



THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

A publication of this kind cannot exist without your support, so we welcome all editorial suggestions and seek contributing editors for essays on a wide range of theosophical themes. And, in the true spirit of dialogue and debate we look forward to letters to the editor, comments, and suggestions for the content and themes of this journal.

Letters intended for publication should be restricted to no more than 500 words. The editor reserves the right to shorten any letter unless the writer states that it must be published in full or not at all. The editor will contact the writer prior to publication date – please include a phone number and or email address with all correspondence.

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THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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OBJECTIVES:

To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

To encourage the Study of Comparative religion, Philosophy and Science.

To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

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Cover artwork by Paul Joseph Carroll



THE OLD VIOLIN

The Touch of the Masters Hand

Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer thought it

Hardly worth his while

To waste his time on the old violin,
but he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bid, good people", he cried,

"Who starts the bidding for me? One dollar, one dollar, Do I hear two?"

"Two dollars, who makes it three?"

"Three dollars once, three dollars twice, going for three,"

—
But, No,

From the room far back, a grey bearded man came forward and picked up the bow,

Then, wiping the dust from the old violin and tightening up the strings,

He played a melody, pure and sweet,
as sweet as the angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low,

Said, "What now am I bid for this old violin?" as he held it aloft with its' bow.

"One thousand, one thousand, Do I hear two? Two thousand, who makes it three?"

"Three thousand once, three thousand twice, going and gone", said he.

The audience cheered, but some of them cried, ho aid

"We just don't understand. What changed its' worth?"

Swift came the reply. "The Touch of the Masters' Hand."

And many a man with his life out of tune, all battered and bruised with hardship

Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd, much like that old violin.

A mess of potage, a glass of wine, a game and he travels on

He is going once, he is going twice,
he is going and almost gone.

But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd never can quite understand,

The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought

By the Touch of the Masters' Hand.

By Myra Brooks Welch

Note by Lois Brisbois: I first heard this poem from Leland Val Van De Wall, who, in my view, was a true Master Teacher and Saver of Souls



FROM THE DESK

Lois Brisbois, President

In 2018, The Theosophical Society in Canada has continued to pursue Truth. That pursuit, in my view, is tremendously exciting. Things in the outer world are shifting and changing quickly, but Truth can still be found. Theosophists know to seek within.

Your Board of Directors meet monthly, when possible, and all meetings are times of lively discussion and sharing of ideas, as well as attending to the business at hand.

This year, 2019, will be an election year. More information will be forthcoming.

Our AGM was held on Dec. 2, and it was again a successful event. There were presentations by directors on various topics, with plenty of time for commentary. The presentations were followed by the business meeting. Our venue was a downtown Toronto

hotel so it was convenient for local attendees, with wheelchair access, making it possible for member Mr. Chakravarty to attend.

Our members are mostly from all over Ontario, but we do have members, including a Board member, in Alberta. We are always interested in hearing from all of you. We thank those members who send letters or emails. Please consider sending items for our magazine, as it's your magazine.

It came to our attention recently that some have thought we were the same society as the Toronto Theosophical Society. We are a separate entity. We have our own Constitutions and Boards. In the far past, TTS was a branch of TSC. We, at TSC, recently used the Toronto building on Dupont Street for our meetings. Some of us, including myself, are members of both Societies. The Toronto Theosophical



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Society has a new building and they are getting their library ready for re-opening. TTS members all live in the GTA and they have regular member sessions, including Full Moon Meditations, each month.

In 2018, we awarded a TSC Scholarship for the second time. The recipient, Cameron Schmidt, was very pleased to earn the scholarship. He is studying Commerce at Queens University in Kingston. Our TSC Scholarship is available every year to a student graduating from grade 12. Please be thinking about your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc., who may be getting ready for University or College in 2019. Higher education grows ever more expensive, and our \$1500 scholarship can help a deserving student. An average grade of 80% is required on grade 12 graduation.

One thing we have been considering at the Board level is an event for all members and their guests...perhaps a seminar on a particular topic. Your thoughts are welcome...topics, speakers, etc.

