a great reality; the brotherhood of this Society ought to be a great reality to us.' *At the Feet of the Master* tells us: 'You must give yourself to the service of the world because you love it, and cannot help giving yourself to it.' *Light on the Path* lays down the Rules: 'Regard earnestly all the life that surrounds you'. Remember that the sin and shame of the world are your sin and shame; for you are a part of it'. As *The Voice of the Silence* asks: 'Hast thou attuned thy being to humanity's great pain? Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? And Annie Besant once wrote: 'Love all, but love most those who are unloving, for their need is the greatest.'

In this connection, Bro. Leadbeater remarked that the ways to do our work must change. Methods must change with the times. We must spread the idea of Brotherhood. Brotherhood exists, but people do not realize it and we must help them to this realization.

At the Feet of the Master instructs us to learn to distinguish the God in everyone and everything, no matter how evil he or it may appear on the surface. You can help your brother through that which you have in common with him, and that is the Divine Life; learn how to arouse that in him; learn how to appeal to that in him.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, HPB explains the contours of practical Theosophy as under:

The Theosophical ideas of charity mean *personal* exertion for others; *personal*

mercy and kindness; *personal* interest in the welfare of those who suffer; *personal* sympathy, forethought and assistance in their troubles or needs.

She emphasized the *personal* approach in each case.

HPB remarked that modern ethics are beautiful to read about and hear discussed, but what are words unless converted into action?

HPB said that 'Theosophy is the quintessence of duty. Duty is that which is *due* to Humanity, to our fellow-men, neighbours, family and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless than we are ourselves.' She gives an insight by observing that 'Theosophical duty practically and in view of karma is to drink without a murmur to the last drop, whatever contents the cup of life may have in store for us, to pluck the roses of life only for the fragrance they may shed on others, and to be ourselves content but with the thorns, if that fragrance cannot be enjoyed without depriving someone else of it. A cup of cold water given in time to a thirsty wayfarer is a nobler duty and more worth than a dozen of dinners given away, out of season to men who can afford to pay for them'. She quotes Carlyle's truism: 'The end of man is an action and not a thought, though it were the noblest.'

In *The Voice of the Silence*, HPB's following words of wisdom should be pondered over in silence:

– Shalt thou abstain from action? Not so shall gain thy soul her freedom. To reach

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Nirvāna one must reach Self-knowledge, and Self-knowledge is of loving deeds.

– Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain.

– Let thy soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.

– Sow kindly acts and thou shalt reap their fruition. Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.

At the Feet of the Master shows the way for each and every individual, who does not require any money or any kind of paraphernalia, except his commitment, time and energy, and the effort expected of him is powerful enough. It says:

Use your thought-power every day for good purposes. Think each day of someone whom you know to be in sorrow or suffering or in need of help, and pour out loving thought upon him.

Let us not forget the entire manifestation flows from Divine Thought. Man, the microcosm, has the same power. His thought can move mountains.

It is important to notice that the thought has to be ‘loving’. Love has to permeate our being; the book makes it abundantly clear.

In daily life this means two things: that you shall be careful to do no hurt to any living thing; second, that you shall always be watching for an opportunity to help. First to do no hurt. Three sins there are which work more harm than all else in the world — gossip, cruelty and superstition. Against these three the man who would

fill heart with the love of God must watch ceaselessly.

In the context of Human Regeneration, Radhaji, our International President, has made the following observations:

. . . there are many organizations which stand for international relations. . . . from the deeper point of view, universal brotherhood is far from realized, and nowhere do we see brotherhood in action. Unless we see that this object implies a deep psychological revolution, universal brotherhood cannot be realized. . . .

From a practical point of view; does not brotherhood begin with simple things? Just being ordinarily kind, beginning to think in terms of another person, instead of only of ourselves. . . . So we must continue practising brotherhood, until the tendency of the mind to see in terms of duality dis-appears. Even the word ‘brotherhood’ suggests that there is a brother and ‘myself’.

The mind has to become new and learn to look at everything from the point of view of unity. What humanity needs is this new awareness, a state of mind in which there is no division.

