



# 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.

# On the Watch-Tower

RADHA BURNIER

## **The World as a Ground for Pleasure**

The chief concern of many is their own personal comfort. These people do not like their familiar routine to be disturbed. No matter what needs to be done or how urgent the task, they will not allow themselves to be inconvenienced. It is well known that wherever there is work to be done there are only a few who are willing to do it; the majority are taken up entirely with safeguarding their own interests and passing the time agreeably.

In *The Voice of the Silence* it is said 'Inaction in a deed of mercy is a deadly sin'. The world is crying out urgently for help; there is widespread need and tremendous suffering. We may perhaps be disturbed when these things come uncomfortably close to us, but if they are far away we are not at all concerned as long as they do not interfere with our comfort. If we can lead fairly agreeable lives ourselves we generally do not bother too much about what happens to the rest of existence. We have what is necessary for our own survival, and perhaps more than we really need, so we have not too many problems.

The condition of humanity has ever been one of struggle, of hopes and despairs, of quarrels and misunderstandings, of cruelty and callousness.

And all this is born of ignorance, of lack of understanding. But we do not really care about it; we care very little about anything until it touches us personally. Only our own narrow satisfaction is important to us and all we want is to sink into any little comfort that life happens to offer. We seek out for ourselves a position which is psychologically and physically cosy, and we settle down into it. Other people, even those near to us, may suffer hardship but as long as we are reclining on soft cushions we do not bother about them.

To the person who seeks pleasure, everything that he encounters become objects of indifference or objects which are obstacles to the fulfilment of his wants. Our desire for power converts other people into pawns which can be used or which can be dominated, controlled, organized and shaped according to our fancy. The whole world is looked at from the point of view of our personal drives and desires.

## **An Unreal World**

These pursuits are of different kinds. Our minds are concerned with a variety of ideas, perhaps virtuous and idealistic, but too often mediocre if not downright bad. And it is these mental pursuits that

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cause problems. If you have a delicious cake before you, it is not the cake that is the problem; the problem is that you want to eat too much of it. To have pursuits, then, is to have problems.

Pursuits and attitudes create various reactions, because when there is a pursuit there are objects which promote that pursuit. There is a pursuit of pleasure and the objects which satisfy that pleasure. And when there is an object of satisfaction there is attachment. Then arise jealousy and envy, and there is anger against any obstacle to that satisfaction.

Pursuits in the mind necessarily carry with them emotional reactions. There is a longing to possess the object of desire (often irrational), so there is expectation. Or there is the dread of its 'being denied' and there is resentment. The likes and the dislikes, the hopes and the fears, the elation and despair — all create turmoil in the mind and colour the world that is perceived through them. Most things, for most of the time, take on a hue that may not properly belong to them. So the content of the mind and disorder within it, distort our perception. The Sanskrit word for desire or pursuit is *rāga*. It is significant that *rāga* also means colour; and it underlines the fact that when there is desire, everything that surrounds that desire is coloured and distorted.

The unreal world of which the individual is conscious is not basically different from the unreal world of everyone else. There is the same search for pleasure. And, as long as this 'fever' — this 'thirst' as Buddha called it — goes on inside the

mind, there is distortion. The suffering it causes is not just physical; it is the suffering of living in ignorance. The mind 'is the great slayer of the Real', for it takes the unreal for the Real. That is also part of the sadness of it.

If a person wants success above all, then all his thoughts centre round his ambition. He makes friends with those he thinks can help him; he plans how to please them; what harmless deceptions he can get away with. So connected to every desire there are many thoughts and emotions, many reactions.

To know something conceptually as an idea is not the same thing as knowing it actually. As an idea, one may accept that there are factors in the mind which create obscurity, but actually to see that this is so — that we live in a dim world of psychological reactions — is something else again. But if we observe carefully and if we begin to see that there are these currents of various kinds inside the mind, which distort perception and create disturbance, it will become clear that meditation is not a matter of acquisition.

The greater part of mankind is bent on achievement of power, the acquisition of pleasure, getting satisfaction of some kind, not necessarily for material things; perhaps for psychological satisfaction in the company of chosen people. If something prevents their being with their friends they feel angry; if they find somebody else in the same company they feel jealous. And this favoured person may not necessarily be connected with ordinary desire; sometimes it happens that people seek a

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spiritual teacher. They want to be in his presence and they do not like anybody else to be near him or nearer to him than they are themselves. So there is jealousy and competition among the so-called disciples. All the feelings and turmoil which exist around a worldly relationship can also be found around a guru. It is exactly the same desire for satisfaction and the attachment which comes from the pursuit of satisfaction.

So the whole movement of life is towards getting either knowledge or information, affection or appreciation, material possessions or a good position or something or other. And it is also the pain of life, because when we attach ourselves to something, sooner or later it disappoints us. We attach ourselves to people and the relationship breaks up. We attach ourselves to ideas and the result more often than not is misunderstanding and quarrelling. Attachment to a narrow set of ideas breeds intolerance and strife. And the same thing happens when the desire is for enlightenment, for some special kind of experience. It creates exactly the same sort of turmoil.

### **The Way to Darkness**

If you think about all this, you will find that our difficulties arise out of the pursuits we have been discussing. If there is the pursuit of pleasure or of power, one can very easily cause injury through actions or words. Other people can become secondary to our ambitions; they do not matter at all and they can be set aside.

Whatever lies in seed within the mind

will grow in strength. For example many people pursue power. It may not be for great power, they may not want to dominate the lives of many people, but the love of power is still there. It may be hidden for the time being or it may show itself in a number of small ways — in their efforts to manipulate others to do what they want, to impose their ideas on them. It may be the desire to hold a position — to be the first in a small group if we cannot be the leader of a larger. Or they may see themselves as superior to others in virtue (although self-conscious virtue is nothing but conceit and pride).

We can feel superior in ability. There are people who are efficient in their work, who can organize business deals, and they have little tolerance for those who are not up to the mark. The feeling of superiority which arises with feelings of virtue or with capacity or a hundred other different things is, in fact, desire for power, and it drags the mind away into darkness and illusion.

And there is not just the pursuit of power; the pursuit of pleasure is equally strong in the mind. We live in a materialistic society where decreasing working periods leave us with more idle hours to fill with amusements, where pleasure-seeking has become not only a dominant objective in life but a major industry. There is therefore the search for self-pleasing in every possible way. Then there is pursuit of pleasure through knowledge; the acquisition of knowledge becomes so important to many people that they do not care how it is obtained. Hence we gather

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more and more facts in the fields of science and medicine through the wholesale vivisection of animals. A person who is following up his interests with one-pointed dedication too often becomes indifferent to the methods he uses or to the objects of his experiments, and this holds true whether he is seeking power or pleasure.

Within the mind, then, there are all these cross-currents, dragging us this way and that towards comfort, towards power, towards pleasure and many other things. And because this is so, the world and everything in it become for us mere objects mostly unconnected with one another.

### The Falsity of Personal Desire

The object of our desires may change. The mind alters its direction but not its nature. So, instead of wanting to achieve something at the material level, a person may want to excel in the so-called spiritual or religious field. He has, let us say, fleeting experiences which lift him out of himself — he may even have had an occasional expansion of consciousness — and he wants to know where he has arrived, he wants somebody to tell him he has now reached a particular stage in

his spiritual journey. He is still involved in the whole psychology of achievement and will probably feel that he is now superior to others on the same search.

We may imagine ourselves to be fairly advanced in the spiritual life; our desire after all is for enlightenment, we want to have some special experience, to reach some transcendental state, to escape the mundane, troublesome features of life. But even when we appear to desire only what is noble and good, the mind is in exactly the same condition as it was before. It is still capable of creating the same disturbance — jealousy, envy, conceit and everything that goes with it. These disturbances lie hidden in the soil of desire for achievement and, like weeds they grow fast.

Desire for the spiritual is often hidden in the midst of desire for one's own progress. How can we be free of all desire, the desire for personal as well as non-personal things? The desire for personal satisfaction is a strange thing. It hides behind other seemingly superior ideas but when it exists it is a barrier. Can we watch for it and transcend it and reach a level where there is no desire at all? ✧

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

Mr M. P. Singhal was recently elected Vice-President of the Theosophical Society in place of Mrs Linda Oliveira, and took up office from 5 January 2012.

Mr T. S. Jambunathan has been appointed from 1 January 2012 as International Treasurer of the Society in place of Miss Keshwar Dastur.

# Self-preparation for Regeneration

M. P. SINGHAL

ADDRESSING the TS Convention on 26 December 1986, Mrs Radha Burnier, the international President, said: 'I cannot sum up the purpose of the Society better than by using the words "Human Regeneration" — the inner revolution which cleanses the mind.'

To end sorrow, the Buddha suggested the eightfold path of righteousness. But greater than that is the objective of the spiritual regeneration of mankind. N. Sri Ram said: 'It is of fundamental importance; because, when that takes place, all else follows. The forces that are brought into play in regeneration will themselves have their effect on the external conditions. Merely to produce an outer change is not enough. It is like teaching good manners.'