In the meantime, continue to enjoy the magazine, and make sure you check out our website. Look for upgrades in 2019. People far and wide have been enjoying the content. Our magazine still goes to Universities and Libraries. If you have any questions, please send them along to any Board member. We will respond. May every day find you happy, healthy and seeking. Here is one of my favourite poems, penned by Rumi.

"The breezes at dawn have secrets to tell you

Don't go back to sleep!

You must ask for what you really want.

Don't go back to sleep!

People are going back and forth across the doorsill

where the two worlds touch,

The door is round and open

Don't go back to sleep!"



IS THE PLAN FOR OUR FUTURE DEHUMANIZING?

Paul Carroll

Today, we seemed to be overwhelmed by technology, as soon as we become accustomed to one system another comes along, it's hard to keep up. We have computers that can retrieve information at the push of a button. We have Smartphones, that make calls, allow us to send text messages, take photos and get on line to the internet. We have Watches, that monitor Health, Activity, our workouts and allows us to communicate. This may be considered the golden age of communication.

Let me remind you, the nineteenth century was the first time that technology played a significant role in changing humanity. Through experiments in locomotion, Sea vessels, trains, Airships, and finally the first Airplane. Humanity took a leap in transportation, and time, was organized throughout the world. The golden age of transportation was upon us.

However, there is another side to this technology boom, Cyborg: a being with both organic and bio mechanical body parts, hearing aids,

pace-makers, and arms and legs with robotic prosthetics, life-altering and a remedy for the handicap. Quoting from the website *TMF: In the future of Humankind*, brain implants could improve our memory. Implants magnets RFID (radio frequency identification) chips implanted in our fingers could replace passwords and keys. Exoskeletons could boost our strength, and augment a whole range of our human capabilities.

So it will never be more important to keep the features that make us human, such as empathy, creativity, or the ability for change.

The military has conducted experiments in implanting computer chips in the brains of humans, hoping to alleviate soldiers' suffering from PTSD. The electrodes are placed into a patient's brain, and wired to electrodes to a manipulate computer implant in the patient's breast.

in short the treatment does not always work, and relapse can occur when the battery needs charging.

Due to ethical restrictions, researchers implanting electrodes into human brains can only be conducted under special circumstances, hence most



relevant experiments on humans are conducted using non- intrusive helmet-like devices, technically known as Transcranial direct current stimulators. The American military experiments with such helmets in the hopes of sharpening the focus and enhancing the performance of soldiers both in training and in the battlefield. though the results are far from conclusive through hype, the transcranial runs ahead of its accrual achievements.

In one experiment a subject entered the battle field stimulator without wearing the helmet, for every one the subject manage to shoot dead three more new assailants would pop up from nowhere. Where the subject was wired with the helmet, the subject picked of the assailants one by one as cool and methodically. Calmly lining up the rifle, taking a deep breath and picked off the closest before tranquilly assessing the next target. When the drill ended and the lights went on the subject was disoriented by the time. When the subject inquired about the outcome, the response was 100% kill. When questioned about the experience the subject expressed, not feeling smarter, nor feeling as if learning faster, but expressed a quietness

never felt before, there were no voices.

If Morals refer to 'right or wrong' and are determined by society where are we? If ethnics refer to 'good and evil' who are we? The Theosophical definition for ethics is as follows: a philosophy of moral conduct based on the inner structure and operation of the universe itself, not on a mere code of conventional behavior. The grounds alleged for moral conduct depends on one's view of man and the universe. Theosophy distinguishes between a person's real self and the illusive personal masks which are mistaken for that self. As with Kant, a sharp distinction is drawn between wish and inclination on the one hand, and the sense of moral obligation on the other; this latter is regarded as supervening upon the drama of self-interest and imposing a higher law.

Seek within instead of seeking without, we must turn our searching consciousness inward and seek what the mystic's have always called the: Inner Light



MAN'S MIGHTY DESTINY

*Henry T. Edge
(Universal Brotherhood Path – June 1900)*

To help the human race to realize its grand and mighty destiny — that is the declared object of the Universal Brotherhood Society; an object familiar to all who have read its prospectuses and are conversant with its literature and phraseology.