The work in our Society is not merely to talk of universal brotherhood but to demonstrate to the world that it can be a reality.

Krishnaji made an unambiguous proclamation: ‘You are the world.’ No further elaboration is necessary to embrace this Truth. Let us align ourselves with this Truth. Our individual uniquenesses will display the colours of creativity which will result in beautiful brotherhood in action on our planet. ✧

Foundation Day: November 17

NOVEMBER 17, 2013, is the 138th anniversary of the foundation of the Theosophical Society. The President-Founder gives the dates of the Society's beginnings in *Old Diary Leaves*, Volume I, thus: 'The Theosophical Society, first conceived of on the 8th September, and constitutionally perfected on the 17th November, 1875, after a gestatory period of seventy days, came into being and started on its marvellous career of altruistic endeavour *per angusta ad augusta*. Inadvertently, in our first published document, the *Preamble and By-Laws of the Theosophical Society*, the 30th October was given as the date of organization, whereas, as seen above, it should properly have been November 17, 1875.' The following piece, from Colonel Olcott's Presidential Address to the Theosophical Convention of 1901, is offered as a choice thought of the Day :

THE ONE WEAK POINT AND DANGER WHICH THREATENS US IS THE TENDENCY IN CERTAIN QUARTERS TO THE GROWTH OF UNREASONING HERO-WORSHIP AND COMMITMENT DOGMATISM. I REITERATE MY PROTEST AGAINST THE ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE UPON MEMBERS OR OUTSIDERS THE IDEA THAT THERE IS IN OUR SOCIETY SUCH A THING AS ORTHODOXY OR AN INSPIRED BOOK OR TEACHER. I CALL UPON MY COLLEAGUES IN ALL COUNTRIES TO KEEP IN MIND THE SPIRIT OF OUR CONSTITUTION AND THE LETTER OF OUR RULES, AND TO UNITE TOGETHER TO OPPOSE AND PUT DOWN EVERYTHING AMONG US WHICH SAVOURS OF NARROWNESS OR SECTARIANISM; THE SOCIETY CAN ONLY FLOURISH ON A FOUNDATION OF ABSOLUTE LIBERTY OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH, WITHIN, OF COURSE, THE LIMITS OF GOOD TASTE. ONE MAY REVERE A GREAT TEACHER WITHOUT TURNING ONESELF INTO A SLAVE.

Altruism is the Keynote of Theosophy

C. A. SHINDE

ALTRUISM is the Keynote of Theosophy and an integral part of self-culture. It is transformation within oneself from selfishness to unselfishness and to live for the good of others. He who does not practise altruism meets suffering, writes HPB in the book *Practical Occultism*. It is now a scientifically proved fact that — Love and compassion for others can help one to reduce the risk not only of heart disease but of many other illnesses of body and mind and to establish harmonious relationship within and without. If we change our beliefs we can change our body physiology. It is only through forgetfulness of the personal self that one can progress in the spiritual life.

Theosophy is not a religion but it is the *Wisdom-Religion* i.e. source of all religions, it is a religion per se. The deeper meaning of Religion is to relate. To live a life and to obey the laws of higher life means to have harmonious relationship within and without. In every relationship there are three factors *the subject, object and their connection*. Harmonious relationship in right spirit between these factors need awareness, awareness of our inner

true spiritual being. It is not our personality in the way, but it is our *personal idea* that comes in the way and brings disharmony. If the contents of our consciousness is hurt, jealousy, anger and ego, it naturally brings disharmony. If the contents of our consciousness is love, gratitude, compassion then it brings harmony. If the contents of consciousness are good then every difficulty will be an opportunity for us to grow and if the contents of consciousness are not good every opportunity will be a difficulty.

Our two founders of the TS, Mme. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott considered every difficulty as an opportunity and did a pioneering work to break down caste and religious barriers. They tried a lot to promote understanding and fellowship among people of all races, nationalities, philosophies and religions. Dr Annie Besant also, as we know, was a fighter for social reform and to promote brotherhood of religions. All of them led their life strictly according to the ideals of practical occultism. So every responsibility in our life is an opportunity for evolution which means — acquiring control over our

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vehicles, purifying the mind from undesirable tendencies, developing *Viveka* and *Vairagya* by right remembrance and living an ideal life with higher state of mind and consciousness.