While Krishnamurti was being initiated, his teacher told him: 'Will, Wisdom and Love are the three aspects of the Logos and therefore essential elements in self-preparation for regeneration.' However, Will, Wisdom and Love are mere words and their essence needs to be internalized and reflected in our thoughts, words, deeds and behaviour. For internalization, we have to live these aspects

in life day after day diligently, in our full consciousness.

Every work, big or small, requires preparation. The present Convention is perhaps the result of long and sustained preparation. NASA'S mission of landing a man on the moon in the 1960's was executed in thirteen Apollo missions spread over that decade. These are examples of works in the physical domain. Cleansing of the mind belongs to a subtler area and preparations may be spread over several lives.

Just as a tree, though cut down, can grow again and again if its roots are undamaged and strong, our soul is the undecaying root of our life and is capable of regeneration, life after life. The aspirant is assured of the possibility of regeneration by a great truth: 'That the soul of man is immortal and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.' Now the aspirant makes regeneration his definite purpose in life and takes deliberate actions to achieve his goal.

During the Question and Answer session at the Ninth World Congress of the Theosophical Society in Sydney,

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**Mr M. P. Singhal** is international Vice-President and a former General Secretary of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society. Talk delivered at the international Convention, Adyar, December 2011.

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Australia, we were told that compassion ranks higher than wisdom. If a choice is to be made between wisdom and compassion, the latter is the one to be chosen, said Ven. Prof. Rinpoche, a panellist, because if compassion is present, wisdom will follow.

Aśoka, the Mauryan emperor of India in 265–238 BC, conquered the Kalinga country (northern Orissa state), but the terrible sufferings the war inflicted on the defeated people so moved him with compassion, that he renounced armed conquest for ever. Thus the power of compassion completely transformed him. He came into contact with Buddhism, adopted it, vowed to preach the dharma (principle of right life) and to serve all humanity following a new policy of ‘conquest by Dharma’.

The first step in self-preparation for regeneration is to diligently practise Patañjali’s Ashtāṅga Yoga — Yama, Niyama, Āsana-s, Prāṇāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhyāna, Dhāraṇa and Samādhi. It trains one’s physical, mental and emotional bodies; it also purifies, disciplines, energizes and sensitizes these bodies. One is able to live from within, which means living in constant touch with one’s Higher Self, making each vehicle a willing and efficient instrument of that Higher Self. Moreover, each vehicle acts only in response to the impulses coming from within and is positive towards the impulses coming from outside.

The second step is self-awareness. The aspirant should become aware of the content of his consciousness which may

have fear, anxiety, jealousy, desire, anger, sloth, greed, attachment, ill will, doubt, guilt, grudge, confusion and conflict. To be aware of them is an essential step for purging them out of the consciousness. In addition, we need strength, detachment, strong will power and, above all, compassion. We need to substitute the opposite of what we want to purge. If we want to purge sloth, we have to practise activity constantly. Sloth will weaken and be substituted by activity. To improve self-awareness, one needs to practise silence until the habit of instantaneously focusing attention develops.

Let us look at the natural world in its process of regeneration. In 1995, my wife and I took from Adyar several periwinkle saplings and planted them in flower beds in Delhi. We have never fed these plants any type of fertilizer. We periodically water them and prune them when the flowering season is over. They have been regenerating themselves year after year in the original soil in natural sunlight and air. We only see that the roots are protected from white ants or other harmful organisms.

Taking this example from nature, the physical body may be considered as akin to soil, and the soul to the root of life; we need to maintain the physical body in sound health, free from disease, adequately hydrated, and feed the soul with will power, love and compassion. This is the third step in regeneration.

The fourth step is acquiring wisdom. This is possible by living according to the Golden Stairs, practising and perfecting each step diligently and patiently.

## Self-preparation for Regeneration

The first four steps are to be mastered and imbibed in our life before we go further ahead. Selfless service will enrich and widen wisdom, observing nature and life intelligently will help. The fifth step in regeneration is in developing the will by self-recollection and practising reactionlessness.

A newborn baby is innocent, shorn of the memory of previous lives, but he has tendencies and certain capacities from those lives. With exposure and experiences he grows up, he hardens, his mind assuming a certain attitude. In modern terminology, this composite mind is called a mindset. The attitudes reflect the dominant qualities of one's mindset. A regenerated mindset will be free from all tendencies that pollute the mind.

Let us see the mindsets of Gandhi and Mother Teresa. On his return to India from South Africa in 1915, Gandhi travelled extensively by railway trains to know the condition of people and their stark poverty. He travelled always in the lowest class — the third class. Once a journalist asked Gandhi: 'Sir why do you travel in the third class; surely you are not so poor?' Gandhi quipped that it was because there was no fourth class available by which he could have travelled. On another occasion when he went to England for a round table conference, scantily clothed, an English journalist asked: 'Sir, how would you face His Majesty the King in the scanty clothes that you put on?' And Gandhi replied: 'Surely the King would be putting on enough clothes to compensate for us.'

Both these answers reflect the dominant factor of India's poverty in his mindset and a deep concern to mould himself accordingly.

An American lady came to India to meet Mother Teresa and requested training in her Āśrama. Mother Teresa said: 'We have nothing to teach you. You should go back to your country and start serving the first man you encounter on the street.' Begin now, from where you stand. She believed in action, without brooking any delay.

To modify the mindset, we need to exercise the steady pressure of the will, suffusing the mind, the heart and the soul with compassion continuously. Soon, the qualities of self-determination, self-dependence, patience, tolerance and endurance will be reflected in the attitude and behaviour — a transformation of the personality.

Love is the affection that begins by attraction to truth, beauty or goodness in people or objects. The more we apply these virtues in our life selflessly, the stronger the bond of love gets. And its strength has no limit. Compassion can be developed by empathy with the miseries of events or people. For instance, there is the story of the inhuman plight of American and British prisoners-of-war who were forced to build the railway line with a bridge on the River Kwai in Thailand during the second world war, the story of the persecution of Jews by Germans, the story of the sinking of the Titanic in 1912; a visit to a hospice where terminally ill patients are compassionately

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cared for by selfless and dedicated people will evoke empathy. Gandhi used to undertake a fast when human suffering deeply moved him. Self-inflicted punishment helped him to empathize with the suffering of others and cleansed him spiritually, evoking a deep sense of the oneness of life, and completely transforming him.

The practitioner, thus renewed, will evolve from the personality to universality, from dispassion to compassion. To

such regenerated beings, contentment will appear as the greatest wealth. Living in the eternal will bring peace; knowing the Self as One will give power. And as we are transformed by the regenerative power of compassion, we will really see what we see, hear what we hear, feel what we feel, making real HPB's call in 1886 to the delegates assembled at the American Convention: 'Theosophy commands us to work for Humanity' — the hallmark of regenerated man. ✧

**We cannot create a peaceful, intelligent society if the individual is intolerant, brutal and competitive . . . If each one of us is driven by a consuming ambition, striving for success, seeking happiness in things, surely we must create a society that is chaotic, ruthless and destructive . . . It is our everyday life that has brought this and previous catastrophes, horrors; our thoughtlessness, our exclusive national and economic privileges and barriers, our lack of goodwill and compassion have brought these wars and other disasters . . .**

**Worldliness will constantly erupt in chaos and in sorrow . . . All cultures are superficial — but your consciousness, your reactions, your faith, your beliefs, your ideologies, your fears, anxieties, loneliness, sorrow and pleasure, are similar to the rest of mankind. If you change it will affect the whole of mankind.**

J. Krishnamurti

# Buddhism — A Religion, a Philosophy or a Way of Life?

OLANDE ANANDA

**B**UDDHISM can be seen as a combination of all these three above-mentioned. It is a religion in the sense that there is a founder, Gautama, the Buddha, who became enlightened. There are scriptures, the *tripitaka*. Then there is an Order of ordained *bhikku-s* and *bhikkuni-s*, Buddhist monks and nuns, and also lay followers called *upāsika-s*. It is a non-theistic religion where Buddha has put emphasis on the role of the human being rather than having God at the centre of everything. It is also not a religion in the sense of the original word for religion, which means to bind together the soul with its source or with the Creator. Buddha apparently has smiled at the question if there is a Creator God. Then, when he was asked, ‘Well, is there no creator?’ he smiled and kept silent. Then he was asked: ‘Why do you smile and keep silent?’ He said: ‘If I would say there is a Creator God, some people might accuse me of being an eternalist and if I say there is no God, some people would criticize me for being an annihilationist or nihilist.’ So he liked a no-view kind of attitude.

After his enlightenment, he thought: Who in this world would actually be able to understand this subtle Truth, and he realized that his teachers who had taught him the deepest and highest levels of meditation had already passed away. Then, with his divine vision, he realized that his five companions would be in the Deer Park in Sarnath to share his discovery of the Highest Dhamma. That was called the First Talk of the Buddha, the *Dhamma Chakka Āvarthana Sutta* or setting in motion the Wheel of the Dhamma.

At the very time of his first sermon, the first Dharma talk, one of his five disciples immediately understood what he said: *sabbe sankhārā aniccā*, ‘all conditioned things are impermanent’. And one called Kundanya, realized the deeper truth of that and immediately got enlightened.