To some this may be a mere form of words, an idle phrase, a grandiloquent expression, designed to stand in ornate capitals at the head of a prospectus, or to sound sweet in the mouths of some exotic clique of cranks or dilettanti. Our modern world is so full of gaudy shams and big, swelling advertisements that phrases have lost their meaning and fall ineffectual upon our deafened ears. But let us consider the present state of humanity and the open and declared work of the Universal Brotherhood Organization, and see how true and real that avowed object is in its bearing upon the problem of human life.

To begin with, let us ask: What is man's mighty destiny? And in answering the question, let us invoke the aid of no set creed nor authoritative gospel, but see if we cannot infer our conclusions from the observed facts of human nature.

Looking, then, at man, we find him to be a creature endowed with a restless and ever-aspiring spirit, but surrounded by circumstances and conditions which fetter and limit that spirit, so that man is always striving to alter and improve them. Humanity has for ages been discontented, has not found its circumstances adequate to its aspirations, and has always been seeking and striving after something higher and better. There is in man a something which is greater and grander than the bodily and circumstantial environment, a something which demands ever more perfect expression — a growing force like that which unfolds the acorn and spreads the ample and perfect tree. This growing force can never be repressed; it makes itself felt in every rank of life. Even the professed materialist, though he would fain secure harmony by trying to stifle this importunate voice and make it move to the slow measure of a humdrum life, is obliged to yield to it when he frames his strange, uncouth theories. It drives him to extremes in his vaunted moderation; he has to be an out-and-out materialist; he must deny everything; and his "atom" assumes the proportions of a deity of the first order. Even the selfish recluse is driven by this ever-aspiring, illimitable fire to actions which frustrate his desired



retirement; and, taking a partner to his pleasures, becomes the father of a family, being thus forced by nature's laws which he has invoked to undergo the sacrifices and generous toils of parenthood. No one can remain still; all must move in some direction.

Let it be admitted, then, that man is growing; for it is a fact which no one will be disposed to deny, resting as it does upon no dogmatic sanction nor authoritative dictum, but on the observation and experience of all. The next question that arises is: Is there any limit to man's growth?

To this question the members of the Universal Brotherhood Organization answer an emphatic "NO." There is that in us which forbids us to entertain for a moment the idea that we have ceased or can cease growing. Man is full of unrealized aspirations and ambitions, restless and searching as ever; not like an old man, who has learnt all he can for one life and is resting on the fruits of the past, but like a man still young and ambitious. All around us are questions and searchings and strivings; we all feel the approach of a more gladsome day; our present condition is not so comfortable but that we can one and all imagine a better. Looking around upon Nature, teeming with its countless marvels of perfection, wherein the Divine Spirit has expressed Itself in endless and

unfathomable beauty and variety, we find man the only incomplete and inharmonious being. The greater part of his wondrous nature remains as yet unexpressed: he is like a plant that has so far produced only leaves; the blossom is still stirring and struggling within, awaiting the day of its unfolding. Man's life is not a perpetual joy, even if it is ever a joy in the true sense of the word. Men have asked, "Is life worth living?" Weary bards have sung odes of woe, and pessimistic philosophers have invented marvelous cut-and-dried schemes of materialism. Religion gives up this life in despair and points to death as the gateway to possible bliss of an uncertain character. A "favored" few spend their days in the fever of pleasure or the monotony of cultured ease, and perchance mistake that for joy; while a far larger host grind an endless mill of labor to feed their bodies, harassed by worry and want.

Is this the goal for which Humanity was placed upon earth? To toil and sweat and snatch his uncertain pleasures at the expense of his neighbor, or to die and go to heaven?

Is it not possible that a day will dawn when man can call himself happy, and sing from his heart, "Verily life is joy?" Will he never finish learning his toilsome and tedious lesson, and become serene and joyous and beautiful like the other products of



creation? Will he always be a creature of doubt and despair, anxiety and fear? Why is man so unhappy and discordant in so harmonious and peaceful a universe?