The Theosophical idea of evolution is threefold evolution. There is the evolution of the Material form, the evolution of the Intellect or Psyche, and an additional Spiritual evolution which is unfoldment of what is already present. *The Secret Doctrine* says (I.634), it is the spiritual evolution of that inner, immortal man that forms the fundamental tenet in the occult science, and HPB gave us the Golden Stairs leading to wisdom or unveiled spiritual perception and asked us to behold that truth before us. The words of Golden Stairs *A Clean Life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception* seem to be very simple. But the question is why few souls grasp and live in the ideal expressed by them? Why do we change so slowly even though spiritual life is at hand? No doubt these are simple words but are spoken by the Great Teacher through their messenger HPB in the hope that the younger souls might gain some understanding of the qualification necessary for spiritual unfoldment.

A Pure heart is a dwelling place of our inner being who shall become the future Master in each one of us. He is already existing within us in a potential form or as a flower bud to be unfolded. It is our responsibility and opportunity in this earthly life to prepare the indweller to unfold by keeping our mind, heart and

intellect pure, strong and loving. It is such a loving and pure heart that brings understanding, wisdom and power to serve. Nothing is more harmful to the spiritual life than a failure to relate oneself to one's inner being — such inner attunement is the key for forgetfulness of personal self that involves sacrificing force of evolution. If it is so, then why should we obey our egocentric tendencies and animal instincts? Why should we obey our lower nature which will continue to have its say? To make a mistake is not a serious offence as long as we realize it. We should not be indifferent to our errors.

One can be compassionate, and do charity but as long as one does not go beyond I-ness and mine-ness how can he/she attain Self-Realization? And the key to go beyond is to be aware of them. In general, the human mind is always attached, restless and swings like a pendulum between likes and dislikes. For purification of such a mind one has to be disciplined in tuning his lower mind with the Higher mind. Mind like a mirror gathers dust while reflecting but Meditation or Retreating within acts like a breeze of soul wisdom to remove the dust gathered.

A Clean Life. Inclination for a clean life is already within all of us as a latent human aim. There is an inherent desire in every one of us to be helpful to others and to do something good for others. Such hidden inclinations come into action when the heart becomes pure and mind becomes free from worldly possessions. *A Clean life* is an ideal living, disciplined living,

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that helps us to realize the trap of *Māyā*. *Māyā* is Illusion, *Moha* is Delusion, *Kleśa* is affliction and *Trishna* is longing. It is interesting to know that all these arise from the illusion of *self as separation*. And religion is aimed at understanding the oneness of life. It is the *open mind*, that knows its limitations or barriers or conditionings. For spiritual unfoldment one has to learn to stop the storms of *desire*, *anger* and *delusion* — not by prayer to any God but by careful *self-culture* and transcending the lower mind.

Our Higher Mind is like a flower and as flowers bless the world with their beauty, so does the Higher Mind bless mankind with the gift of Wisdom and creative thought and action. This gift is available to all who seek it. That kind of eagerness and intellectual sharpness is to be developed to be successful in inner attunement and to still the storms of desires, likes and dislikes. Buddha taught this saying *Save thyself by thyself. Raise thyself by thyself* as the spiritual journey is individual and highly personal. It cannot be organized. H. P. Blavatsky makes it clear that the theosophical idea of charity in the book *The Key to Theosophy* means personal exertion for others, personal interest in the welfare of those who suffer, personal sympathy, fore thought and assistance in their troubles or needs. So self-culture requires one's hearty inclination, eager intellect — which is the behests of Truth. This is an inner call to act individually by careful and scientific way of planning to remove the impurities within one's consciousness

which are in the form of past memories, thought and even knowledge. If we are to escape from *Moha* or Delusion we must systematically observe how our ego is deluding us to have many desires and to be in the cage of *Mārā* (The king of temptations). Man under the influence of *Māyā* or illusion, thinks himself a very grand fellow making a fool of himself.