There were followers who reached different stages and the final stage was called *Arahat-hood*. When they become *Arahat-s* they are completely free from greed, hatred and delusion, *lobha*, *dosa*, and *moha*. When there were sixty *Arahat-s*

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**Ven. Olande Ananda** is Director of the Pagoda Meditation Centre in Nugegoda, Sri Lanka. Talk delivered at the international Convention of the TS, Adyar, December 2010.

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in this world, the Buddha sent them all in different directions, each one alone, for the welfare of the many.

The Buddha said to the Kālama-s, a tribe in that area who were quite intellectually advanced: Please do not accept anything just because the majority of people believe it, or because it is written in the scriptures, or even because I tell you. But if you, after thinking about it, realize that it is not against reason, and it is good for yourself and for others and it leads towards liberation from suffering and to dispassion, peace and happiness, when you are convinced, you can accept it.

The Buddha's teaching is the liberation from suffering. The Buddha said: If you really want to sum it up I teach only two things and that is *dukkha* and the way out of *dukkha*, suffering or unsatisfactoriness of all conditioned existence.

Suppression of thought and the creation of a temporary state of suspension of thought and of a deep, peaceful and strong mind was not, according to the Buddha's discovery, the final destination of spiritual aspiration. And that is why, at the Niranjana River, near Bodhgaya, under the Bodhi tree, he actually decided not to get up from his seat until he found it. And at that stage he discovered that which was beyond, what is called the unconditioned body. And he found that because he had been in this cycle of death and rebirth for so many lifetimes, of course as a Bodhisattva, he had the aspiration to reach what is called *sammā sambodhi*, Buddhahood, or full enlightenment.

That is why he was called Bodhisattva even until the moment of his Enlightenment, a Being on the way to full Enlightenment. But from the moment of his full Enlightenment, which happened at the age of thirty-five under the Bodhi tree, he could teach the Path to others. After the growing of the Sangha, it spread in many directions.

Can we say Buddhism is a religion only or is it a philosophy? Some philosophies remain floating in the air and do not have both feet on the ground; they are rather theoretical and not very practical. Whereas the Buddha's philosophy is very high and is called *abhidharma*, the higher philosophy and psychology of Buddhism. In it you find a very high type of psychology and philosophy which is very practical, that helps one to overcome *dukkha* or unsatisfactoriness.

There is a kind of *dukkha* that comes from the fact that things are changing (*parināma dukkha*), such as the sorrow that we experience when somebody is suddenly dying or when we have been separated from people and situations we love, or when we are confronted by people whom we do not love. Because we do not accept such changes there is attachment, grasping, and sometimes craving also. That is one of the main causes of our suffering: we do not see the realities as they are. That is called *moha*, sometimes *māyā*. *Moha* or *avidyā* is usually translated as ignorance, not knowing. Ignorance, according to Buddhism, is 'not to see things as they really are'. Such ignorance is not to be superseded or

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conquered by an accumulation of knowledge or information.

We can go to school, to the university and attend a course in philosophy, even have a degree in Buddhology and still be called ignorant in the Buddhist sense because knowledge is different from wisdom. Wisdom starts where knowledge ends, as Krishnamurti used to say. The Vedāntin-s probably spent twelve years studying Sanskrit and the Veda-s and in the end they discovered that wisdom starts where knowledge ends. Krishnamurti used to say: Well, could not they have discovered that at the beginning, instead of spending all the time studying and then, in the end, realizing that it is not knowledge that really matters, but wisdom?

The Buddha actually gave very interesting subdivisions to the different stages of knowledge and wisdom. He said there is one kind of wisdom, *prajñā*, which comes from hearing; Kundanya, the first monk of his five disciples, who immediately understood and attained liberation, *moksha* or *nirvāna*, realized that just by hearing the teachings of the Buddha in that very short sentence, that all conditioned things are temporary or changing, impermanent. The other sentence was *sabbe sankhārā dukkhā*, ‘all conditioned things are unsatisfactory’. So that is one kind of knowledge or wisdom that we can learn from wise people by listening to wise words.

The problem sometimes with wisdom-talks is that they go in one ear and straight out through the other one, while very little remains. Therefore the Buddha said

that there is another level where we have to investigate Truth and the Dhamma — by, for example, having a discussion with somebody who knows more about it than oneself. That is called *dhamma vijaya*, the investigation of Dhamma. But even that sometimes leads only to a better understanding and a kind of intellectual knowledge of Dhamma. It is not necessarily called real insight, wisdom. That is another stage of wisdom which apparently comes from what is called insight meditation (*vipassana bhāvana*), or the use of mindfulness, awareness or attention. The development of mindfulness is the major way towards *prajñā* or wisdom, according to the Buddha. So we could say that Buddhism is a way of life also. It is religion, it is philosophy but it is also a way of life.

In the Noble Eightfold Path one finds teachings on *śīla* or morality, *samādhi*, the development of the mind, concentration and mindfulness, and also *prajñā* or wisdom. It is not a theoretical and speculative philosophy but it contains some very practical instructions. The Buddha had no dogma. He was very practical and said to his followers: Do not cling to ideas or concepts. Buddhism becomes like a free thinker’s philosophy and religion when, like in Theosophy also, it is ideally practised, when one does not cling to ideas, dogmas or theory. Another aspect which is very practical is the development of qualities such as *karunā*, *mettā*, *muditā* and *upekshā*, that is, compassion, loving-kindness, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Compassion can also be practised in

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action, like when we have the Animal Welfare Society and other kinds of compassionate acts towards the sick, the poor and the have-nots. *Maitri* or *mettā* is the kind of love that a mother has for her child. And that feeling should be continued, spread out to all other beings. That is called universal loving-kindness or unconditioned love for all beings. It can be developed in stages, even towards oneself. There are people who hate themselves, who cannot be friendly or loving to themselves, not in a selfish way, but they do not accept themselves sometimes. For that also *mettā bhāvana* can be practised. If one cannot develop love towards oneself, it is very difficult to do it towards others.

The Buddha pointed to a gradual path of developing loving-kindness until it becomes all-encompassing. What is called sympathetic joy is a good quality. It is the opposite of jealousy; to be sympathetic or empathetic with the joy of others — when somebody is happy, doing well, not to feel jealous but to feel happy. And then there is equanimity, or *upekshā*, which is different from indifference, when you do not care. Equanimity means to be able to withstand the different kinds of pairs of opposites like gain and loss, fame and blame, happiness and unhappiness, and to keep an even mind towards it. Equanimity can be developed in different ways. It can come through meditation in its higher stages, where there is a level of *jñāna* in which deep concentration and equanimity are the quality of your mind. Even Hamlet was considering suicide as

a kind of solution to the problem of suffering. The Buddha showed a different way out of suffering. He said that by killing oneself and getting out of this there is no end to suffering because there is a continuation of a stream of consciousness that goes from life to life, and one only creates more suffering for oneself in the future and for others. That is not the way out. The Buddha showed that the way out is overcoming ignorance, the main culprit that has shackled one to *samsāra*, the ocean of existence, birth, death and rebirth. And ignorance is this: not seeing things as they really are. During this process of enlightenment, he perceived the chain of twelve conditioned links, starting with ignorance and followed by karmic formations.

We create karma out of ignorance. We need the body and mind to do these things. We have six senses, the physical senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touch, and then the mind. The Buddha said that the fore-runner of all things is *mano dhamma*, *mano sattā*, *manomaya*. The mind is the cause of a lot of stress and it is because of the mind that certain things follow in our thoughts, words and deeds. Therefore one has to guard the mind very much in order to see things as they really are. As mentioned before, insight meditation or *vipassana* is to see things as they really are, changing in nature. What we think is really solid and lasts forever, like diamonds — are they really solid? We have discovered that if you look at a diamond under an electronic microscope it looks quite different, and

## Buddhism — A Religion, a Philosophy or a Way of Life?

there are all kinds of twirling particles and lots of space in between those particles. If you go down to the subatomic level it will turn out to be just energy, condensation of vibrations and energy. The Buddha said there are different levels of Truth. J. Krishnamurti said in his famous speech at the Ommen Camp in August 1929, that Truth is a pathless land and that you cannot get there by any kind of method or technique or even organization. But that Truth, as far as I understand, is different from what the Buddha says, that there are different levels of Truth. One is called relative Truth (*samvṛiti-satya*). That is when we say: 'My name is this, this is my husband, this is my wife'; we would not be able to recognize these things if there is no 'me', or self, or even the conventional use of language. So that is true but up to a certain extent.

Then there is a deeper or higher level of Truth where there is actually no 'me', no self, no 'I'. That is called in Buddhism *anattavāda*, the doctrine of non-self. But the Buddha also said that by evil done by yourself, by good done by yourself, you are the creator of your karma. You are also the receiver of the results of your karma. So there is the self but he denied that there is an eternally unchanging, everlasting self in this stream of consciousness that we call 'me', 'mine' and 'my own'. You do not identify yourself even with what is unconditioned. He says that all things, the conditioned as well as unconditioned, are non-self, not me, mine, my own or myself. It is very hard to realize

it but if one does, that would be the way to liberation from the cycle of birth and death in this almost seemingly unending cycle of existence. Unless, of course, one takes the path of the Bodhisattva and chooses to remain in the cycle of birth and death in order to help as many beings as possible and to develop the qualities of *pāramitā-s*. But according to the Buddhist school to which I happen to belong (Theravada), it is more practical to get out of suffering and working on one's own salvation by following the Noble Eightfold Path. We should not see it as a path from A to B, or from Madras to Delhi, or some physical path, but rather as a way of living in which we can liberate ourselves, maybe gradually.

