



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 Two Worlds: Māyā and Light

One of the statements in *The Mahatma Letters* refers to their world being different from the human world, our world. This by itself is a very big subject. It becomes easier for us to understand if we think for example of a person who has been blind from birth. He cannot see all the things that we see, the beauty of the earth, the colours of the sky, nothing of that. But he or she still perceives sounds, smells, taste and so on, and he experiences the world in a completely different way from us. And there is no way of conveying to him the experiences which we feel, which we go through, because we have eyesight.

Similarly we can take the example of various creatures, animals, birds and so on who live in their own world. In their world there is very little of reasoning and all the experiences which have to do with reasoning in the human life, have no meaning for them. The human being receives affection from them but they cannot understand most of the human experience. And the human being, similarly, cannot understand them wholly because they live by instinct, which is a different kind of awareness from reasoning. By analogy we can try to understand that there may be people who

lead a life which is very different from ours. Their world is not the same as our world, because what is essential and vital in Their world is not important in our world. What seems important to us has no relevance at all to the world in which They live.

Let us consider some points which will perhaps indicate the enormous difference between the world of illusion or *māyā* in which we live and the world of Mahatmas. In the human world, time is very important; in the modern world, much more than in the ancient world. All our organizations and institutions depend on time to function, and if human beings were not conscious of time, these organizations would collapse. But that is only at the outer level.

This illusion of time makes us psychologically face the world in a certain way. The first rule in *Light on the Path* is: 'Kill out ambition.' Ambition exists only because we are under the control of time. Ambition is the desire for achievement; to get something done within a certain time.

Everything in Nature grows and exists and dies according to the dictates of Nature. A child is born and you do not have to do anything about it growing. You

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plant a seed and if the conditions are right it sprouts, becomes a little seedling and then maybe a big tree; it bears flowers and fruits; all this happens by itself.

One can give numerous examples of how expansion takes place, not only through physical growth, but the growth of faculties. Each human being has extraordinary faculties, not only the faculty of reasoning but the faculties which awaken the sense of beauty in him, make him aware of peace, and so on.

These faculties exist in the human being; they have grown into the human consciousness by themselves. But we do not accept that growth, expansion and all that is connected with that can come by themselves. Because of the sense of time, we feel that within our particular lifetime, we must reach somewhere, get something and so on.

And time is an illusion. Time passes differently if you are happy, and in another way if you are in distress. If you are standing in a queue, the time passes very slowly. If you have reached the top of the queue, then time does not go so slowly.

So we see that this has something to do with our desire. If you are at the back of the queue, and you want very badly to be in front, time goes very slowly. But if you are at the top of the queue, then you are not conscious that time is going slowly.

This was perhaps the reason why Krishnamurti made such statements as: 'Desire is time.' And ambition is a kind of desire. It is intense desire. And ambition produces all kinds of difficulties in

relationships. The wars that have taken place in the world and caused misery for millions of people are the products of ambition in the human mind. Ambition makes people want more and more things to satisfy them. We may be ambitious about small things or apparently great things. We may be ambitious to derive spiritual satisfaction, or intellectual satisfaction, not only sensory satisfaction. But it is all the same thing. It is caused by the feeling of the desire for achievement in this lifetime, or even within one part of a lifetime.

Animals do not have ambition, because they have no time-sense. Unlike human beings, they live freely and spontaneously and they do not want other animals to recognize that they have gone ahead more than their friends.

But the ambitious human being wants the whole world to know that he has done better than others. Part of the satisfaction that ambition gives is comparing oneself with everybody else. I have run faster than everybody else and I have got the Olympic gold medal. But the animal runs very fast, unconsciously, not trying to impress anybody else. And competition in this world is the source of enormous evil. In one of the essays of Madame Blavatsky, printed in the booklet *Practical Occultism*, she points out how competition in the modern world is the source of evil.

All this is part of the world in which the illusion of time is strong. Ambition, desire, achievement, all these are expressive of the human mind being under the illusion of time. But in the Master's

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world, this sense of time does not oppress any of Them. The Masters know how to wait for things to grow according to the flow of Nature.

Sometimes people ask: 'Why don't they intervene, and put things right? Can't they remove quickly some of the bad characteristics in the human being?' This is like saying, why is the small plant not a big tree? If we are not thinking in terms of time, we will just be watching the plant growing into a tree. We will realize that what we call a bad man will slowly become a good man and we do not have to force him, model him, change him, all those things that human beings want to do.

So what we call patience is one of the great characteristics which prevails in that world of light, which is the Masters' world. They know what has happened and what will happen, because everything already exists in eternity. We are imprisoned in time, psychologically. They live in the eternal.

In *Light on the Path*, this contrast between that world of light and the world of illusion has not been explained. Four times we are told: 'Live in the eternal.' And from that eternal point of view all the activities, particularly the psychological changes and attitudes, which exist in the human being, based on time, are false. That is why it is *māyā*.

The Future depends on the Present

From the *Compassionate Friend* of the Beauty Without Cruelty organization we understand that the only all-Vegan

Supermarket in Europe is in Dortmund, Germany. It occupies more than a hundred square metres in the centre of the city, which is important, because it has become a large marketing centre. The store, we are told, is offering a variety of food to a numerous clientele. The use of soya spices and other supplements has made it possible to stack the shelves with about one thousand five hundred products. The flow of customers reaches up to a hundred and fifty per day. And this is growing, which is very encouraging.

The world is disproportionately divided because people either belong to the large number who seek more and more, or the few who are conscious of the problem which will undoubtedly arise in the future because of this tendency. The world is in general greedy. But the profits go to the rich and others have merely to look on.

The minority are doing their best to remedy the situation. In America, the number of vegetarians and vegans is growing, not because all of them are concerned with the condition of the poor victims, the animals and birds, but mainly out of fear about the future. Land is being grabbed, as in Brazil, where huge areas of the vast Brazilian forest are being destroyed in order to create farms. The profits will no doubt go to the very rich.

There is need for people to wake up to facts, because only facts will convince them that we are going to face a tremendous problem unless a change is made. The disposal of the vast number of

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animals kept impounded is itself a great danger, because it is polluting the environment, creating disease and so on.

Britain is the only country which is conscious to some extent of the way human beings are using animals for gastronomic pleasure. In about five years most of the animals now in captivity will be free to walk around. This will make a major difference to them. In the continent of Europe they have strict rules about animals in captivity, but this effort seems to be not so successful because large companies which are producing animal products are merely transferring them to countries like India, where hardly any rules exist to protect them.

Global realization of the problems involved and quick action in the right direction are called for. Any movement working for protection of living creatures, and aware of the merit of not using animals for food, is urgently needed.

What is Theosophy?

It has become common nowadays to use the word 'Theosophy' for whatever one understands for the time being by that word. So it is becoming, like the word 'religion' a word which denotes almost anything that the user means. C. Jinarājadāsa wrote in 1941:

The word is of course now used by all, including the public, as a label to describe a set of ideas held by a body of people who profess (so thinks the public) a new faith.

He also points out that in the early days of the Society, the word 'Theosophy' appears very rarely as the designation of the teachings which the Mahatmas offered, 'merely a few times in their letters'. In fact, in the extensive letters of two of the Masters of the Wisdom, compiled by Mr Barker, the word appears seven times.

But it is clear, as we read the letters of the Adepts, that it is not the name that matters, but truths and principles which are eternal and unchanging, whatever label is given to them in successive civilizations.

We are asked to take into consideration the fact that the Theosophical Society itself is a concept which has undergone many changes in its chequered career. In the Constitution of the Society there is no mention of the word 'Theosophy'; and there is *no official definition* of what is Theosophy. So every member can say what Theosophy is or is not.

It is very important that we realize that the work of the Society is to establish a Universal Brotherhood, not to proclaim what is Theosophy. ✧

True enlightenment is to man like sunlight to the soil.

N. F. S. Grundtvig

Without Loving Care, I am Nothing

MARCOS RESENDE

THE biggest challenge in life is to understand it, not just intellectually, but in the essence of its movement of manifestation and retraction.

Who am I? If I answer it by my name, I will see that it is a mere superficial record. If I think I am the body, I will realize that, at some point, near or more distant, it is something that will inevitably disintegrate. All my knowledge, career, everything that has been acquired and accumulated over time, will disappear at some moment in time. The psychological ego itself is a self-image that nature will take care of by erasing it. If I say I am the higher Self that reincarnates, this intellectual explanation does not make me different. One of the most beautiful things in life is to realize that I am nothing except a focus of observation of life, nature, manifestation and relationships.

What place has love in the complex movement called life? What is love, what is its nature?