The sense of separateness is the root of all evil. Our intention may be good but still we fail because of *Moha* or delusion of personal growth. Desire is there in all of us but this egoistic mind wants many things and all these wantings are for oneself and therefore his unhappiness is the harvest of his selfish and careless sowing. 'What man sows so does he reap' says the law of karma and also says that there is no injustice. What we have to realize is that there is no evil in wanting happiness, knowledge, peace or even power but that wanting needs to be for others. Misery enters only when there is no place for sharing with others. Wealth, fame, power all lead to unhappiness and they are not permanent. But man is attached to all these and hence his mind is unable to share with others. Unfortunately humanity is carrying the psychological burden, life after life, burden of hate, jealousy, prejudices etc. and that is why J. Krishnamurti asks us to see what is it that reincarnates? Even Albert Einstein said man is the part of this manifested Universe limited in time and space. Man thinks that his thoughts and feelings are separated from the rest, which is a kind of optical delusion of his con-

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sciousness. And because of such delusion man creates a prison for himself which restrict him to his personal desires and to have affection for few persons who are nearest to him. One has to free himself from his prison by widening his circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole nature in its beauty.

There is a tragic story in the history of the TS in India. Some complained about Sinnett and Hume who ate beef and drank wine and still how could they write to the Mahatma and receive answers? It is totally unfair. And the response from the Mahatma 'M' is 'The Mahatmas feel no obligation to communicate with any one who has given up cast of exclusive selfishness'. So this indicates, one has to become unselfish if one really aspires to become the pupil of the Master. One must give up his selfish desire and let his heart shine with motiveless desire. Man has become selfish and carrying the psychological burden life after life. He must think seriously why be selfish? Really why one should identify oneself with that which is mortal and changing moment to moment? For instance human body is quite remarkable, it has up to 100 trillion cells, and every hour about 1 billion cells in the human body must be replaced. The physical body is not an object, it is a system, a microcosm. Our body is a colony a *multi cellular* family we are utilizing. And each individual cell carries out all the functions that the multi cellular body carries out within itself. Even if the nucleus of a cell is removed, the cell remains functioning quite satisfactorily for

some months showing that nucleus is not only the controlling centre because in the absence of nucleus the outer thin cell membrane regulates the cell's activities.

The key is to feel the oneness of life by giving up the cast of exclusive selfishness as stated by the Master of Wisdom. Such feeling and experience cannot be put into words, but needs to be intuited in the silence. Through reverent mind and heart and brooding in silence one can bring that insight of oneness. Such insight Dr Annie Besant shared through the Universal invocation, "O Hidden Life". The One Life is hidden not only from fleshy eyes but also hidden from any conception or belief system. Although it is hidden it is vibrant and alive in every atom. And that which cannot be seen is shining in every creature, as no one is truly dark within. And above all the one hidden life embraces and enfolds all. The milky way of Galaxy with its billions of stars is no more or less than a small creature (amoeba).

J. Krishnamurti also shared his insight and surprised his audience by asking, 'Do you want to know my secret?' and everyone in the hall became curious and alert. He said 'This is my secret that I don't mind what happens.' Then Eckhart Tolle, a well-known author comments 'when I don't mind what happens, what does it imply? It implies that I am internally in alignment with what happens. It is to be in a relationship of inner, non-resistance with what happens. Wisdom religion for all of us is to relate oneself and remain contented. To be contented which is not

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concerned with little or more in life, but to be free from that attitude which distinguishes into little or more likes and dislikes.' HPB mentions in Practical Occultism *He who does not care for Heaven, but is contented where he is, is already in Heaven*, i.e., he is free from attachment and repulsion towards whatever may befall him, and that he acts without determination.

So to sum up, it is now scientifically proved that the environment, the external universe, and our internal physiology and more importantly, our perception of the environment directly control the activity of our genes. The genetical determinancy has its limits. So if we change our beliefs we can change our body physiology. This has become a scientific belief now.