There are schools which say it is not gradual but sudden, but the preparations take so long, until you suddenly see it and have the realization of the unconditioned. Therefore the preparations on the path, all the techniques, methods and even organizations may have to be, at least psychologically, abandoned in order to realize that which is beyond. One beautiful simile which we find in the Mahāyāna literature is called Indra's net. It shows how interdependent everything is in the universe and gives a picture of a tree, a pine tree in the early morning, in a cool and moist climate. We see there are dewdrops at the end of every needle of the pine tree. When you look into the dewdrop you can see the whole tree and the environment reflected in that dewdrop. And in every other dewdrop also that dewdrop is reflected, all from different angles. And if

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you touch one dewdrop and it drops away, it influences the whole constellation of these reflections in every dewdrop. So that is how important it is to guard our mind through being aware of what one is doing, what one is saying and even what one is thinking and the intention behind the thought. If you are aware of what you are saying, doing, then you can avoid the unskilful and choose the skilful. If you purify your mind you come to the stages on the path where *lobha*, *dosha*, *moha*

have been fully eradicated. Then one will not create any fresh karma. And one would be like a swan in the sky, leaving no trace behind.

The Buddha also said: Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today. Those were his last words and they will be my last words: Work out your own salvation or your liberation with diligence. Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today. I wish you all peace and happiness and prosperity. ✧

If we really and truly understood what is our true personal dignity, we should at once spring to our feet and change our very hearts and minds. We should worship the three treasures and reverence the patriarchs. We should put filial piety first and above all else. We should preserve that proper and respectful love between husband and wife. We should be cordial in the courtesy of our behaviour towards our brothers and friends. We should never forget our duty of fidelity towards our relatives and neighbours. We should have compassion on the sick and the poor. We should work with all our might for our home and family. We should be obedient to the ordinances of our rulers. We should be merciful, honest and patient, so as to be good examples to all men. Then without appearing to instruct we should in the most natural way be able to act as guides. Then all classes of the people would associate in peace. Everyone would pass through life with smiling faces, cooperating with the Buddha and the gods of heaven and earth.

Then the eight million gods, Bonten (Brahma), Taishaku (Indra), Daikoku, Bishamon — all of them would be a protection to you. Evil demons and false gods would flee. There would be no sickness. The whole world would be at peace. The five harvest grains would mature and every home be prosperous. The children who were born would be good too.

Hakuin

# Truth Alone Conquers

BHUPENDRA R. VORA

THE Theosophical Society's motto is 'satyān-nāsti paro dharma' or 'There is nothing higher than Truth'. Truth is the ultimate Dharma which transcends time, because it is invariable. In *The Secret Doctrine*, Madame Blavatsky refers to the One Absolute Reality which antecedes all manifestation and is the Infinite and Eternal cause — the Rootless Root of all that was, is or ever shall be. In the manifested world this Absolute Reality is the consciousness pervading myriad forms of life. To the limited perception, however, only an aspect of this Truth is understood which the perceiver sees as the whole Truth or Reality.

Mahavira, the last Tirthankara of the Jains, said in his theory of *anekānta-vāda* that Truth is relative. His example of the four blind men standing around an elephant and describing it differently, is very revealing. The blind man touching and feeling its tail compared it to a rope; the blind man touching the leg stated it was like a pillar, and so on. Although all the perceptions were correct, they were only partial expressions of the Absolute Truth, of the totality of the elephant. Similarly the illusions of the manifested

world so distort the vision that Truth is either not perceived at all or only partially. Therefore the aspirant says:

The face of Truth is covered with a golden vessel.

Uncover it, O Lord, that I who love Truth may see.

*Īśa Upanishad, XV*

The golden vessel is the symbolic representation of the illusions created in the world of name (*nāma*) and form (*rupa*). Therefore the sage proclaims 'Brahmaiva satyam, Jagan mithyā', meaning that the only 'Reality or Truth is Brahman (the Absolute), the world is an illusion'. This does not mean that the world does not exist but that it is ever-changing or transitory as against the substratum of consciousness behind it which is eternal. The great sages reveal that pervading the entire manifested Universe is this One Consciousness — Brahman. The limited human consciousness perceives only a partial picture of the real nature of things and creates a partial picture of the Reality. As insight becomes deeper, a more comprehensive picture of the

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objective world and the subjective consciousness behind it develops. The curtain lifts as it were to reveal a more complete idea of Truth.

At the transcendental or macrocosmic level this Timeless Being — or Sat-Chit-Ānanda — is Truth Absolute. In the *mul-mantra* of the Sikhs, there is a very apt description of this Being:

There is one God,  
Eternal Truth is his name,  
Maker of all things,  
Fearing nothing and at enmity with  
nothing,  
Timeless is his image;  
Not begotten, being of his own Being;  
By the grace of our Guru made known to  
man.

The whole manifestation of this Timeless Being is an aspect of this Truth, It becoming relative Truth in its microcosmic manifestation, operating under the laws of Nature. A well-established Truth (*satya*) is that various parts of this Universe function harmoniously and do not conflict with each other. Scientists have often marvelled at the precision with which the various heavenly bodies move without colliding with each other. *The Light of Asia* describes beautifully the ‘ordered music of the marching orbs’ in accordance with the laws of Nature.

Nature is the follower of *ṛta* (Supreme Truth) and everything within creation, be they minerals, trees, animals, men or distant star systems that function in accordance with cosmic laws. From the minutest organisms to large stars,

everything functions under laws of Nature.

Truth (*sat*) is the very nature of existence, and it may be said that God is Truth or Truth is God. To live in accordance with the laws of Nature is man’s duty. The sages said:

Speak the truth and follow the path of righteousness (*satyam vada, dharmam chara*)

Any action which is against the harmony of Nature creates conflict and has to be resolved karmically, eventually.

The Buddha stressed the need for understanding the real nature of things in the Universe. In the Noble Eightfold Path, he stated that right view led to right thought and consequently to right action. Consequently a moral and ethical means of earning one’s livelihood and living in harmony with all sentient life was called for.

When disharmony is created by resorting to untruth in whatever way — either through self-centredness and separateness, etc., disorder sets in. Nature, under the operation of the law of cause and effect rectifies the imbalance and restores order. In the *Bhagavadgītā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa refers to the operation of this law when he says to the disciple Arjuna:

Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I Myself come forth; for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age.

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We have witnessed the operation of this law, in the collapse of many fascist and autocratic movements, which seemed to go against Nature's harmony. Other examples of the unjust systems collapsing against the order of nature are the apartheid movement in South Africa which was against the principle of Universal Brotherhood. In his *satyāgraha* (insistence on Truth) movement, Mahatma Gandhi fought against all kinds of injustices, whether unjust laws of the rulers or the malpractices of society, to re-establish Truth and morality. A similar movement in the USA by Martin Luther King asserted the rights of the black people.

In a similar vein the restoration of the planet's environment and ecology is the restoration of harmony. The disharmony

created by human self-centredness has caused much ecological damage to the planet. The result is deforestation, global warming and change in climate patterns. Causes set by human selfishness are resulting in effects which are detrimental to life. Nature has its own way of restoring balance even at the cost of some natural disasters.

What is true and beautiful is creation with its variety of life. The mountains, rivers, oceans, trees and green foliage as well as the birds, insects and animals are all expressions of the One Life manifested in different forms. The preservation of this natural treasure of Mother Earth is the assertion of Truth — for each form of life to operate in harmony with all other existence and to reach its full potentiality.

What profit rosy cheeks,  
forms full of grace,  
And ringlets clustering  
round a lovely face?  
When Beauty Absolute  
beams all around,  
Why linger finite beauties  
to embrace?

Jami

# Adventures in Theosophy

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

## **Expand through the Kingdoms of Nature**

No member of the Theosophical Society is ready for deeper study until, and unless, he has Theosophical knowledge of the kingdoms of Nature. He must amplify and fulfil the First Object of the Theosophical Society by bringing within his ken a realization of what is the brotherhood of the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom. He must know something definite about these kingdoms, not merely from the standpoint of actual information conveyed in Theosophical literature, but also through his own individual expansion of consciousness into the kingdom concerned.

We must be able to sit down by the sea or by the side of a mountain, or near rocks, stones and earth, and be able to project our spirit into them so that, little by little, after many a trial and effort and failure, we are able to enter into the spirit of the rock, the sea, the earth, the mountain. Thus, apart from our Theosophical knowledge (which is a very good introduction to this expansion of consciousness), in addition to it, in fulfilment

of it, we unify our consciousness by a series of experiments with the particular kingdom with which we happen to be for the moment concerned.

## **Contact the Kings of Each Kingdom**

Especially should we seek to expand our consciousness so that we enter into the spirit of the kings of each kingdom. For example, we can enter into the spirit of the jewels of the mineral kingdom—the ruby, sapphire, diamond, opal, emerald, any precious stone which especially appeals to us. There is nothing more delicate, nothing more unfolding and expanding, than to hold a precious jewel in the hand, especially if the jewel has not been tampered with by man by being put in some incongruous setting. If we can lose ourselves in some jewel we hold in the palm of the hand, we can enter into the spirit of the kingship of that kingdom, because we are contacting a very king of the kingdom itself.