Surely it is because he alone of all creatures is endowed with a free will, an intelligent power of choice. It is this tremendous and hazardous power that makes his life such a critical and significant one. It enables him to overleap the protecting and guiding laws that limit other creatures to their proper and safe spheres, and to rush wildly into adventures in his search for a larger and fuller life. Thus he has strayed away from the peaceful and divine life from which he came and has become lost in the darkness of outer regions, where glimmer the fires of selfish lust and low cunning, where self-seeking and cautious expediency replace holy trust and the certainty of knowledge.

But man has lost paradise only in order that he may regain it, for there is more joy in heaven over one soul that, being lost, has returned, than over many who have never strayed. To quit the joys of an innocent Paradise, to combat evil, and, combatting, to conquer it, and to choose the right — that is man's destiny. He is a divine messenger upon earth, charged with the glorious task of informing and controlling the lower kingdoms of nature. He descends into the nether world, loses for a time his sight of

heaven, fights with the lusty dark forces, and finally wins and returns with the spoils of his conquest — a perfect man, having dominion over that which is above and that which is below.

Man's mighty destiny, then, is to regain the knowledge of his soul. By doing so he will unite heaven with earth, for he has explored all the regions of the lower creation until he has identified himself thoroughly with earth. Now he has to regain his original divine and spiritual knowledge, so that he may make a heaven upon this earth; not waste his time in waiting for a dim heaven after death and up in the clouds, but make a heaven here whither he has been sent.

He has to remember that the Soul is immortal, eternal, and that the body is as a garment which suffices for the needs of one day's work. Death must be regarded as a sleeping, for the resting of the Soul, before it resumes in another body its task upon earth. Hence the Universal Brotherhood upholds the forgotten truth of REBIRTH, and seeks to dispel that fatuous delusion which assigns to man but a single short life upon earth, and which makes every question of life seem so difficult and insoluble.

He has to remember that the Soul is ONE and not many. Man has strayed into the life of selfishness, and



dwells in a narrow prison-house of self, isolated from the limitless and teeming life around him. He shuts himself up in a little world of his own, feeding on prejudices and caprices and personal aims and desires; this narrow life has grown so familiar to him that he can scarcely imagine a wider. The ideal of unselfishness has been presented to him in an unpalatable form — as a painful obligation, a kind of mortification, a penance undergone in view of possible post-mortem recompense.

The Universal Brotherhood holds up unselfishness as a joy, a liberation, a glorious and happy awakening from troubled dreams. For it means the awakening of the SOUL. When the Soul awakens, man will arise with a shout of joy and say that "Life is Joy." There is a heaven for man, and it is here on earth; it will come when he has realized the fact that all Life is One. The selfish man is a fool, for no joy can penetrate into his narrow cell; the warm, bright glow of Soul-life cannot be felt in any single isolated breast, but must find response in a harmony of human hearts. This is the true "fellow-feeling." Lovers know the joy of escaping from self, when for a time they lose their sense of personal isolation in conscious blending with another soul. This is the ever-present reminder of the far

fuller life, the far deeper joys, that await us when we throw aside the intolerable weight of personal life and live for humanity instead of for self. Let that one universally known fact of the lovers' bliss be an example to us of the certain joy and freedom that attends the forgetting of self.

The Universal Brotherhood aims at bringing back into humanity the joy of soul-life. All its efforts and activities are means to that end, and they can all be explained by that one clue. Otherwise they might seem to be diverse and incoherent. Music, the elevation of the drama, the promotion of community-life, the practice of hygienic living, the training of children, the teaching of Rebirth and other half-forgotten truths — all are carried on with this same object in view, to bring back to forlorn humanity the joy of life and the knowledge of its grand and glorious destiny.

Universal Brotherhood Path

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THE VOICE FROM WITHIN

E. O'Rourke

(Universal Brotherhood Path – June 1900)

Krishna says: "If I were not indefatigable in action, all men would presently follow my example. If I did not perform actions all these creatures would perish."