Love is one of the most important Theosophical teachings for the spiritual path, maybe the most important. HPB said

that Theosophy is essentially altruism and, without love, it is not possible to be altruistic.

The Dalai Lama once said that man is the son of compassion. In nature, animals generally require a certain maternal protection while they are young. But none of them depends, as human beings while they are babies, on the compassion of others, without which they would not survive.

It is not difficult to see that love is an energy present in nature. When you see the beauty of a flower, feel its scent, the beauty of a baby squirrel, the most beautiful colours and sounds that manifest themselves, you will realize that love is always present, if you have sensitivity to perceive it.

The word 'love' is widely used for almost everything, even advertising. The word, so often misrepresented by the human egocentrism, will never express the infinite energy that is love.

In the words of Brother N. Sri Ram:

Love for humanity, for each thing that

Mr Marcos Resende is General Secretary of the Brazilian Section of the TS. Talk given at the international Convention, Adyar, 2010.

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exists, is the ruling passion of the Adept. What characterizes him is a flaming altruism — a love which draws no boundaries and is focused upon every individual living being. It is a love to which everything else in life is subordinate.

Why is love not present in our lives? Why is there no room for such a contagious, aggregating, unifying and beneficial energy as love? The aridity of our lives derives from the simple fact that we are self-centred, continually focused on ourselves and our interests. Even when we try to leave the strictly personal sphere, we expand our centre of interest to our family, our group of friends, our country, always expanding and reinforcing our egocentricity through a divisive and separatist mental attitude.

We are neither capable of seeing life without a division in our minds, nor of observing its vast movement and the profound beauty and suffering it contains. As one of the Mahatmas, who were the founders of the Theosophical Society, said: 'Nature is devoid of goodness or badness. It follows the laws that have an antidote for each poison, a reward for every suffering.' But we, human beings, do not understand the laws governing the material and spiritual life, and live for ourselves or for our people, with interests always limited, and therefore we suffer.

While the human consciousness — our consciousness — is self-centred, operating solely on the basis of personal interests, there will be no room for the endless and

beneficial energy which is love. It will not find space for manifesting itself. Even in the Theosophical Society, which has as its first Object brotherhood, we are seeing how difficult it is to make it a reality, due to our lack of love.

'Love your neighbour as yourself', said Jesus Christ. 'Be like the sandalwood which perfumes the axe that wounds it', said the Buddha. Is this a reality among us? Where is our love?

A Society like ours is a vast experimental field to know ourselves, to test our capacity to love. The first challenge, which is related to brotherhood, is always present, showing us how egocentrism degrades our relations, in a contagious way. And if we want to regenerate them, we must perceive ourselves by seeing the division and separateness in our own minds, in order to break out of these disaggregating delusions.

We are not perfect, but we must have sufficient self-perception to avoid the forces which are present in our ego to act against the laws of unity and harmony.

Harmony does not mean equality or uniformity of thought but absence of division or separation in our minds. When the differences are not taken in a personal way, they can expand our field of vision, enriching our comprehension. On the other hand, when we take them personally, we act against each other and cause a split.

Is it possible, here and now, to die to all personal interests so that in this single moment love can manifest itself? Is it possible for us to embrace each other

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internally, so that deep affection touches us and makes us, together, channels for the waters of life that we may benefit the world?

Let us awake to the perception that only by observing our own heart will we be capable of cleaning and purifying it from all egocentrism, accumulated by decades of self-centred and unconscious thoughts.

Love and wisdom are two sides of the same coin. One cannot exist without the other. Love may show itself in a hard way, but it will always be beneficial and healing. Wisdom, in its turn, always brings a vision of the whole, of the unity behind all things, which is essentially, love. Theosophy, which is wisdom, is also love.

Love conquers all. This is a spiritual truth which governs the subtlest planes of nature. Our mission is to make this subtle energy get to the mental, astral and physical planes, in order to deeply transform our relations, which will be no more belligerent or selfish, but naturally true and affectionate. For this to happen we must perceive ourselves, not allowing ourselves to be fooled by all the tricks created by our thinking and by this pernicious and unconsciously-nurtured thing called self-image.

This wonderful thinking machine, given to us by nature, cannot be allowed to be the greatest ruler of our lives. It exists only for practical things, concerned with our civilized life.

In order to allow the presence of love as a force that conquers all, that brings us closer to the centre of life and allows us,

united, to be channels of the most elevated blessings that can diminish human ignorance and suffering, we must know how to put this machine aside, quietly, calming down its instinctively divisive and speculative movement.

Our Theosophical Society is a fertile field, an extremely useful space for learning about life and about ourselves, as well for the practical and effective exercise of brotherhood. But to make this a reality, we must perceive the divisive and pernicious thoughts present in our relations, and radically change our attitude.

For us to be a light in the world, we must be united. Unity is not made with words but with an inner attitude of sympathy, goodwill and love, with no barriers.

Hatred does not cease with hatred. Hatred can only be extinguished by love. These are the words of Lord Buddha. Likewise, antipathies and antagonisms are only overcome by a deep affection which chooses nothing, asks for nothing, does not judge, but simply loves.

Our dear Theosophical Society is already so brilliantly consolidated with regard to the lack of racial and religious prejudice. We must reflect on the personal prejudices that still affect us and that do much harm to our work.

May we realize ourselves, by observing our ego, with its likes and dislikes, so we can leave them aside, making our relationships, not just in the TS, but wherever we are, healthy, harmonious and deeply spiritual relations.

When self-centred living ceases, love begins to emerge as the morning sun,

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dispelling the darkness of unconsciousness and ignorance. And when this wonderful energy begins to rule our lives, everything changes.

Without love life is sterile, colourless and scentless. We must die to the self, with its array of egotistic interests, by the perception of this self-centred mental structure in us, so that life can be simpler, with care for others and with all that lives, with affection, respect and deep comprehension.

Without love we are poor mortals who live without beauty. Dying to the ego and opening ourselves to that energy that

permeates everything and that keeps the universe alive and united, we are life itself, a blossom in nature.

I close with the wise words of St Paul:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could move mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Love gives beauty to everything it touches. Not greed and utility; they produce offices, but not dwelling houses. To be able to love material things, to clothe them with tender grace, and yet not be attached to them, this is a great service. Providence expects that we should make this world our own, and not live in it as though it were a rented tenement. We can only make it our own through some service, and that service is to lend it love and beauty from our soul. Your own experience shows you the difference between the beautiful, the tender, the hospitable, and the mechanically neat and monotonously useful.

Rabindranath Tagore

The Nature and Role of Love in Life — Some Reflections

SURENDRA NARAYAN

IN that beautiful booklet, *At the Feet of the Master*, the last chapter is on ‘Love’ and it starts by mentioning that of all the qualifications, Love is the most important for when love pervades one’s nature, the other qualifications or virtues are spontaneously acquired. But, that love has to be pure and not so-called love which is based on selfishness, self-centredness and personal identity. In pure love duality merges into oneness. The gap between a member of the Theosophical Society and a theosophist also arises for the same reason — the presence of a degree of selfishness, self-centredness and personal or self-identity, which prevent growth in refinement and thus, in pure loving action.

Madame Blavatsky had once pointedly cautioned the members of the Theosophical Society of an important Section, who had gathered for their Annual Convention, against this trait of self-centredness:

Now, I have marked with pain a tendency among you . . . to quarrel over trifles and to allow your very devotion to the cause of Theosophy to lead you into disunion.

Self-watchfulness is never more necessary than when a personal wish to lead and wounded vanity dress themselves in peacock’s feathers of devotion and altruistic work.

J. Krishnamurti once observed: ‘Love is the total absence of the “Me”’. If you have got it, you have drunk of the fountain of life.’ Angelus Silesius, a poet and priest of the seventeenth century, similarly cautioned: ‘God, whose love and joy are present everywhere, cannot come to visit *you* unless you are not there.’

Life if attempted to be lived in such I-lessness surely begins to flower into bliss, beauty and goodness — which are all qualities of love.

Religions and great Teachers of the world have all stressed oneness of life, based on its divine origin, divine essence — ‘One Flame and countless undetached sparks shining in it.’ Love is a natural expression of a life lived in such awareness. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad*, Sage Yājñavalkya speaks to his wife Maitreyi thus:

Mr Surendra Narayan was for many years international Vice-President of the Theosophical Society, and prior to that held an important government position in finance.

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Behold! not for the love of the husband is the husband dear but for the love of the Self is the husband dear. Behold! not for the love of all the all is dear; but for the love of the Self all is dear!