It is the same with the vegetable kingdom. Take our Banyan tree, which is far more spiritually evolved than any other Banyan tree. This is natural when we think of those great personages who have

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Excerpts from *Adventures in Theosophy* by **Dr George S. Arundale**, President of the Theosophical Society from 1934 to 1945.

## Adventures in Theosophy

gathered in its atmosphere. We can enter into the spirit of the vegetable kingdom through that tree as we can enter into the spirit of the mineral kingdom through a jewel. The jewel, the tree, are an Open Sesame to the kingdoms to which they belong. We can do the same with the animal kingdom.

### **Commune with the Voice of the Silence**

But that is not all. It is not enough for the student during his earlier years in Theosophy to have these communions with the various kingdoms of Nature, and obviously with the human kingdom no less. He ought also to have communion with the voice of the Silence. If only we could commune with the voice of the Silence of growth, as it can be heard everywhere, though perhaps better at particular times or in particular moods! I am very much afraid, especially in India, where without exception everybody has been brought up in the Western system of education or has been subordinated to the whole of the Western system in his professional career, that there are very few who can really commune with Nature, who can understand what nature is, and can hear the voice of the Silence of her growth.

We do not know much about the science of Silence, for we are always so busy doing something. We are occupied

the whole day long in rushing hither and thither, in going from this place to that place, in reading this or that, there is not enough time left for being. However much we may read or know with the mind, that is little as compared with being, with the building of the Realities of Life into the Eternal Self which we never lose, even when we enter into the heaven world. When we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, the physical body disintegrates, and the etheric body, the astral body and the mind body disintegrate sooner or later. Even the higher mind body may disintegrate and, if the Theosophical student has penetrated, during his life, into the depths of Theosophy and has not been content merely with superficialities, he will live in a heaven world beyond even the higher regions of the mind. The mind, the emotions, the physical body will have gone. It is the Eternal body we must learn to build with the aid of mind, emotions and physical body, but only with their aid.

I sometimes wonder how many members of the Theosophical Society are building with the matter of the Eternal their own eternal vehicles. We may have a member who knows a great deal of Theosophy, can quote from the whole range of our classic literature, and yet his actual spiritual growth may be comparatively small. ✧

**Thrice happy is he who, not mistook,  
Hath read in Nature's mystic book.**

Andrew Marvell

# The Higher Life and the Law of Duty

M. NATARAJAN

We all have the inherent divine spark of potential perfection within us, just as, within the seed is closely packed the vital power of the tree, to grow in all its beauty and splendour. Of course, we need a sufficient period of time for this magnificent progress, marked by the constant and continuous process of elevation and advancement in the desired direction.

Every atom in the universe is alive and ever active. The hidden life of the Supreme is vibrant in each, as stated in the golden lines of the Universal Prayer by Dr Annie Besant. When viewed with the limited consciousness, man is considered to be a tiny microcosm in the mighty celestial Hierarchies. But in the eye of the Absolute Consciousness, there is neither microcosm nor macrocosm, but essentially only One Existence. Man is assumed to be an ambassador of Goodwill from the Almighty Creator to the subhuman kingdoms of Nature, such as those of the mineral, plant and animal. In this great endeavour, man's principal task or duty is to gradually uplift the lower forms to his own level of progress.

We see that life is regulated and ruled by Law in various ways and magnitudes. Some of these, with different names but overlapping, are: Scientific Laws, Judicial Laws, Law of Nature, Law of Beauty and of Love, Law of Harmony, Law of Evolution, and so on.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, Dharma means 'the Eternal Law of the Cosmos, moral or social custom and right behaviour'. As viewed by Annie Besant, Dharma is Duty, Righteousness with the touch of conscience, which is a person's moral sense of right and wrong and of being careful, honest and meticulous in carrying out one's work or duty.

Righteousness refers to being right or justifiable, with the synonyms — being blameless, guiltless, God-fearing, Law-abiding, good, holy, honest, pure, truthful, virtuous, upright and upstanding.

Dr Besant had great interest in and in-depth knowledge of the Oriental epics, Itihāsa and Purāna. She aptly illustrates the right kind of practice of Dharma, the Law of Duty, by narrating the instance of Yudhishtira, the Dharmaputra, ascending

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to Svarga, the Heavenly Abode, along with his faithful dog. Truly speaking, Dr Annie Besant herself has proved to be a role model in practising the Law of Duty in Dharmic principles through her devoted, dedicated, selfless service above all else.

She says that ‘the spiritual alone is the Life of Consciousness, which recognizes Unity, which finds One Self in everything and also everything in that unique Self’. ‘The first great step towards the attainment of this realization is the Law of Duty.’ It is the first Truth which a man must obey, if he wishes to rise in the spiritual Life.

The spiritual Path chosen by the wayfarer is a life path, which is evolutionary in its basic nature. It facilitates an onward and upward spiritual progress with internal and external purification and development. In carefully choosing the correct Path, the aspirant may be promptly assisted by the Law of Duty within him and by the divine Self which readily points out the true path of progress. He must show strict obedience to Duty and conscience above all. He must give due respect and reverence to Truth as the greatest, worshipping Truth without the least hesitation or wavering.

The Law of Duty varies with every stage of one’s evolution, although the abiding Principle remains the same. As the process of evolution is progressive, so also the Law of Duty is progressive. The nature of duty is not the same for all individuals. For example, Dr Besant says, ‘the duty of the savage is not the duty of the cultured and evolved man; the duty of the teacher

is not the duty of the king’ or the Ruler; the duty of the merchant is not the duty of the soldier or the warrior, and so on. Therefore, when we are studying the Law of Duty, we must begin by analysing our own position on the great Ladder of Evolution. We must carefully observe the circumstances around us, which show the nature of our karma.

We must estimate our own power and capacities, with due consideration for our weaknesses and limitations. Finally, out of such careful study and examination, we must find out the appropriate Law of Duty, by which we should guide our steps of progress.

Dr Besant says that the nature of Dharma is the same for all those who are in the same stage of evolution and also in the same kind of circumstances. Further, there is some Dharma common to all, and there are certain duties assigned to all. For instance, the tenfold duties laid down by *Manu Śāstra* are quite binding for all who would work with Evolution, and the general duties which man owes to man mutually.

Very often the real difficulty of those who are struggling to advance along the Path of Spirituality is to distinguish their correct Dharma and also to know exactly what the Law of Duty demands. Our past experience may reveal that there are many such cases in which the conflict of duties appears to arise. One duty calls us one way, and at the same time another duty calls us another way. As a result of this confusion, we may stand perplexed and amazed like Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

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Moreover, our own personality may frequently play a villainous role, says Dr Besant, 'by wrongly directing us to follow the path of desire', instead of the path of duty. When we think that we are choosing Dharma, we may be moved away by Pride (*ahamkāra*). Thus when duty directs us in the right way, our personality may mislead us in the wrong way. In such miserable situations, we must quietly go to 'the chamber of the heart' and try to put aside the personal desire. Let us strive to separate the self from the personality and analyse the situation in clear light. Let us seek the timely guidance and help of the Guru Deva — our Masters. We may thus succeed in our earnest efforts by means of self-analysis, prayer and meditation. Then we will be able to choose the correct path of duty, even in the midst of a few mistakes and blunders, which can also teach us to correct ourselves accordingly. We can learn from the mistakes committed by us or by others around us — this is a blessing in disguise!

In times of difficulty, let us solemnly invoke the help and assistance of the God within us, who will then correct and guide us, and clear our mental vision. When our heart is fixed on the Supreme, we need not fear or despair in vain. We should not be like a coward, turning a deaf ear to the inner voice of our conscience. When we have 'dulled the Divine Voice within us', we are likely to be led astray by choosing the lower, rather than the higher. We may even tend to cause some injuries to our evolution itself.

If we want to distinguish between the good and the bad, the Deva and the Asura,

we have to 'test them by the standard of Duty and by the righteousness they incarnate'. Wherever duty is not done and where the noble qualities of Love, compassion and self-sacrifice are not seen, there may not be any trace of 'spirituality, which enlightens the world' and sets an example to the people.

We cannot expect the way to be easy and plain on the path of spiritual aspiration. The spiritual life can be obtained only by repeated endeavour. The Path of Duty is found only by fearless and courageous perseverance. In our daily life, let us constantly 'practise to do the right', as far as we see it correctly. Further, it is very important to choose the proper guide who may aid in the aspirant's upward mobility. The test and proof of the advanced spiritual man, fit to be the guide, teacher and helper of others, is in the perfection of the good qualities and ideals within him.

We owe a duty to each one of those whom we meet in our daily life. Duty is the payment of the debts and fulfilment of the obligations we owe to the people around us in various measures — such as the duty of reverencing and obeying our elders and superiors, the duty of being gentle, affectionate and helpful to those on our own level, and the duty of protection, kindness, compassion and helpfulness to those who are below us. These are the Universal duties which every aspirant should try to fulfil as far as possible. Otherwise there is no sign of any spiritual living in reality.