St. Paul acknowledged the same truth when he said, "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being." And the greatest poets have disclosed the same thing. Recognizing the truth indicated, we have a guide to discover the light in our own heart, and in the hearts of all. This light within the secret chamber of the heart, in its divinest manifestations may be said to be a ray from the infinite light. We are in it, and of it, and do not exist in any real sense outside of it. Having faith in this, we entertain an unshaken belief in our own immortality. Surrounded as we are by the fog of materialism, at first we perceive but a faint light. If we persevere in our search, the light will grow, — become more bright, until ultimately we shall realize our identity with the infinite light.

As we move along on our pilgrimage, proving all things by the rules that human experience affords, we come to know as a fact, what is merely suspected by others, that there is a

Voice that speaks to us from within, called "the still, small Voice of Conscience" — "the Inward Monitor" — "the Voice of The Silence." This is the key to unlock the burglar-proof safe of the life of Socrates to the materialistic world. Without it all is dark and dismal, but with this key the real meaning of the life of the Saviors of the world may be understood; a reasonable motive may be perceived in their life work. The great sacrifices they have made, their self-denial, their love for humanity, may not be considered as mere waste of energy, but rather as a perfect scheme, a divine plan for the regeneration and salvation of the human race. The great ones of humanity have blazed the trees through the forest of error, made the rough places plain and leveled down the hills and mountains, — that all might be able to follow along the path.

The greatest error of Western civilization lies in its attempt to separate itself from God. For, as Cicero says, "Whatever that be which thinks, which understands, which wills, which acts, is something celestial and divine, and upon that account must necessarily be eternal." God is the highest reason. He is the Supreme Law. This Supreme Law manifests in and through us and throughout the entire Universe.



Hence, the attempt to separate ourselves from the Supreme and from each other is vain and futile. We are one in essence, separate only in development — physical, intellectual and spiritual; separate as complex individual man differentiates from his fellows, having a higher and lower nature.

To illustrate: The centre of man, the real man, is divine. Hence we say man is a Soul, his body is a vehicle, an instrument. This soul is the master endeavoring to train and discipline the human nature, that it may come to realize its higher possibilities and divine origin. As we have learned, the Supreme is ceaseless, eternal motion — never at rest. Being omnipresent, it penetrates all things — in it "we live and move and have our being." Hence we can easily apprehend that the growth and expansion of our mental and spiritual faculties depends upon the discipline and purification of the lower nature that it may respond truly and completely to the divine motion which is the basis and source of its manifested power. When this is apprehended, we may have a correct concept of the meaning of the phrase, "the Voice from within."

Think of the greatest musical performer you have ever heard, or heard of. If you have heard the greatest musician at his best — under the most favorable conditions — with a

perfect instrument, you can understand my meaning. Such a musician, with such an instrument, with such conditions, can lift an appreciative audience beyond their normal state to an immeasurable height. The musician himself, in love with his art, transcends the bounds of ordinary consciousness and ascends into the regions of celestial delights. The same may be said of the great singers. Then, again, think of the greatest musical performer having a bad instrument, attempting to entertain. I need not enlarge upon this. To attempt to simplify a matter of this kind, to even ordinary intelligence, could be likened unto the effort made to teach fishes to swim.

Let us think, then, of humanity as a whole, and individually. What an inadequate instrument humanity is for the divine breath — the divine voice. We may consider the matter in the same light as to each individual. Some thoughtless person may interpose that the Supreme is infinite in power and wisdom, and is able to destroy all discord in the universe and in humanity — and produce universal harmony. But the infinite is without limitations. The liberty of the infinite is as boundless as the Divine Wisdom. The Supreme is never shorn of the power of manifestation, the Divine Law and the Supreme are synonymous. Owing to the poverty of my language. I am compelled to say, by way of simplification, that the



Supreme is true to its own nature; that manifestation, therefore, takes place according to the Law. No error can be permitted — absurdity is not to be thought of. No idea of injustice in the divine economy can be indulged. Who, then, can question the Almighty? The state of being that is subordinate, should not protest to the Supreme. Why should a single member of the human organism censure the heart and brain? In view of what has been written, it is quite unnecessary to answer the question of the thoughtless, Why was I placed here in this world?