Modern science has also lately begun recognizing first, the interdependence, interrelatedness of all life and later moving on to refer to wholeness and even oneness of life. One may like to repeat here the following well-known statement by Albert Einstein:

A human being is part of the whole. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us.

Love, an aspect of which is total selflessness, does not, however, mean neglect of the self. Selflessness does not mean ignoring one's own normal needs while living in a physical body. Thomas à Kempis in *The Imitation of Christ* states:

Grant that I may use such things with moderation (eating, drinking, clothing and other necessities appertaining to the support of the body) and not be entangled with any inordinate affection. It is not lawful to cast them all away, for nature must be supported; but to require superfluities and such things as are most delightful thy holy law forbids; for otherwise the flesh would grow insolent against the spirit.

When a man of unmeasured wealth approached the Buddha for advice on how he could lead a life of goodness and love for all, the Buddha advised that it is not wealth and power which enslave us but the clinging to them.

A very simple but beautiful statement about love and service — selfish and selfless — is a piece from the Greek philosopher Marcus Aurelius which runs as under:

There is one type of person who whenever he does a kind deed, will not hesitate to ask for some reward. Another type of person, though not so bold, will keep track of everything he has done for you, feeling deep down that you are in his debt. Then there are those who give without any remembrance of what they have done. They are like the vine that brought forth a cluster of grapes and having once borne its delicious fruit, seeks nothing more . . . So should a man be when he has done an act of kindness, not seeking reward, not proclaiming his virtues, but passing on to the next act, as the vine passes on to bear another cluster of summer grapes.

It has also been stressed that for engaging in loving deeds one should not wait for big opportunities. These can be done well in small ways in our everyday lives. C. W. Leadbeater in *The Masters and the Path* quotes, in this context, a piece from one of the New Thought books:

Knead love into the bread you bake; wrap strength and courage in the parcel you tie for the woman with the weary face; hand

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trust and candour with the coin you pay to the man with the suspicious eyes.

He further adds:

All who can think can send out kindly and helpful thoughts and no such thought has failed, or ever can fail, while the laws of the universe hold. You may not see the result but the result is there and you know not what fruit may spring from that tiny seed that you sow in passing along your path of peace and love.

In addition, as we send out kind and pure thoughts to others, traces of impurities of selfishness and self-centredness still remaining in us also gradually begin to disappear. As Madame Blavatsky puts it:

For every flower of love and charity he plants in his neighbour's garden, a loathsome weed will disappear from his own, and so this garden of the gods — Humanity — shall blossom as a rose.

Living and working in this world, we sometimes find that persons whom we have helped selflessly, friends with whom we have lived closely and worked together, turn against us, even try to harm us when it comes to their self-interest. We get shocked and often deeply disappointed. Comes to our minds the opposition, accusation and insults Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott had to suffer in their beneficent work for Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. A passage from Marie Russak Hotchener in her article which appears in *Reminiscences of Colonel H. S. Olcott* published by the

Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, is worth mentioning here. It relates to the visits of the two Masters to Adyar when Olcott was confined to bed before he passed away. Long, important and profoundly impressive were the conversations among them and many were the words of praise and gratitude uttered by the Masters. At another of their visits the Colonel complained feelingly to the Master M about one of the members who had caused him and the Society a great deal of trouble, and ended by saying that the person was a very dangerous, evil enemy. The Master KH put his hand on the Colonel's shoulder and with a divine tenderness in his voice said: 'Then he has all the more need of your love and compassion.' Annie Besant once wrote in the autograph booklet of a young Theosophist: 'Work so that the world may be the better for your living in it. Love all, but love most those who are unloving, for their need is the greatest.'

The Buddha and Jesus Christ were known for their boundless love and compassion for all. George Grimm in his book *The Doctrine of the Buddha* beautifully elucidates the nature of deep and pure love thus:

When we speak of love, even of the purest love, we connect with it inseparably the conception of something due to feelings and affections. In other words, we always think of inclination towards some or all men, or towards beings in general . . . But everything that is inclination or feeling is nothing more than a stirring of thirst,

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perhaps thirst in its most noble form, but nevertheless of thirst . . . Love is something free from all kind of inclination. But what remains if everything of the nature of inclination is separated from love? Kindness remains, pure kindness. Kindness is love purified by insight from the dross of passion.

Mystic poet Tagore mentions that when insight or understanding dawns (sometimes called inward flowering): ‘All my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love.’

We may end by reminding ourselves

about a piece in a letter from a Master of the Wisdom:

Become blended into one universal feeling, the only true and holy, the only unselfish and Eternal one — Love, an immense Love for humanity — as a *Whole!* For it is ‘Humanity’ which is the great Orphan, the only disinherited one upon this earth, my friend. And it is the duty of every man who is capable of an unselfish impulse to do something, however little, for its welfare.

Then follows a quotation:

Since there is hope for man *only in man*
I would not let *one* cry whom I could save!

**Bright but hidden, the Self dwells in the heart.
Everything that moves, breathes, opens, and closes
Lives in the Self. He is the source of love
And may be known through love but not through
thought.
He is the goal of life. Attain this goal!**

**The shining Self dwells hidden in the heart.
Everything in the cosmos, great and small,
Lives in the Self. He is the source of life,
Truth beyond the transience of this world.
He is the goal of life. Attain this goal!**

Mundaka Upanishad, II.2.1–2

The Other Shore

MARY ANDERSON

WHAT do the words ‘the other shore’ convey to us? We may think of a river, a lake, a sea or an ocean, separating two river banks or two shores, even two continents. The other shore may be quite different from the shore where we are or which we know. A river may form the frontier between two countries with different languages, customs, etc., for example, the Rhine, when it flows partly between France and Germany, the Oder-Neisse between Germany and Poland, the Mekong between Thailand and Laos. Even the Seine in Paris divides two banks with different ‘cultures’: the Left Bank, the world of students, artists, ‘la Bohème’, and the Right Bank, the world of ‘Society’, commerce, affluence, ‘la Bourgeoisie’. A river may also separate two different landscapes, like the Gangā at Varanasi. On the one bank we see numerous buildings, many people, great activity, on the other shore marshland, unoccupied, apparently hostile territory. The shores of a lake may be still further apart, so that one can hardly see the far shore. A German lady, who had never left home before, travelled to Switzerland and exclaimed, passing Lake Zurich: ‘How wide the

Rhine is here!’ Let us consider the shores of a sea: The Mediterranean separates different cultures — those of Europe, Africa, Asia Minor. The same can be said of an ocean. If we cross the Atlantic from Europe to America or the Pacific from America to the Far East, what differences we find! Such differences in landscapes, cultures, languages and countries contribute to the wonderful diversity of our earth. But that diversity leads only too often to misunderstandings, to quarrelling. The other shore often seems to us alien, far off and frightening.

Yet all the shores on our earth have physically something in common. They are all made of solid matter, on which we can survive, and separating them is liquid matter, in which, contrary to the fish, we cannot survive for long. A river or a sea may divide those who are alike, who are attracted to each other, who love each other. This was a theme in romantic poetry in Germany: ‘There were two royal children. They loved each other so dearly. But they could not meet. The water was much too deep.’ An alien element separates two who are not alien to each other.

Let us remember all this when we

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consider the symbolic meaning of a river, a sea, etc., and different shores, especially with reference to the spiritual life, for here too a river, even an ocean, seems to separate two worlds which are apparently foreign to each other. Thus the concept of the other shore is used symbolically in a religious context. In negro spirituals the River Jordan separates the miserable world of the slave from the Elysian Fields. In Buddhism they speak of the other shore. In Christendom we speak of this world and the 'hereafter', the world beyond. We know the former. We do not know the latter, although we may be attracted to it or frightened by it or indifferent to it. Thus we speak of earth and heaven, Samsāra and Nirvāna, time and Eternity — and a river seems to divide them. People wonder: How can we cross the river?

There are two types of answer to that question: The first is the answer of the mind, the only instrument that we possess consciously for such a search, and the second is the answer of the intuition. The mind says : The two shores are separated by a river. You must swim across the river or cross in a boat. One who is on his way is said to have 'entered the stream'. That is the answer of the mind, of logic, the answer of theology, of orthodox religion, of Theravāda Buddhism. The intuition wonders: Are the two shores perhaps *not* different? In that case you do not need to go to the other shore, for you are already there. You only have to realize it, really know it, not just believe it in theory! But in order to know it a quantum jump is

needed. That is the answer of the intuition, of mysticism, of Zen Buddhism.