'Whenever a person comes within our circle of life', let us see that he 'leaves that

## The Higher Life and the Law of Duty

circle as a better man'. When an ignorant person comes to us and suppose we have enough knowledge, 'let him leave us as a better-informed person'; when a weak and helpless person comes, and provided we are sufficiently strong, let us leave him strengthened, and not humiliated by our pride; when a sorrowful person comes to us, let us share his sorrows and console him. Everywhere and on every occasion, let us be tender, patient, gentle and helpful towards all around us. On our daily path, let us not be harsh or inhumane so as to confuse, bewilder or perplex others, even the least form of life. As spiritual beings, let us be a source of comfort, peace and harmony. Let us be as a lamp within ourselves and shine forth light on to the world. Let us judge the quality of our spirituality by means of our good effect on the world. We must be careful and very particular that the world may become better, purer and happier, because we are also a part of it and not apart.

Let us not hurt or wound the feelings of others. Let us be careful how our thoughts, words and deeds affect the lives of others. Especially our tongue must be gentle and our words must be mild and loving. The so-called difficulties and failures in our spiritual life are only within us and not outside of us. It is here in our own lives and in our own conduct that the spiritual evolution must be made, and continued thereafter.

The noble 'Heart of the Divine Life is Infinite Compassion'. Hence the spiritual

man also must be compassionate. Let us readily share our love and affection with all our fellow beings, by satisfying their immediate basic wants and at the same time putting aside our own personal needs and comforts. That alone is true spirituality. In the broader sense, 'it means the recognition of the One Self in all'. The true spiritual man must lead a higher life of self-identification, filled with Brotherly Love with all that lives and moves. When we thus solemnly practise the great principle of 'Universal Brotherhood', there is no such 'other' in this world. Because, when we mention the word 'Brother', it includes the 'other' also; quite similarly, when we call our beloved 'Mother', the 'other' is there under her affectionate fold. We say a mother is God-like, because

Mothers give and forgive;  
others get and forget.

Though each in the universe is a separate form, the same One Single Spirit moves and lives in all and that is the hidden Love embracing all in Oneness. So without the least hesitation, let us give devotion in abundance to the Supreme Love and thereby establish our inseparable bonded oneness with each other. When we thus rightly resolve in this noble way, in spite of our inherent weaknesses, faults and blunders, there is the promise of the Eternal Truth which will make us all dutiful and let us rest in abiding Peace for ever and ever more. ✧

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# Questions and Answers

**Q: Autonomy and freedom of expression are misconstrued and misinterpreted by a few members of Lodges and even certain Sections. Will you please enlighten us in depth. This is required more now because it affects the TS.**

**CP:** Freedom is only freedom when it is used responsibly. The moment freedom is abused it is destroyed and lost, or it is certainly imperilled. This is true in almost every walk of life and particularly true in the political sense. It runs also in the TS. We know that there are certain Lodges in the world which have drifted so far from the whole tenor of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society that they do not belong to it any more, because they have abused the freedom of expression and the autonomy which they possess as a Lodge. There may be a particular city which has only one Lodge. If that Lodge fails in its duty to present the sort of philosophy which is embedded in our teachings then we have no expression in that whole city. And worse than that, the people in that city think that the Lodge teaching is Theosophy while we very well know it is not. So there are tremendous problems there. Do you think that we should

withdraw some of the freedom or some of their autonomy? That will go against the philosophy on which our Society is based. There has to be a demarcation line somewhere, and the only way we set demarcation lines as practically observed, is by people being responsible for the way they use their autonomy and freedom of expression.

**PO:** Col. Olcott, while he was reviewing the first decade of the work of the Society, actually marvelled at the fact that the Society continues to be a cohesive unit and he said that the Society did practise the principle of autonomy, in the sense that the General Secretary of the Indian Section will not determine which programme is conducted in Lodges in Karnataka, Bengal, Maharashtra, and so on; and the International President does not determine what will be the activities of the Australian Section, or the American or English Section. Autonomy is a very important principle. But as Colin mentioned it can be misused. Col. Olcott said that basically what holds the Society together — he said that in around 1885 — is its dedication to its Objects and its work. It is not just a framework of the international rules that are important,

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International Convention 2009, Adyar. RB – Radha Burnier, CP – Colin Price, PO – Pedro Oliveira.

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but we know in the past that Lodges and Sections have disregarded that constitutional framework and went on to do their own thing. There was a Lodge in Australia where I worked for a while, that declared itself to be an umbrella group for all spiritual groups in Australia. That is not the mandate of a Lodge. The mandate of the Lodge is in its Charter. It becomes the representative of the Society. So if there is no discernment and no commitment to the essential work of the Society, the principle of autonomy can be misused. The same applies to the principle of freedom of expression. If you read the Resolution of Freedom of Thought it is stated there that every member is encouraged to his or her views within the limits of courtesy and consideration. It is very easy to forget that. In other words we may disagree but we do not need to become like a labour union assembly where sometimes in agitation, chairs are thrown at each other. This happens again, I think, because it is easy for us to forget what the essential work of the TS is. And why we are in it. We should ask this question: Why am I a member of this Society? Am I in it to promote my own views, my own influence, or do I really want with my heart and mind to offer service to its purpose?

**RB:** This is not a question for everybody. Autonomy for instance does not mean that a person feels he has the right to kill off a certain group of people or a certain group of living things and be a member of the Society. Suppose somebody had said,

‘I think the policy of killing off the Jews was right’, which the Nazi government followed, then he should not be a member of the Society. A person cannot say ‘I believe that this caste consists of people who are no good and I do not believe in being brotherly with them’. He should not be in the Society. It is the same with all creatures other than human beings. So let us not think that autonomy and freedom of expression are only towards members of the Section, and so on. This is very important to realize that as members of the Society we accept and respect life in its many forms.

Even the life of a small creature has to be examined and we must learn to love it, to appreciate the fact of its existence, etc. This idea used to be common in India that all life is sacred. So autonomy inside the Society does not go to the limit of the individual member regarding a certain section of life as not worth considering, as the Nazi did to the Jews.

I think autonomy of expression, freedom of expression which is mentioned here, is necessary, for at the same time we like to express and find out for ourselves the nature of things. One may follow a so-called religion and be told that you have to think in a certain way; it is wiser not to be a member of that religion or to consider oneself as a member. This idea that everybody has to think exactly as they are told on certain subjects is regrettable. People can think what they like. They can feel as attracted to one thing as they want but at the same time not disregard any section of life whether

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they are Jews or some animals, or whatever it is.

To regard all life as respect-worthy, as sacred, as the good growing in its own way, is very important. I suppose members who come into the Society have a feeling for this, that they do not feel that they can abuse the existence of any other creature. But at the same time when it comes to thinking about various things like what we discussed just now about the question of where a person will go, etc. we must be free to find out and the Society offers that freedom of discussion, freedom of expression, freedom to think for oneself.

So we can think whether there is a life after death, whether it sounds reasonable; we do not have to accept it because so and so said it. Some religions say it, C. W. Leadbeater says that, but we can think it out for ourselves. And temporarily we can have a certain view knowing that it is temporary. And we can discard that view and have something better. So the views are not something to be held on for good; they can be changed, they can be modified, they can be enlarged. All that is possible.

Take the various religions, for e.g. the Hindu religion. I take it because most of the people here are Hindus. Gradually the idea came into Hinduism that certain people are outside all the castes, that they should not be touched, they should not get education and so on, but fortunately we have escaped that trap and there is no 'outcasticism' at the moment. Of course, there are individuals who still face that.

But the state, the authorities, do not propagate the idea that certain people who are born in a certain family are not worthy of consideration. So like that, in every religion, certain ideas have arisen. That is why we have, as members of the Theosophical Society, to examine the concepts in every religion and accept only those which are concerned with the idea of Universal Brotherhood.

Let us not think that we have to practise brotherhood in a way that means we are nice only to the people who are nice to us. Brotherhood is to be practised with everybody, with people who are not nice to us, who are intellectually below us, because they are all growing. In our hearts, deep within ourselves, we must see the beauty of this flow of life. So let us have a proper consideration of the idea of freedom. Freedom combined with brotherliness towards all creatures is really the way of life which seems suitable for a member of the Theosophical Society. I am sorry to have taken a certain time over this but it is an important question.

**Q: The teaching of J. Krishnamurti may have a meaning in the context of Theosophy. If so, what is it?**

**CP:** J. Krishnamurti may have had a tremendous need during his life to try and get people to know the essential nature of things; and he had a unique way of expressing it; and expressing it to people who did not want the formal way that we usually have of imparting information. Those of you who have watched any of

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Krishnamurti's videos will know exactly what I am talking about. He did not feel the need to teach classical Theosophy because he wanted to communicate the message in his own special way. I am sure, having seen some of the videos, that he communicated to a lot of people to whom we, in our somehow more formal standpoint, would have great difficulty in communicating. His is an art of communication. I think Krishnamurti has to take his place amongst all the other ways in which we try to communicate this incredible message of Universal Brotherhood. If this message of Universal Brotherhood does not take hold of humanity in the next few generations, it is quite reasonable to suggest that humanity in this particular cycle is doomed. I believe that we hold in Theosophy and the Theosophical Society the key to the future of humanity. That is how strongly I believe in it.