It is natural for the person who is too indolent to think, or the one who is puffed up with intellectual pride, to drop into the notion that the Supreme has irrevocably fixed the condition of each individual, and that therefore human effort is of no avail to change the lot of humanity. But in the light of human experience, why not accept the notion that we are sharers in that perfect liberty which the Supreme enjoys, and that the advancement we gain depends upon the right use we make of our privilege to choose. As intimated already, we cannot assume that the Supreme Law is just and unjust; that it is a complex rule in which justice and injustice are mingled. To ordain that one should be a master and that another should be his slave would be injustice. There is no warrant for such an assumption. It would be log-

ically fatal to the theory that the universe is regulated by Supreme Law. As Pope says:

"All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou canst
not see:
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good.
And spite of pride, in erring reason's
spite,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right."

The immutability of the Supreme Law is acknowledged. With the Supreme Law there is no past and no future. It is the Eternal Now. We cannot say that it has been, or that it is about to be, — but that it is. And on account of its unchangeableness and perfectness it is right.

All that we behold in the world is the logical result of antecedent causes and therefore must necessarily be right. Every effect in its turn becomes a cause. And if we allow ourselves to take a calm view of human action we shall become reconciled to the notion that every act of an individual, including his thoughts, makes an indelible impression upon the soul. He weaves for himself a garment which he cannot cast off so long as the same weaving processes that produced the garment continue. He may change by degrees, in daily, hourly, momently action, the warp and woof of the garment; and, by



right action purify the human soul, thus reaching the greater heights of perfection.

Because of the gross, materialistic condition of the mass of mankind, the Voice from within is but dimly heard. The tone is below even the middle tone of nature.

Remember that the Supreme power does not move to destroy, but to regenerate and build. Neither is there any coercion exercised on the individual, for that would be entirely inconsistent with the principle of perfect liberty which belongs to the Supreme. The voice within is continuously suggesting and soliciting, rather than commanding and compelling. We may gain the proper idea sought to be conveyed, by recalling the methods of the great sages and Saviors of mankind. The master does not seek to substitute his will and superior state of consciousness for the state and condition of the individual he is teaching. His aim is to draw forth the powers latent in the pupil, that he may do the work to his advancement himself. The opposite method would tend to destroy the consciousness of the pupil, and force his acceptance of truth blindly and without question. The pupil not apperceiving the truth, would remain stationary, and the voice from within, thrilling through such an imperfect instrument, would seem to utter an uncertain tone, just as the pure white

light when transmitted through a colored medium, seems to be of the color of that through which it passes.

It appears to me that the perfect liberty of the Supreme Law vibrating in matter, imparts to each individual liberty of action, and because of the condition of the individual he does not seem to apprehend that he is free to choose. Outwardly at least, to screen himself and to avoid responsibility, he declares that he is not free; but when he tries to be true to himself, the voice from within, which is the real self, convinces him of his error. In his sober, meditative moments, he may realize and repeat after Holmes:

"From the deep caves of thought I
hear a voice that sings,
Build thee more stately mansions,
O my Soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than
the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome
more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's
unresting seal!"



The idea of self-reliance must be kept steadily in view. We advance or recede by the exercise of, or the failure to exercise, the will. If the desires are impure and the will is weak, we know what will follow. The desires must be purified. We should have faith in the right. We should strongly desire to have the courage of our convictions, and to love truth for truth's sake. Heroes must possess these qualities. Such have made themselves glorious. As the "Dhammapada" says, "By one's self the evil is done, by one's self one suffers; by one's self evil is left undone; by one's self one is purified. The pure and the impure stand and fall by themselves; no one can purify another." St. Bernard says, "No one can injure me but myself."

In the consideration of this subject, it is necessary to understand that the cord of many strands — Karma and Reincarnation — runs through it; that each individual man has passed through many births, though they may be unknown to him. Each one may say, I am what I am in consequence of the work I have done on the human loom in many separate periods of existence. I have done the work myself, and I alone am responsible. I reap what I have sown. This, every rational, intelligent mind should recognize as just.