There is a joke about an Englishman travelling in Ireland. He asked a tramp the way to Cork. The tramp replied: 'If I were you, I would start from here, from where you are.' That is the logical answer of the mind: We must use what we have, that is, the mind. But this joke was once misunderstood: The reply of the tramp was said to be: 'If I were you, I would *not* start from here, from where you are.' That is the answer of the intuition, for the intuition is already in Cork, is already on the other shore. It is the answer of Krishnamurti when he says that to cross the river you must start not from this shore but from the other shore! Otherwise you will remain on this shore, on the shore of the mind, of concepts, of duality, of speculations, of prejudices. All that has nothing to do with the other shore. Somehow or other one must already *be* on the other shore. We *are* indeed already there, but not consciously!

The question was asked: what is the difference between Buddha and the average person? The answer given was: There is no difference, except that Buddha knows that he is Buddha! This type of knowing is not theoretical. It is real knowledge, not a matter of opinion.

Do we have here again two separate shores? That is, between the intellectual and the mystic, the saint, the sage? But *we are both*: the intellectual and the mystic, that is, at the same time we have an intellect, with which we are conscious, and wisdom, intuition, which is asleep in

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us. This may remind us of the two birds on one tree in the Indian tradition. One bird is hopping around, nibbling constantly, restless. The other observes calmly. This calm observation is insight. But both birds are one. *We* are both birds.

We may suddenly stand on the other shore, having taken a quantum jump, *but* this is possible only if certain conditions are fulfilled. We try to fulfil these conditions. But that is difficult, because it means our way of thinking and our way of life must be transformed. We must become unselfish, even selfless, and completely honest with ourselves and with others. That is the quantum jump. How can this transformation come about?

On the shore where we are there are many tradesmen, many vendors, offering enticing bargains: 'I will carry you across the river' or 'I will take you over in my boat'. 'You do not need to do anything. I will do everything for you. You have only to pay the price.' For such merchants demand a price, if not in Euros, Dollars or Rupees, then in any case we must pay as Faust almost had to: with our soul, with our independence, with our inner freedom. These merchants are, for example, the numerous false gurus. Some of them are benevolent and relatively harmless. Perhaps many are, without always knowing it, harmful to themselves and to others. But we must admit that some are helpful. They say: 'I will help you to learn to swim, but you yourself must be willing and able to learn to swim and you yourself must actually swim across.' Gurus are helpful only when one

does the work oneself and when one forgets the teacher and swims oneself. Even if one drowns, one has learned something!

Everyone must probably try out some of the enticing bargains of false gurus, either in this life or in past or future lives, until we learn their lesson, see through them and reject them.

So what distinguishes the two shores, this shore and that, this world and the hereafter, Heaven and Earth, Samsāra and Nirvāna? For the logical mind the two have nothing in common. For deeper insight there is no difference. Since we are conscious above all at the level of the mind, let us examine this question first with the mind. Let us begin where we are, with what we have, and that is the mind.

The mind demands and finds a path with many stages, leading to the other shore. These stages are depicted differently in various religions and traditions, sometimes as conditions to be fulfilled or as qualities to be acquired, sometimes as stages on the way, sometimes as both. In Hinduism the conditions or steps are described, for example, in the first seven of the eight limbs of Rāja Yoga: moral prohibitions, moral rules, right posture, right breathing, withdrawal of the senses, concentration, meditation. These first seven limbs of Rāja Yoga clear away outer and inner obstacles. The eighth limb follows: the quantum jump to *samādhi* or knowing by being one with what is known, that is, knowing *there is no other* — also, *there is no other shore!*

In Śankarāchārya's *Viveka-chudāmani* the conditions for crossing the stream are described almost as in *At the Feet of the*

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Master: viveka, the ability to distinguish between the Real and the unreal, the important and the unimportant, etc.; *vairāgya*, desirelessness, non-attachment, non-possessiveness; good conduct; and *mumukshutva*: the strong desire for liberation. One must long for liberation as a drowning man longs for air. In *At the Feet of the Master* this qualification is called Love. 'When it (love) is strong enough in a man, it forces him to acquire all the rest, and all the rest without it would never be sufficient.' Love is the quantum jump.

In Buddhism the Noble Eightfold Path is taught: Right Insight or Perception, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness or Memory, and again there follows the quantum jump to Oneness with all, that is, *samādhi*. In Buddhism too we are told of the following steps: the stages of one who has entered the stream; one who will be born again only once; one who will attain liberation in this life; and the Arhat.

In Christianity virtues like Faith, Hope and Charity are extolled, but: 'The greatest of these is charity' — or love (1 Cor.,13:13). Here too love represents the quantum jump to the other shore. And in Christian mysticism the steps on the Path are described roughly as follows: 1. Conversion, awakening, the turning point, the realization that one cannot do otherwise than follow that path; 2. Purification; 3. Enlightenment; 4. The dark night of the soul and 5. The quantum jump: Unification.

But there are certain dangers in the

concept of steps on the path, whether we see these steps as qualities to be acquired, conditions to be fulfilled or virtues to be developed or as stages of development on the way. The very concepts of a path, of individual qualities, of stages, are mental images and one is tempted to conceive of them mentally, that is, in a literal or worldly way — from the point of view of this shore. For the Path, steps on the Path and even qualities are not to be understood mentally or literally or in a worldly fashion, but intuitively, symbolically, in depth.

What does it mean when one conceives of the Path, qualities and steps mentally, literally and in a worldly manner? If we do so we may understand them as if we were at school, at university or doing an apprenticeship. We have to learn certain lessons, acquire certain skills, pass certain examinations. Later, in our profession or job we have certain experiences: we are successful and unsuccessful. Seen in this way, the spiritual path becomes a career. We forget what is important. We are still selfish. And we remain definitely on this shore.

Even the development of virtues can be counterproductive. A friend told Benjamin Franklin that he practised a different virtue every day of the week and that he was pleased with the result. On Monday, for example, he practised honesty, on Tuesday courage, on Wednesday compassion, etc. Benjamin Franklin pointed out that he had forgotten an important virtue: Humility. And what is humility? Humility does not mean having a poor opinion of oneself, repeating: 'I am

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a poor sinner', etc., which is really a form of pride or at least egocentricity. Humility means not thinking of oneself at all, forgetting oneself. Can one resolve or make an effort to forget oneself? The more one tries, the less one succeeds! Wanting to forget oneself is ambition, which has no place on the spiritual path. Thus we remain on this shore. We cannot make the quantum jump. So the attempt to develop virtues contains many traps. If we try to develop virtues one at a time, we are led astray. We can over-develop one virtue at the expense of others. If a virtue is exaggerated, it may become a vice.

On the other hand the quantum jump can succeed only if certain conditions are already fulfilled, so that we are not even conscious of them, so that we are virtuous without realizing it. But if we realize it and ambition appears on the scene, we are no longer on the spiritual path. If we learn for example to speak a language or play a musical instrument, there is a learning process. First we make an effort: We learn individual words or sentences, grammatical rules, etc. We practise. In learning music too we practise an instrument, we learn from our mistakes. The quantum jump comes only later, sometimes quite suddenly. Then we speak the language without mistakes, without thinking of the meaning of individual words or of the rules of grammar. Or suddenly our playing is fluent, even inspired, but we do not think of the notes. The music simply plays in us! The quantum jump has taken place. The other shore is there. We are no longer conscious of ourself, although this is

mostly only a temporary state, and we revert to our former condition as soon as thought intervenes.

What is the characteristic of the other shore? One might say: Unity, Oneness. What is the characteristic of this shore? Duality, multiplicity. But unity is the source, the origin of duality and of multiplicity. This duality and multiplicity form the outer characteristics of the wonderful world in which we live. The inner Oneness is present in Nature and expresses itself in harmony as long as man does not interfere. Unfortunately duality and multiplicity are also the inner characteristics of our being, the characteristics of our consciousness. Inwardly we divide the world into I and the others.

We no longer perceive our inner oneness with all beings and with all things. We are beings who are inwardly separated, isolated, lonely. This leads to fear, insecurity, jealousy, suspicion and aggression. Because we are unhappy in this state of division, we seek to recover oneness, but we seek it in the wrong places. We unite ourselves with possessions, be they riches, knowledge or other people. We become dependent on them. Not only are our feelings split but also our thinking. We tend to think in black and white, in concepts which are contradictory. Liberation does not lie in binding ourselves, but in relinquishing, in giving up — inwardly.

The Zen Buddhist sage Huang Po distinguishes between three kinds of seeker:

1. When everything inside and outside, bodily and mental, has been relinquished; when, as in the Void, no attachments are

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left; when all action is dictated purely by place and circumstance; when subjectivity and objectivity are forgotten — that is the highest form of relinquishment.