Theosophy teaches us that our true being, our consciousness, the monad is eternal and is outside and inside the body.

It is repeatedly said Theosophy is the Ageless Wisdom and it is not a religion but it is the light that shines through many coloured lamps of religion. So Theosophy affirms this truth and helps us to live harmoniously with ourselves and others. Altruism is the Keynote of Theosophy. All Life is One; Universal law pervades all. There is an evolutionary process working through all life. And more importantly Theosophy points out that selfishness is the chief cause of pain, sorrow and suffering in the world. So it is only through forgetfulness of the personal self and through altruism that one can progress in the spiritual life. ✧

There is a way of life that leads the soul
To happiness undreamed of by the mind
A way whereon the earnest heart may find
A reason for its being, and a Goal.
When laughter grows no more to be enough
And pain no longer turns the heart to tears
The entrance to that Mystic Way appears
And all the world becomes a plastic stuff
That shapes into a Stairs. O world, be Stairs
To me. Be no more hearth or prize or song
Be no more home, but scenery by the long
Long way to Home. Be hand that bares
My soul of all its wilfulness to be
A thing apart from what is really me.

HELEN PALMER OWEN

Theosophical Work around the World

Adyar

Dr Annie Besant's Birth Anniversary was celebrated at the International Headquarters on 1st Oct. President Mrs Radha Burnier presided over the function and gave the concluding address. Mr S. A. Sanghram, the new Garden Superintendent, Prof. Geetha Jaikumar and Ms H. Sripriya spoke about the exemplary life and work of Dr Besant. Ms K. Jayashree sang the Besant song. At the end, flowers offered in memory of Dr Besant.

Naarden

The International Vice-President Mr M. P. Singhal and his wife Sashi visited the International Theosophical Centre Naarden from August 3 to 6, and he gave talks to the members of Dutch Section on 'Living with Self Awareness' and Human Destiny. His talks indicated real happiness lies in Self-knowledge and awakening to one's inner true being.

India

The International Vice-President Mr M. P. Singhal inaugurated the 94th Annual Conference of the U. P. Federation at Ghaziabad on 28-29 Sept. 2013. Bro. S. Sundaram General Secretary, Indian Section was the chief guest on the occasion of the 108th Annual Conference of Bihar Theosophical Federation held in Patna on 8th September. He also visited

Bhubaneswar and Cuttack lodges of Utkal Federation and gave public talks on '*From Individual to Indivisible*' and '*The Essence of Revolution*'. Smt. Manju Sundaram conducted a study camp on 'The First and the Last Freedom' by J. Krishnamurti and gave public talk on 'Live to benefit Humanity'.

The National lecturer of the Section Mr C. A. Shinde was the chief guest at the 37th Anniversary of Bharadwaj Lodge and 33rd anniversary of Mayfair Lodge in Kolkata. He also conducted study classes at Bhubaneswar, Orissa and at Guwahati and Nalbari Lodges of Assam from 27th August to 7th Sept. The study class and public talks were attended by a good gathering of learned members and was much beneficial to activate lodge activities.

The Centenary celebration of Marathi Theosophical Federation was held at Belgaum from 21st to 23rd Sept, 2013. The General Secretary of the Section Mr S. Sundaram, was the chief guest and Dr Satish Inamdar and International Vice President Mr M. P. Singhal presided over the deliberations on the theme Religion, Philosophy and Science. A special centenary souvenir was released on the occasion. About hundred and fifty delegates from Marathi and Karnataka Federations attended and benefited by the talks of the General Secretary, Sis. Manju Sundaram and Dr Satish Inamdar. ✧

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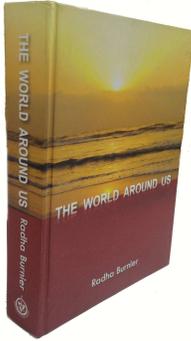
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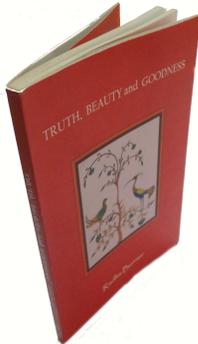
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