**PO:** For a number of reasons, that we do not have the time to examine here, the Society was slowly drifting into a cult-like organization. I am talking about the 1920s. Krishnaji not only perceived that, but one may attempt to say very tentatively that he basically refused to perform a role that he did not choose. Many members of the Society were disappointed because they expected him to fulfil the structure of their own expectations. He shook the tree of these people. There are people in the world who have not recovered from that, and some of them say his teaching is not Theosophy; it does not explain the septenary constitution of man; it does not

explain different levels of Karma or the cycles of evolution, but there is a different approach to all this.

In her biography of Mr Krishnamurti, Mrs Pupul Jayakar has a dialogue with him which is very revealing. She quotes a conversation in which Krishnamurti said he has written a number of books and people would refer to those books as Krishnamurti's teaching. He said that the teaching was not the books. The books only aid to look at yourself, understand yourself and go beyond. Then he said the understanding of oneself is the only teaching. Now if you can see in certain statements in *The Voice of the Silence*, this is exactly what is said. One cannot tread the Path until one becomes the Path oneself. So many things that were mentioned by Krishnamurti have profound relevance for the students of the Theosophical Society. Probably the centre of all this is the need for us to question everything; and therefore keep our minds open. He was relentless in this insistence. His denunciation of human psychological conditioning is unparalleled in the twentieth century. Not only because it was vigorous but also because it was true and profound. He did not invent. He did not make it into a philosophy. He was communicating what he saw.

**RB:** I think the people who came into contact with him to a lesser or greater degree and were open to him and what he was trying to say, were very fortunate. I have a little experience of contact with him and could see that his interests were

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as wide as the world. He was interested in Nature. Nature has been dealt with a little briefly, I must say, during this morning but the trees, the plants, the small animals, the sky, everything was part of his consciousness. He was interested in that. He was interested in the human situation. He was sorry that human beings could not understand themselves. They were pursuing useless things.

Think of the present world. There are rich people who spend their time at parties, in trying to pass the time or to avoid dying, and wasting their lifetime. But we human beings have a brain not fully used. We have the power to think, we have the power to feel as large as life itself. We have a lot of power but we do not use that power; we use only a minute portion of that. And one could see in him a person who had that power and he knew how to use it.

In this incarnation he was using it to tell people certain things. He considered the manner of one's living to be more important; that is, the human living, because the human being affected all living beings. And the human being — he did not say that, I say it — in the middle of progress, has to go very far ahead. Krishnaji had the greatest affection, reverence, feeling, for the Buddha, because the Buddha, according to Theosophical ideas was a human being who had gone very far. But he could see that every human being would go far like that. If a person was on the beginning of the way or the middle of the way, he did not say anything.

I remember when sometimes I used to go to see him: at that time we had a driver in the Society who was a very nice man; he was very humble. He had very little education, except the natural education which he had. So he stood at a little distance. And Krishnaji went out to him, took his hands, said a few words; he was so affectionate and good to him. He could be nice to anybody; however good or bad we think that person is, he did not think so.

There was an elderly lady standing on the beach where he went for walks — people used to do this to see him — and this lady just fell on her knees and saluted him with her head on the ground. He went up to her and held her hand and said: 'Amma', which means 'mother' in our language, and there was so much affection in his words that the lady did not want to hear anything more. So he could give his affection. He could give many things but he gave only what he thought the people needed at the time. That is the teaching which you find in his books.

So J. Krishnamurti was not an ordinary person and the Theosophical Society was right in educating and looking after him and seeing that he did not die. I say this because the family was very poor and the father did not know how to care for the children when Krishnamurti's mother died. He was looked after by Annie Besant whom he had great regard for until the end of his life.

But in the context of Theosophy, Krishnaji has a great meaning because he was brought up by Theosophists, he was

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given all the facilities he required by Theosophists because most of the Theosophists believed that he had a great message to give and they were proved to be correct. He had a message to give; a time came when the people in the Society did not care for him but his work was clear to him and he went about doing that work which was to make people feel that there was a great way ahead for them to tread. To go in that way, they had to shed various feelings, various ideas, the prejudices they had. He talked about that. He talked only about human beings, that they could free themselves and become free individuals, something different from what they were in the present time.

So I think that his life and his teachings have a great meaning for the members of the Society. I can go on talking. But this is enough.

**Q: What advice would you give to a very young member who has joined the Society? Is it necessary for the student member to attend Lodge meetings?**

**CP:** It is a very general question which needs a number of specific answers. You cannot generalize when you ask a question like this; it depends on the young member enormously. Some young members may not be particularly interested in the intellectual side of Theosophy when they come into the Society. They come in because they like the friendship; actually they do. They come in because they like the idea of Brotherhood rather

than because they are attracted to the philosophy. Not everyone. It is a long way to be attracted to philosophy. But maybe they are attracted to Brotherhood. So it depends on what sort of young man you are looking at. If it is a young man, as I met in the dining room earlier this week, who had come from Bangalore, and he was deeply interested in discussing philosophy, then you should offer him philosophy as deeply as he wants to go. But that is just a particular young member.

Is it necessary for the student member to attend Lodge meetings regularly? Yes it is. You cannot do it alone, at least not in the early stages, in my view. You need the encouragement of other people to help you along the way. In the *Pilgrim's Progress* — I do not know how many of you have read it — it is mentioned that John Bunyan all the way shows the pilgrim leading the companion to help him along the way. We all need companions. We all need other people to share the difficulties of treading the Path and young people in particular need the companionship and brotherhood and the help of other people to see them along the way. There are very few people indeed who can actually pick up *The Secret Doctrine* and be a Theosophist just by reading the books; they need the fellowship as well. Yes they do need to attend the Lodges regularly.

**PO:** What advice would you give to a young member who has joined the Society? Do not read *The Secret Doctrine*

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in one sitting. It may give you a headache. I remember my own days as a young Theosophist in Brazil. One of the things that was really rewarding were our group meetings. I went to Uruguay, Argentina, and different places in Brazil. Having the sense of participation is very important, particularly, I think, for a young person. The Society provides that. I was present in Rio de Janeiro in 1981 with Felix and Eunice Layton when they visited. Felix Layton had worked here for some time. He was a very nice person; Eunice was his wife. Both of them were speakers for the TS in America for many years and their book, which is available in the bookshop is called *Life, Your Great Adventure*. It is the result of their lecture tour in America. A young man asked Eunice what advice she had for a young member and she said: 'Question everything'. But it was not just that. The spirit of questioning and investigation is important. I think that one should also try to familiarize oneself with what Ianthe Hoskins called the fundamentals. She was not talking about fundamentalism as it exists today in the world. One should study the fundamental principles of Theosophy again and again, not just read them but try to understand them. I think her book, *Foundation of Esoteric Philosophy*, is a good beginning for a student who is a beginner. And so, attendance of meetings is important, study is also important, and participation — coming to know each other and realizing that we all share a great deal together in the work of the Society.

**RB:** What advice would you give to a young member who has joined the Society? If it is really a young member, I would give no advice. I was a little over ten, which is the youngest age when you can join the Society, and Mr Arundale was there. He gave us nice presents from time to time. He gave us a lot of his attention, affection; he gave us advice very casually at times, but I can never forget what he was. So it depends on how young a person is. When a time comes when the young person grows up and is questioning everything, you can help that person to find out what are right questions, what are stupid questions, what are useless questions, what are good questions, etc. He may have joined the Society or not joined the Society, but he is young.

Is it necessary for a student member to attend Lodge meetings? It all depends on how young the person is. When he is very young he may not attend any meetings. When he is a little older he may attend some meetings and when he is still older he may have responsibilities which will make it difficult for him to attend the meetings. So the important thing is not to attend meetings for the sake of attending meetings. However, if he feels like it he should be able to attend the meetings. When he is older, you can say he must begin to ask some questions, and being with other people who have similar interests may help him to attend meetings and come to meetings, and so on. Everything depends on whom you are dealing with. I think what is important is that we have that kind of sensitivity. If we are able to

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interest people, whether the person becomes a member or not a member, is not important. In the Theosophical Society, we have never tried to make members. I say we have never tried; at least some of us have been told not to make members.

Other questions have been asked which we have no time to deal with, about making members, but it is not necessary to read them out. What we need is a certain number of members who can do the work of making other people realize that there is Theosophy, etc.; but maybe there are others who understand. We have small books, and bigger books, which go to many people and who wonder how members can buy all these books. Members do not buy them. They are bought by various people who become, sometimes, interested enough to become members; at other times they do not feel interested but they are influenced by the

books and that is very important. So you leave the person free to become a member or not a member. Becoming a member may not be the first thing that concerns us. Whether he is interested in the deep questions which Theosophy puts before him when he grows up — this is important and if he is so inclined, he will join the Theosophical Society. If he feels inclined to help other people in some ways, he may join the Society. That is very good. We are very happy when some people join. But when they join because they are told to join or induced to join in one way or another, let us remember that Theosophy is more important than membership of the Society. We are happy when people become members but we are much happier when they really study Theosophy in the real sense of the term; study life, study our relationship, study how to give to other people what we have. ✧

**As our funds warrant, we shall print and circulate our documents, and translate, reprint, and publish works by the great masters of Theosophy of all times.**

Henry Steel Olcott, *Inaugural Address*, 17 November 1875

# Books of Interest

NATURAL THEOSOPHY, by Ernest Wood, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Chennai, 2008, pp. 158.