2. When, on the one hand, the Way is followed by the performance of (consciously) virtuous acts; while on the other, reward is entertained — that is the medium form of relinquishment.

3. When all sorts of virtuous actions are performed in the hope of reward, by those who, nevertheless, know of the Void by hearing the Dharma and are therefore unattached (that is, who should know better) — that is the lowest form of relinquishment.

The first (the highest form of relinquishment) is like a blazing torch held to the front, which makes it impossible to mistake the Path; the second (the medium form of relinquishment) is like a blazing

torch held to one side, so that it is sometimes light and sometimes dark; the third (the lowest form of relinquishment) is like a blazing torch held behind, so that pitfalls in front are not seen.

‘What is the Way and how must it be followed?’ ‘What sort of thing do you suppose the Way to be that you should wish to follow it?’

‘“Studying the Way” is just a figure of speech. It is a method of arousing people’s interest in the early stages of their development.’

So is the other shore only a symbol to awaken our interest?

Must we renounce outer life? No! Huang Po advises: ‘Do not permit the events of your daily lives to bind you but never withdraw yourselves from them.’ Then you will already be on the other shore without noticing it! ✧

The true light is that which emanates from within man, and reveals the secrets of the heart to the soul, making it happy and contented with life. Truth is like the stars; it does not appear except from behind obscurity of the night. Truth is like all beautiful things in the world; it does not disclose its desirability except to those who first feel the influence of falsehood. Truth is a deep kindness that teaches us to be content in our everyday life and share with the people the same happiness.

Kahlil Gibran

The Future of the Theosophical Society

C. W. LEADBEATER

I AM supposed to be speaking to you on a subject occupying the minds of many — the future of the Theosophical Society. The first question is, are we considering a distant or a near future? I have *no* doubt about the distant future of the Society. It will increase in numbers, usefulness and influence. But when speaking of the *near* future I must say that it depends on ourselves, the members of the Society. We may carry out the ideals of the Society, or, if less wise, spend our time in arguing the matter.

Now, methods must change with the times. The methods of fifty years ago are not ours today. Our discussions concern not the work to be done, but the way to do it. The Objects of the Society are good, but there are many opinions regarding the way to carry them out, and this variety of opinion is good, for it will prevent us from crystallizing. The fundamentals that we have to popularize do not change. We must spread the idea of Brotherhood. Brotherhood exists, but people do not realize it, and we must try to help them to this realization. That is the main aim of the Society.

The other two aims are good also. The

comparative study of religion shows us that in fundamentals all religions agree; and that is perhaps the only thing about religion that matters. Get the people to realize this.

The third Object, the study of the powers latent in man, is to give us a sound basis for our knowledge. Occultism is merely the study of the inner side of man — but the inner side of things is generally more important than the outer.

All these studies help towards the great idea of Brotherhood.

We used to say that this great study of Theosophy has been ‘revealed’ to us. The antithesis between revelation and realization seems to me to be elusive, for they are two stages of the same process. Every great idea is, when first given out, a revelation, and then we begin to understand it.

Madame Blavatsky, when teaching us, used to say: ‘These are the facts, but do not take them because I say so; examine and accept them only if you have for yourself found them to be the best explanation.’ I have never been under the delusion, nor was she, that we know the whole truth. We in the Fifth Root Race

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are very proud of our intellect, and certainly what we have found — the facts formerly known only to the few — is marvellous. But because the discovery for us is so new, we are somewhat like a child, proud of its new toy.

But reason is not everything. You have no conception of the conditions under which Theosophy came to us in the early days. The orthodox form of Christianity had become impossible for many. We were as though living in a gloomy cage, filled with superstitions, and Theosophy helped us to step out into the sunlight. We had to put away many things that were unbelievable. This brought many people to Atheism. The first time I had the honour of hearing our great President — it was in London — she spoke against the orthodox Christianity of that day. I as a curate was staggered, but could not deny the truth of her points, which she pushed to an absolute conclusion. That was the first thing that showed me that facts were the only things worth finding. There seems to be no proof, short of Occultism, of anything taught in the orthodox Church — not even that Christ lived in Palestine.

Madame Blavatsky told us to accept nothing merely because she had expressed it: many, however, did. And when a Report of the Society for Psychical Research claimed that Madame Blavatsky was a charlatan, many people dropped the cause. Others, however, who had reasoned it out, and had found it the only reasonable hypothesis of life to work upon, were not shaken.

The first time I heard of Theosophy

my whole soul went out to it. It was an inner certainty for me, an intuition. So, you see, I had felt it, and I had reasoned it out. I have taken the trouble to convince myself of the reality — but of course everything may be an illusion, even my standing here and your seeing me! Every day we have to accept things without proof — the word of Science and the testimony of experts. In astronomy we must always be ready to revise our old conceptions when new discoveries are made. Facts are true as far as they go: they themselves are unalterable, but we may see them differently. Thus the broad outlines of Theosophy remain, though conditions may change. There will always be wider vistas before us. We mould our lives by the things we do. The immediate future of the Society is in our hands. If we can be liberal in our thought, we shall hold our rather heterogeneous crowd together.

Realize the central facts of Theosophy, and show no hostility towards others of our brethren who tread paths different from our own. Our Krishnaji says that the highest is pathless. Still we are not all so evolved as to work out the way for ourselves. It is our privilege to take advantage of the labour of those who have gone before. We do teach the child, acquaint him with the conditions around him, without leaving him to find everything for himself. Well, that is what we are trying to do in our Society, by advising people; but by no means may we force our opinion upon them.

Our Masters say that if only three people remain faithful to this inner

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teaching, They will be with them to help them. It will not come to that. Do not despair of the future. I cannot hold that there is only one way, for around us we see noble men struggling along many paths. A Great Teacher has said, 'Upon whichever path a man approaches me upon that path do I meet him, for all paths are mine.' When we know the whole truth, we shall see all paths converging in one point. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, and the best way to be persuaded is to go forth and work for the good of mankind. Here below we have

but the broken arch; only in heaven shall we have the perfect round.

Let Brotherly Love prevail, then we shall be helping in the evolution which Krishnaji said in *At the Feet of the Master* is God's plan for man. Let us stand together as brethren, and work together. The brotherhood of man is a great reality; the brotherhood of this Society ought to be a great reality to us. I have had forty-seven years of it and shall stay in it to the end of this incarnation, and I hope I shall know enough in the next incarnation to join again. ✧

MARIA VON KRUSENSTIERNA

'On this happy occasion I wish to thank my beloved husband Sten for his infinite patience, and our son Axel for his loyalty. Gratitude to my friends in the TS, LCC and Co-M for all they gave to me.

"God be with you till we meet again."

Rie

No flowers

Privately cremated.'

This newspaper notice was arranged by Mrs Maria (Rie) von Krusenstierna in advance of her passing in Adelaide, Australia, on 2 June 2011. Born in the Netherlands in 1909, Rie married Mr Sten von Krusenstierna, a fellow Theosophist whom she met in Adyar in 1946. They moved to Sydney and he later became the Presiding Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church. A vibrant, strong and down-to-earth person, Rie was a stalwart member of the TS.

Journey of the Soul

D. P. SABNIS

BEFORE we undertake a journey we need to find out all that it will involve and to seek advice from those who know the difficulties and pitfalls on the way. We also need to look at ourselves and see if we possess the strength and ability to undertake the journey.

Therefore Fragment I of *The Voice of the Silence* contains instruction as to what the journey we are contemplating is likely to involve, what it leads to, and what qualities and capacities we must possess before starting out.

From this Fragment we learn that the one quality which it is necessary to possess if we would be instructed is the capacity to listen carefully to what is being said. Otherwise we may give our own interpretation to what is said, we may even distort the words to suit our own conceptions, and thus miss the real meaning. What, for example, is the meaning to be given to the word 'mind', or to the word 'soul', as used in *The Voice of the Silence*? We need accuracy in listening in order to place the words in their proper context before we can see clearly.

Listening carefully, therefore, to what is said in the book about ourselves, what

do we learn? First, we learn that we have to change many things in ourselves, and to do so we must admit that we need changing. The major change to be made is to learn not to be deceived by what we see or hear. This is most important, because as we progress on the inner Path the awakening inner senses give us powers which we may not know how to use properly, and we may encounter one pitfall after another.

Admitting that we have to change ourselves, admitting that we shall meet with pitfalls, we come to see the necessity of having a guide on the journey. This guide we shall not see or hear at first though He is with us, unseen and unheard. The next important fact, therefore, is to know that we do have a guide all the time. He shows himself to us in terms of our understanding, if we can recognize him.

If we look at ourselves as we are today, we find that our main characteristic is awareness of our surroundings, of our body, feelings, desires and thoughts, but we also find that we have within us an urge to be better in every way; we realize that there is something we strive to reach up to, some ideal — whether of being a

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better businessman or professional, a better father or mother or husband or wife, or of acquiring a better character. Where does this urge come from? Let us recognize, mentally at least, that it comes from somewhere higher than our ordinary desires and thoughts. The nearest approach we have to it is our conscience, which though it does not give positive guidance, at least warns us not to do this or that, that one course or another is not 'right'. To cultivate an awareness of this conscience is the first step which takes the mind away from excessive awareness of sense-objects, personal desires, etc.

In time, as we become more and more aware of this inner monitor, we shall find that it is not enough just to know what we ought not to do; we also need to know what we ought to do. This calls for knowledge, but we must first learn that much of what we know at present is false, deceptive, illusory, incomplete. An effort to become aware of a higher code of morality and knowledge will help us to see that we are something other than that which our present mode of awareness makes us believe we are.

Thus we begin to feel a touch of the Inner Guide or Master. A constant effort to remember the Wise Ones of all time will help, for we shall then have a model to copy, and shall see what is right action, right feeling, right thought as taught by them.

Our books, the words of those who have passed this way and learnt; our conscience; our Inner Master or Ruler; and the Bridge, the Great Ones who embody

the Path and the Goal — all these are our teachers and guides. As we progress, we shall reach a point where we have to travel on alone. We have been taught; now we must apply. The only reliance at this stage is on the Inner Master. We must merge in him, become one with him. Steps as to how this is to be done are given. We must take those steps. Masters stand and beckon, but only our unhelped effort will bring the necessary strength to hold the position once it is attained. Only he who has conquered by his unaided efforts is the victor. We must be taught, but we must practise what we are taught.

It is necessary, therefore, at the very beginning, to have a view of this Path and its Goal. Once we reach the stage when we realize (which means more than mental acceptance) that the Goal is within us, that the Master is a higher aspect of ourselves, we find our way lit by a flood of light, and we hear the Voice of Compassion which thrills through all and everything. We and the Light and the Sound are One. We are changeless and eternal:

Thou art THYSELF the object of thy search: the Voice unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the Seven Sounds in one.

The whole object of our search, therefore, is to find out who and what we are — to become that which we are. This is the goal.

Our first endeavour in practice is to learn to separate the mind from the senses and sensations, from the emotions and from self-centredness. 'Thyself and mind,

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like twins upon a line, the star which is thy goal burns overhead.' We must accept the fact that as we are now, we are very ignorant, ignorant as regards knowledge, yes, but more ignorant of our own character and lower psychic faculties. Also, of just what the goal of life is.

We learn that our faculties are of two kinds, the lower and the higher. The lower are those we have at present — to think, desire, feel and perform deeds. The higher faculties we do not know, but they can be known if we train our spiritual powers, powers which give us strength, ability and energy.

If we have these higher powers somewhere, why do they not function today? Because they have to function through the vehicles of the body and brain, through the capacities and energies we possess, and these being untrained as yet, cannot be used by the high powers. In fact, it is a two-way effort, for the lower has to rise to the higher aspect of ourselves, and the higher has to subdue the lower. It is the constant struggle that goes on between our two natures. Unless we know the character and powers of both, we cannot undertake the necessary preparation, and will be misled by what our senses, thoughts and desires present to us.

Many teachers have given rules for the subjection of the lower mind and its concentration upon the higher. In *The Voice of the Silence* we are asked to cut it off from all external sights and sounds, as also from internal images. This, we are told, is *dhāranā* — the stage of 'intense and perfect concentration of the mind

upon some interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses'. This requires the training of the memory, for it is only when the outer is effaced from the mind and memory that the ONE can be discerned at the back or centre of all. This ONE is the eternal and changeless. Hence no change must be allowed to affect the mind; it must remain unchanged through all changes.

This naturally gives us a different sense of Time and of the conditions of life. When we have attained this, we shall be like the wise man described in the second chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*.

In this struggle not only do we need to exert the mind or awareness consciously; we must also analyse why and how the senses affect the mind. We learn that what we see — and it is equally true of the impressions given by the other senses — is not a true picture of things because the senses have for long enjoyed a world of their own making. According to the knowledge we already possess, we analyse and accept the impressions. We have to be more particular now and analyse all that comes to us. We shall see that the eyes are often disturbed and give us distorted pictures. To avoid being affected by them, the mind must be in a state of peace and harmony. In fact, we must learn to use the eyes to see with, not let them bring us impressions that force themselves on our attention. The ears have to be trained in a similar manner so that they remain unaffected by either the 'cries of bellowing elephants' or the

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‘silvery buzzing of the golden firefly’.

When, therefore, in time, we have learnt to use the senses and the mind as they should be used, we can begin to hear the Silent Speaker. We begin to live within, and though we see outer sights and hear outer sounds, we are under no illusion as to their character. We begin to live as inner entities and not as lower forms of matter. We begin to see the One in the many, to hear the One Sound in the many sounds. Instead of desiring and feeling for ourselves, we desire and feel for the WHOLE. Our mind is cleansed and its functions on the plane of senses paralysed. Our heart, our whole motive, is purified.

One of the difficulties in our way is that, having started on the journey, we are apt to look back. There must not be any longing for what has been left behind, or any grief for our loss. We have a glimpse of the importance of this idea in the Bible story of Lot’s wife. When she had to leave the city where she had lived, she was warned not to look back; it was a doomed city. But she did look back, and was changed into a pillar of salt.

Let us learn that we can never satisfy longings by their fulfilment; for, if one kind of longing is indulged in to saturation point, the point of longing will still be alive, will in fact be strengthened, and will only change its form.

We learn next that there are two goals — Liberation and Renunciation, between which we have to choose. The second Fragment prepares us for the decision. The third Fragment deals with the steps we have to take after the decision is reached.

The pupil asks the Teacher what he should do to reach Wisdom and to gain Perfection, and he is told to look at himself first and ask himself whether his heart is clean, whether he can discern the real from the false, the impermanent from the permanent, Head-learning from Soul-wisdom, the ‘Eye’ from the ‘Heart’ doctrine. There are two ways of looking at actions; one is that of the head and the other of the heart; one leads to the cessation of sin and faults through non-action; the other to Self-knowledge through action, through loving deeds. The end of both Paths is Bliss; in the case of those who seek the Path of Liberation, the bliss comes at once; in the case of those who choose the path of Renunciation, it comes at the close of *kalpa-s* without number.

The decision has to be reached. But such a great decision can only be the legitimate result of minor decisions all along the Path.

In Fragment III we are led further, for the choice is made. It is Renunciation that we seek, not Liberation. The way that leads to the goal is through seven gates, to pass each of which we need the key of a particular developed virtue. We are given the keys and an idea of the difficulties to be surmounted. Some important hints are given to us. For instance:

Thou shall not let thy senses make a playground of thy mind. . . . thou must have mastered all the mental changes in thy Self and slain the army of the thought sensations that, subtle and insidious, creep unasked within the Soul’s bright shrine.

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From the Heart point of view we learn: 'Thou shalt not separate thy being from BEING and the rest, but merge the Ocean in the drop, the drop within the Ocean.' To put this into practice we must be 'in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother'.

This is so important that we are again asked whether we have attuned our 'heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind'.

Then we must learn the pitfalls of the Pāramita Path so that we can be prepared not to succumb to them. Let us keep in

mind that we must be prepared if we would be free from fear. To us, struggling would-be neophytes, the message is — BE PREPARED. If we 'remain unselfish till the endless end', we are bound to succeed.

Lest we lose ourselves in the treadmill of life and the struggles to achieve, we have been given a description of the end of the Path. Light and sound unite with the fourfold manifested Powers to blend in one glorious 'wordless' proclamatic 'Peace to all Beings'.

The vision is necessary, or we lose the impetus to make the effort. Hence each Fragment ends with the Vision Beautiful of accomplishment. ✧

If you truly wish to attain enlightenment, lose no time in practising 'zazen'. Cast off all bonds, calm the ten thousand things, think not of good and evil, judge not concerning right and wrong, arrest the flow of consciousness, put a stop to the activity of wishing, imagining, judging, think not of becoming a Buddha!

Dogen Zenji (1200–1253)

Nature and Us

AVANTIKA MEHTA

THE purpose of our life is to realize unity among diversity by encouraging the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science and by investigating the self and nature, the path less trodden. Nature remains a great mystery for mankind so let us observe and understand 'Nature'.