*Natural Theosophy* is a compilation of twenty articles by Mr Ernest Wood who was attracted to Theosophy at a very young age. He arrived in India early in the twentieth century and became a co-worker of Dr Besant in her educational activities. The book is divided into two sections: 'Life and its Purpose' and 'Happenings by the Way'. In the Preface of the book the author says:

Theosophy is the deeper belief that we are all in touch directly with the heart of life. It is *the* antithesis to materialism, whether in science or in religion. Theosophy is not a religion, or if it is, it is the one religion in the world. In it every man is his own priest, and intermediaries between him and God are impossible.

The attempt of the author is to present Theosophy or Divine Wisdom to the modern world in a new style without losing its sum and substance.

The first article, 'The Greatness of Life', deals with the subjects 'Forms are Not Matter', 'Incarnation Is Limitation' and 'The Unity of Life'. According to Ernest Wood, 'to incarnate' is a kind of active or practical meditation. He says:

There are always three steps in a complete act of meditation — first concentration,

then meditation, which goes on until we have known the thing concentrated upon as fully as we can with our present ability, and then contemplation of that full thing. It is the meditation that gives knowledge, which is power, and contemplation causes us to reject the object and take away the power for use elsewhere, like the bee that takes the honey from a flower.

In 'Unity of Life', he says: 'It is the life which is the big thing and the world which is the small thing, and the world is in the life, not the life in the world.' He quotes Śri Kṛṣṇa who said in *Bhagavad-gītā*: 'All beings are rooted in me, not I in them.' In the article, 'The Value of Experience', he says:

There cannot be the dreadful injustice of stark retribution, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But there is the marvellous justice that we live in our own world, and so learn. . . . It is my own cruelty facing myself and it shows me the unsatisfactoriness of a life of cruelty.

According to him we can benefit from our own experiences, whatever they may be.

In 'The Great Active Principle', Mr Wood analyses life and describes its six distinguishable activities, namely, *will* (purpose), *love* (interest), *thought* (method of planning), *knowledge of self* (the essence of all will), *knowledge of life*, and *knowledge of objects*. In the chapter, 'The

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Human Life Cycle', he quotes from the *Mahābhārata*: 'This is the world of actions, and that is the world of their effects. In "heaven" the results of actions already done are enjoyed, and these must be carried out completely, but no other actions can be performed.' With a beautiful example he narrates the use of a form:

So in the course of a lifetime (or rather a bodytime) a man makes and uses his forms, as though a pianist should make his piano, play upon it, wear it out and cast it aside.

Philosophically said, 'Life is a song' which we accompany with our own musical instruments. 'The passing away of forms will not trouble those who understand the fundamentality of life. On the contrary it will be seen that death has its uses.' The author says that there is only one royal road to the fullness of life. It is the natural road of positive living. Men are busy making it long, because they are afraid of life. The path of the spiritual life is always compared to an uphill journey.

Again he says:

We are familiar with the simile of a broad road winding round a mountain and rising spirally to the top, and the idea that on this the millions toil, while but a few take a steep path which goes straight up the mountain side. But the straight path is the natural path. The winding path is the unnatural.

A true Theosophist is supposed to take the natural path. Here he reminds us of the famous book by Dr Annie Besant,

*In the Outer Court*. The articles, 'The Function of Desire' and 'The Goal of Life', show a new approach to everyday life. Ernest Wood remarks: 'If you examine some small object and study it carefully . . . you will come to understand it, and soon understanding will be easy.' He also says: 'For the small things of life are marvellously united with the great whole of life, as the sun may shine into every drop of water.'

According to Ernest Wood the world is a school in which we learn our daily lessons in life. 'We have not our full life, but are learning to live, and all the objects of the world which are taken up and put down one after another are like the toys of a little child.'

'Bondage and Freedom' deals with human nature and the approach to this world. He says there are only four answers to the question which each should put to himself — what do you want? Some want sensations, some want possessions, some want friends and some few want capacity for a fuller life. He again classifies people as two — those who live for the delights of the body and those who live for the delights of life. According to him, this is really the difference between the materialists and the Theosophists.

Ernest Wood quotes Buddha and describes the five fetters: selfishness, doubt, uncertainty, superstition, liking and disliking. He remarks the word *Arhat* means literally one who is able or competent — one who is really living, whose life is not obscured by circumstances.

In the chapter, 'Brothers and Friends',

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he says: 'It is easy to be kind to the unfortunate, the ignorant, the inferior, because that at the same time ministers to our pride, but what is much more needed is kindness or friendliness to equals in ordinary life.' 'Brotherhood is a sort of divine arithmetic, in which two and two do not make four, but forty, four hundred and even four thousand.' How marvellous will human life be when nearly all men have learned to put their very best talent into the common stock. He observes and draws the real picture of progress. He teaches us a very practical thing to be observed by every one of us. 'There are no enemies. All human contacts are beneficial. The man who hurts our feelings or puts obstacles in the way of our plans, or presents to our vision the ugliness of dissipation or cruelty, has his high uses. He teaches me very forcibly what not to do, as others teach me what to do. . . . All men are our friends, but no men are our masters.'

One entire chapter is devoted to the subject: 'Masters and Men'. One of the important messages of the Theosophical Society and the Theosophy of the modern world is the concept of liberated Men or Mahatmas. At the same time there are many wrong notions about their work and approach to human problems. Men fancy many things and weave many ideas around the enlightened ones. The attempt of Ernest Wood is to free us from such wrong notions and ideas about the Masters of Wisdom. He says:

The Theosophical Society has the same function as the Masters. Its purpose is not

to attempt to feed the people, but to call their attention to great truths with which they can feed, clothe, shelter, amuse and educate themselves as men . . . greater than any material gift is the offering of wisdom.

'If people think they *need* a personal Master, by that thought they destroy their own power and delay their own progress.' He shuns the gurudom of the new age: He strongly blames people who cling to the idea of Masters and lead an idle life. 'There are two kinds of persons to whom the Masters cannot communicate — those who cannot get on with them, and those who cannot get on without them. . . . Occultism is not like Christianity, which holds out to you the false promise of mediatorial interference and vicarious merit.' The wise words of the author should open the eyes of every one of us 'who aspire to become the pupils of the Holy Ones'. He also gives HPB's very practical guidance to tread the path:

Take a half hour each morning upon first rising, and in an undisturbed place free from all noises and bad influences concentrate your thoughts upon Them and upon your own higher Self, and will that you shall become wise, and illuminated and powerful.

He also cites some examples of partial mental paralysis due to the misuse of the idea of the Masters. Some people remark: 'This work has failed; that shows that the Masters did not want it.' He says: 'Masters are masters of life, not masters of men.'

The second part of the book deals with

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subjects like ‘The Meaning of Theosophy’, ‘Life after Death’, ‘Reincarnation’, ‘The Real Meaning of Karma’, ‘The Ego’, etc., which are related to the basic principles of Theosophy. Often we ask the question: What is the sign of a Theosophist? He says:

It is the sign of a Theosophist that his devotion is complete. He is a knower of God everywhere, and therefore he accepts all experience willingly, while others prejudge every item of it according to their pleasure and pain, or the comforts and discomforts of the body, the emotions and the mind.

He boldly proclaims that ‘no one can narrow down Theosophy into a religion, a creed, or a church, without destroying it in the process. It is true that many Theosophists (not all) believe in reincarnation and karma as laws of nature, but belief in those laws does not make people Theosophists.’ In the article, ‘The Real Meaning of Karma’, the author says that ‘each man paints a picture, which is his expression or work. Looking at it afterwards, he is dissatisfied; he sees his own inadequacy. That is the utility of karma.’ According to him Karma is a liberator.

In ‘Progress and Initiation’, the revolutionary spirit of the author is well depicted:

Ten commandments have proved a poor guide to humanity; ten million commandments even could not advise us for all occasions. But three simple spiritual laws — never to fail in will, love and thought — govern every possibility of expression or experience.

As Theosophists, many of us dream that the Masters will intervene in our mundane activities and advise us on every issue. Ernest Wood clearly says, quoting the Masters: “‘Come out of your world into ours”, not “Call us and we will come out of our world into yours”.’ He also states: ‘Since all our activities are the play of children, it would be rather ridiculous for liberated men to come out of their world into ours in order to improve our mud pies or to build better sandcastles than ours all along the beach.’ According to him Masters do not want praise or personal devotion or obedience, except obedience to their never-failing advice that we seek to express the fullness of our life.

In the chapter, ‘Religion’, he remarks: ‘Thus religion is not a special set of activities, different from ordinary life. It is that life properly lived.’ He denounces the role of mediators between God and man because they are not separate things, but the whole reflecting in the part. He sums up the message of Theosophy as this: ‘The Theosophic life stands for whatever promotes understanding, love and freedom.’ In the last chapter of the book, he quotes Master M.’s letter to Mary Gebhard in 1884:

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

K. DINAKARAN

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