There is a saying attributed to Plato which is full of significance; it says 'God Geometrizes', a proclamation of the Divine Wisdom that there exists a God of the Universe and that all Nature is a creation by him after a plan.

The Ancient Wisdom, in no hesitating voice, proclaims that every part of Nature's design reflects the plan of a Divine Mind. 'God's Plan', which is evolution, is not mechanical. What seems 'a casual concourse of atoms' is caused by the Logos and their quantity and direction as they operate are determined by him each moment.

We usually mean by Nature the world of lifeless things. In the common use of the word, we mean by Nature the sky, the sea, the woods and the forests; and we say that we long to go out to Nature, meaning thereby away from man's habitations. Sometimes, we also mean by the term

Nature, the subhuman life of plants and the animals. There is however a third use of the word Nature — when we look at the stars and the planets, when we see mighty cosmic forces at work; we then use the word Nature to signify the totality of an evolutionary process.

What is this Nature which is on every side of us, of which we are a part and which sometimes so dominates us that we feel utterly helpless before her? What is the meaning of Nature, how is it that behind it there is a Builder at work? We find in ancient India, in a very graphic form, the ideas of One who builds and unbuilds and builds again. This great personage is called Prajāpati, the 'Lord of Creatures'.

In the beginning, the universe was non-existent. Then, Lord Prajāpati desired: 'May I be more than one, may I be reproduced.' He toiled, he practised austerity. Step by step he then created everything. All of this universe appeared as one form only, namely water; then he created foam, clay, mud, saline soil and sand, pebbles, rocks, ore, gold, plants and trees.

Having created worlds, he desired:

Mrs Avantika Mehta is President of the Gujarat Federation, Indian Section of the TS. Talk given at the international Convention, Adyar, 2010.

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‘May I create such creatures as shall be mine in these worlds.’ And he created All. He placed them in their quarters. Since we are men, we think that right and wrong can only be taught to us by men who have tried to live rightly and have suffered by living wrongly. But in ancient days, for instance in Greece, Nature herself was considered the teacher of what is right and wrong.

The Divine vision towards Nature begins in several ways. One way is by the worship of Nature. We will find that all primitive men sense something mysterious in Nature that must be worshipped. The savage has an attitude of true reverence and he is able to put aside his personality and see for a fragment of time what is outside of himself ‘as it is’. He regards Nature with awe, for Nature is indeed terrifying. It is one of the characteristics of the highest civilization that the more men are cultured, the more they begin to feel by intuition that Nature is instinct with a Mighty Power and Mighty Wisdom. The highest of mankind also worship Nature. Although they may have within the mind a clear scientific understanding of what Nature is, *yet* when the higher part of their nature is called upon, they then feel that rocks and clouds take on another meaning, a meaning which impels them to utmost admiration.

Tennyson’s poem, ‘The Higher Pantheism’ speaks beautifully of that which he who lives in fullness, feels. With the worship of Nature, man begins to tread the first step on the journey to a glorious Divine Vision.

However, there is another avenue of approach and that is by the study of Nature. The different departments of science, as they work today to discover knowledge, are adding a little more wisdom towards the comprehension of the wonderful process of the universe. Whether it be biology, astronomy, physics or chemistry, men will come to the vision of a Divine Mind at work.

The third way of vision about Nature is possible by loving Nature. In the worship of Nature, there is, as it were, a little barrier between man, the worshipper, and Nature, the object of worship, but when we come to the love of Nature, then man delights in a kinship with the sky, the clouds and the animals. Each little thing in Nature speaks of a brotherliness, of a tenderness, that of a younger brother towards an elder. Wordsworth, the distinguished English poet, says in his poems there is an intense truthfulness to Nature and a linking of man to it.

As we go out into Nature and love Nature, we feel a sense of utmost closeness as a child to a mother, as brother to sister, friend to a friend. We come to a new vision, the Divine Vision of Nature. We are like waves in the ocean looking at other waves but missing the ocean in our perception.

Therefore, be like a tree. The tree gives shade even to one who cuts its branches. It asks not of water from anyone though it be withering for want of it. Rain and storm and the burning rays of the sun make it suffer yet it continues to give sweet scented flowers and delicious fruits.

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Patiently, it serves others, ever as a tree. Our revered J. Krishnamurti has given us the real clue to the dilemma. He says: 'Just look'. We have no need to analyse, to justify, to defend. But we cannot take the smallest step on the path until we have learned 'to look'.

Einstein once asked the question: did God have any choice when he created the universe? The law of growth, of development, of evolution, is also the law of beauty, proportion and harmony, and all are integral parts of that Supreme Law of Love. So we must love Nature.

Then comes the fourth way to approach the Divine Vision and that is by refashioning Nature. Refashioning Nature means, when a man has looked at many sunsets, sunrises, etc., with the artistic nature keen in him, he is inspired by one particular sunrise or sunset, and paints a picture. He paints, not that aspect of Nature which he sees or has seen and which a camera could reproduce with greater accuracy. Though he makes a picture of a sunset or sunrise which is never the same in Nature, *yet* his creation is a picture of that permanent Element which does not change.

Whether we come through worship or love, through study or refashioning, we shall begin to discover certain great mysteries in Nature. And of those, one which is easy to discover is her tremendous power which seems at times utterly ruthless — when we stand before some mighty aspect of Nature, say the Niagara Falls, the Himalayas or a storm at sea, when all seems powerful, before which

man seems nothing indeed. But pass beyond that stage and we will begin to feel one with that power. The Niagara Falls, Himalayas or a storm, and others too, tell us that there is both power and peace within you. The storm at sea will tell us the mystery of our own storms of love and despair. Nature releases from within us the sense of power. So in Nature there are neither rewards nor punishment. There are consequences! Now we can understand that Nature is neither good nor evil and manifestation follows only unchanging and impersonal law.

By study and observation we begin to feel the rhythm in life. This rhythm is obvious to us with an understanding of Theosophy. How life comes, possesses a form and grows in it and then when it has come to the limit of its growth, vanishes, and then after an interval, comes back again. Nature has a law of cycles and in us too there are cycles, for there is rhythm in all things. All beings and things have their birth and death cycles, because birth and death are the gates of life. The rhythm is not mechanical, not merely a crash of fate, but indeed the Dance of Life.

Nature is alive, for *if* we look deeply at the clouds, at the hills and the waves and many other things, they are not merely things of matter. They are life veiled indescribably in matter and so we need to study, understand. An individual will feel everywhere in Nature the mysterious quality of life. Nature will then reveal to him a little of her meaning and then shall show something of her own hidden power.

The man who loves Nature can go out

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into the woods and fields, though he be saddened by all the suffering which man has inflicted on animals and by the ugliness with which man has blighted the face of Nature. He can give a blessing, with love, care and compassion towards her. Always he who has lived with Nature is enabled to release his own fellowman. Nature comes to us then as a mother, as a brother, as a sister or as a friend. She leads us to our own Beloved, the ideal one has placed before ourselves.

It is a wonderful mystery that life tells us: all the majesty of the world is ours and all its joys are somewhere hidden within us. Nature has given them to us all, and we shall find if we will seek the Divine Vision of Nature, with that Divine Vision comes at-onement with Man, God and that indescribable truth, that the All returns to the All.

Life within all forms is One life and all deliberate actions produce corresponding reactions. Without relationships, no matter how much wealth, fame, power, prestige and seeming success by the standards and opinions of the world one has, happiness will constantly elude one. So we must have right relationship to the world be-

cause we are after all a product of a long evolutionary process of life and are responsible for the correct use of these facilities which we possess.

There are no weeds in a wilderness or wood. Where Nature's purpose and ways prevail without interference by man, everything, even a single atom, has significance and a purpose. Our respected Radhaji says that it is time to look into the worth of the wood, weed, the earth. Perhaps we may experience that there are no woods, weeds, but only secret gardens.

In one of the Theosophical classics, *The Voice of the Silence*, invaluable to aspirants on the spiritual path, it is said if we help Nature and work on with her, She shall regard us as one of her creators and make obeisance. A feeling of friendly sympathy towards animals, plants and even minerals and towards the Nature-spirits, deva-s, is equally important, if not more so, for the progress of man. The man who faces life with a feeling of kindness to all living things will not only see and learn more than others but will have a smoother passage on life's sea. We are therefore not apart from Nature but we are one with her. ✧

As we penetrate deeper and deeper into Nature, we have to abandon more and more of the images and concepts of ordinary language. . . . Like the mystics, physicists are now dealing with a non-sensory experience of reality and, like the mystics, they have to face the paradoxical aspects of this experience.

Fritjof Capra
The Tao of Physics

Science and Spirituality

S. K. NANDA

MATTER and Spirit are two parts on the spiritual Path through which a seeker has to progress for the merger with the Absolute. In the *Gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: ‘My material nature is divided into eight parts; earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and ego (VII.4). All beings are born from Me and have these two natures — higher as spirit or *soul* and lower as matter or *prakṛti*. I am the source of all origin and all dissolution’ (VII.6).

Matter in different forms like gases, liquids and solids are woven together by spiritual energy to retain its consistency. For example, water in different types of existence are water vapour (loosely woven), water (a bit more thickly woven than gas), ice (more densely woven than water). The spiritual force is the basis, which sustains all these in different forms. Similarly, whatever we see around is either densely woven like earth, metal, wood, etc., or loosely woven, the subtlest being the mind, intellect and ego. There are in between stages.

Men of wisdom, through their constant link with the Supreme, know the Brahman as the ultimate spiritual power in matter, the source of cosmic intelligence (*Gītā*, VII.30). Men of wisdom, who go beyond

matter, attain Brahman, the ultimate spiritual force.

The matter–spirit relationship exists in science. Spirit is expanded to put the matter into motion. This spirit–fohat–matter is the trinity governing the whole universe. We see out of five elements in nature, four elements like water, fire, air and ether flow from one place to another, having different proportions of spirit and matter; whereas the earth element is totally gross and its flow is very little or almost negligible. Similarly, electricity, magnetism, heat, light and sound are the main basis of most of the utility products that come out of scientific technology, for example, the radio, TV, computer, telephone, diagnostic and therapeutic articles like X-ray and Ultrasound machines, the laser beam, scanners like the C.T. Scan and M.R.I. (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), etc. These are nothing but the activity of spirit on matter. The gravitational force which pulls the cosmic matter, the movement of oceanic currents, of clouds and rain, occurrence of seasons, geomagnetism, placement of stars, planets, geo-synchronic satellites and their movement in perfect order are some of the examples of the spiritual force acting

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within the universe, which no science has explained yet.

Cosmogenesis is still in the dark relative to scientific exploration. Various scientific explanations have been put forward for the origin of cosmic matter and life on earth, which have not yet been scientifically demonstrated. So, we have come to the conclusion that the Supreme Consciousness is the regulatory force for all these occurrences, which have no other explanation. The creatures in the universe, like plants, animals and birds, and including men, are matter in which the life force and the spirit play a vital role in their day-to-day activities.

The whole universe and its contents exist on spirit-matter, i.e. *sat-chit* relationships of varying degrees and the funniest play of this relationship is science. In other words, science is the unfoldment of spirituality in varying degrees.

Scientific experimentation is carried out with a deep insight either for constructive or destructive purposes by man. The procedures undertaken are:

1. Deep concentration to draw out the particular experiments.
2. Experimentation: That is the work through sacrificial action with reliability and accuracy and *viveka*.
3. Analysis of observations to evaluate the different components of truth.
4. Inferences drawn through deep insight, logic, reasoning and discriminatory

intelligence which is a part of the vast knowledge of the Absolute.

All branches of knowledge are drawn from the mystic power of the Absolute. Even the animals and birds show some degree of intelligence through their adaptation in nature, although they are propelled by impulse. Dogs, dolphins, gorillas, and wild animals in circuses understand the commands of men. A weaver bird builds her beautiful nest at the top of the tree to protect it from the sun, rain and strong winds. Rats are very wary of poison bait. Mosquitoes attack the back and lower portion of man to escape the counterattack of men. Aggressive behaviour is seen in animals and birds during their search for food and in sex-play. Day-to-day knowledge is divinely gifted for our management, inventions and discoveries.

As we concentrate our mind towards achieving scientific goals, we proceed through a type of meditation and expand the laws of nature, i.e. we attain the realization of the laws concerning matter. Newton's Law of Motion, the Theory of Relativity, etc., are some of the laws already expounded. All the laws and doctrines derived scientifically are from the fohat linking spirit and matter, which regulate the whole universe.

Material science and the spiritual sciences are integral parts of the same Absolute Truth out of which they are derived. ✧

**Lord! Invaluable are Thy Blessings;
Without extent is His bounty.**

Adi Granth

THE 136TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The 136th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, from 26 to 31 December 2011.

All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. *Non-members may attend by obtaining permission from the President. Requests for such permission, together with a recommendation from an officer of the Federation, should be sent to the Convention Officer before 15 November 2011.*

REGISTRATION FEES	<i>India</i>	<i>Other Countries</i>
Members	Rs 50	US\$ 30 *
Members under 21	20	...
Non-members	100	...
Non-members under 21	60	...

ACCOMMODATION CHARGES (SHARING)

(From 24 December 2011

to 1 January 2012 inclusive)

	<i>India (Members)</i>	<i>India (Non-members)</i>	<i>Other Countries (Members)</i>
Accommodation with mat	Rs 80	Rs 160	...
Accommodation with cot	150	300	...
Leadbeater Chambers (including service, furniture, and bedding, but no blankets)	2,000	3,000	US\$ 100 *

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

* (or Euro or Pound Sterling equivalent)

ACCOMMODATION

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

Accommodation is available for delegates from 24 December 2011 to 1 January 2012, both days inclusive, but can be guaranteed only to those whose registration and accommodation payments are received *before 1 December 2011*. Delegates from India requiring accommodation should send *both the registration and accommodation charges together, but not before 1 September 2011*.

Please note that in the event of cancellation there will be no refund of registration fees, but other charges will be refunded if application is received before *10 December 2011*.

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

Mrs KUSUM SATAPATHY
International Secretary

Theosophical Work around the World

Slovenia

The work in Slovenia seems to be going on happily. In May they had four well-attended public lectures in the town of Koper, Ljubljana, Celje and Maribor, with Ms Damjana Gec giving two of them and Mrs Breda Zagar the other two. Some new people among them are young ones, and there are others who have become very interested. After some time, some more public lectures will be given in these towns and perhaps in some others as well.

The Summer School took place from 10 to 12 June in Kranjska Gora with 'Light on the Path' as the theme. About twenty members attended. Mrs Breda Zagar has translated some parts of *Talks on the Path of Occultism* and they were taken up for study in a very harmonious spirit. A professor showed a film about the universe, which was wonderful we are told, and this gave rise to deep thought. The participants also made a trip to the top of a hill where three countries, Italy, Austria and Slovenia, meet, and had a meditation on unity. It is to be hoped that this will be the beginning of a new phase.

Israel — Interfaith Convention

This was organized by the Israel Lodge in Tel Aviv to bring together representatives from different religions and

a good programme was drawn up including speakers from the Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sufi and other religions.

The President, Mrs Radha Burnier, was asked to give a brief introduction to those who participated. Among other things she said:

Brotherhood as a fact is non-existent if it applies only to part of humanity. A truly spiritual brotherhood includes not only all human beings, but all living things: animals, birds, plants, insects and so-called non-living objects, all the elements which give the feeling of sacredness and spirituality. 'Religion' which does not share in this Universal Brotherhood, and which does not help people to know that all life is blessed and protected by the Universal Spirit, is not religion.

The whole of the meeting was intended to bring greater understanding between the religions. We are very glad to hear that about two hundred people attended the proceedings.

Children's Camp

The UP Federation of the Indian Section organized a camp for the Integrated Development of Children in a village near Kanpur, one of the big cities in the country. This was the third camp of

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this kind. The UP Federation is attempting in these camps to expose the young minds of the children to simple Theosophical teachings, particularly those related to good conduct, good citizenship, the evolution of man, concentration and training of physical, emotional and mental bodies. Whether a person becomes a member of the TS or not is considered unimportant. An attempt is also being made to interest those in other groups such as those meant for impaired persons, social workers and so on. We hope that the camps will have some impact.

East and Central Africa

The 45th Convention of the East and Central African Section was held in Kitwe, Zambia, from 22 to 24 April 2011. The theme was 'Oneness as a Natural Law' and the guest speaker was Miss Mary Anderson, former international Vice-President. She also gave talks in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Her topics included 'Many Lives in One', 'The Garden of Theosophy', 'Love Conquers All' and 'The True Work of Man'. The recently completed Kitwe Lodge Hall was opened at the Convention. ✧

Come, bhikku-s, abide pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth; so above, below, around, and everywhere, and to all as to yourselves, abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will. Abide pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with compassion . . . with a mind imbued with altruistic joy . . . with a mind imbued with equanimity abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.

Majjhima Nikāya

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