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THE HERITAGE OF MAN IS MAN HIMSELF

The heritage of man is man himself. Each man is the builder of himself, and the destroyer maybe. Each man is his own regenerator and savior, and each man undoes the work upon himself which mayhap for aeons in the past he had been building. This statement may sound reconcile, difficult to understand, a dark saying; and yet I wonder that anyone could or might doubt so self-evident a truth. Is it not clear enough that what a man is, he is; and that what he is, is the result of his former lives, the resultant of his thoughts and his feelings, the resultant of his previous willings and thinking and feeling? We make ourselves, we fashion our own characters.

This is one of the commonplaces of human experience. But just think what it means to grasp it in fullness. We make our lives shapely from day to day and year to year and from life to life; or we make them very ugly; and no one is to blame on the one hand, and no one is to be praised on the other hand, except the man himself. Think how just this is. We have nobody, naught outside ourselves, to blame if we have made ourselves unshapely and ugly and full of sorrow and pain; and there is none to be praised when our lives become shapely and beautiful in symmetry through our own efforts,

save we ourselves. A man by thinking may change his character, which means changing his soul, which means changing his destiny, which means changing everything that he is or becomes in the present and in the future. Why blame the blameless gods for our own faults, for molding us in the patterns that we ourselves have shaped? It is the old idea of passing the buck — slang, but how expressive! — throwing the blame on someone else. This is the surest way to go down instead of going up; for the recognition of truth and of justice and the cognizance of responsibility in a man, by a man of himself, are the first steps to climbing the path higher; and what hope there is in this. Think of the mistakes we have made in the past, the wrongs that we have wrought on others and on ourselves. Only half the story is told when we say that we have made ourselves and that we are responsible for ourselves. The other half of the story is what we have done upon others: how we have helped to shape their lives in beauty, or to misshape their lives in ugliness.

This recognition of man's responsibility not only to himself, but to others, is the lost keynote of modern civilization which seems to be infatuated with the idea that things will run themselves, and that all that men



have to do is to get what they can from the surrounding atmosphere. I think that is a hellish doctrine, and can but produce its harvest of misery. Let a man realize that he is a man and that what he sows he shall reap, and that what he is reaping he himself has sown, and see how the face of the world will be changed. Each man will become enormously observant not only of his acts which are the proofs of his thoughts and his feelings, firstly upon himself, but perhaps more important, of the impact he makes upon others. I think it is the lack of this feeling of individual responsibility and also mass responsibility in the world today which is the cause of the many, many horrors which are growing worse instead of better. It fosters the belief that violence can right a wrong. It never can. Violence never has perished by adding violence unto it. No problem ever has been solved after that manner. It is against the laws of being, against the laws of things as they are.

What is a man's heritage? I say again, it is man himself. I am myself because I made me in other lives. And how ashamed I am of myself at times that I have not made me wiser and better and higher and nobler in every way; and how I bless the whispering intimations of divinity within my heart that I can say I am not worse than I am! You see, this is the first realization of my responsibility to all —

and the all includes me. And here is a wonder-thought: when a man does right, no matter at what cost to himself, he strengthens himself and he strengthens all others. It is a work of wonderful magic. And when a man does evil, is it not obvious that he weakens himself? First there is the weakening of his will, then the soiling of his thoughts, and then the lessening of the strength of his genuine inner feelings. The very contact with such a man, provided he follows the downward path long enough, causes the self to be soiled. Even as one rotten apple, they say, will ruin a whole barrelful of sound fruit, so will an evil character adversely and evilly affect not only himself, but all unfortunates who may be near him.

We can save ourselves from this very easily, because there are few things so revealing as evil. It has naught to stand upon except illusion. Leave it alone and it will vanish like a mist. Do not strengthen it by pouring more evil into the illusion from your own energy. If it has naught to stand upon, no source of vital activity within itself, it falls, it goes to pieces. How different is good, which is health-giving and strengthening and cleansing. Such simple truths, and so profound! I suppose the most simple things are the most beautiful and the most profound.

So this doctrine of the heritage of a man which is himself is simply the



doctrine of another chance for the man whose life has been spoiled by himself. No other man can spoil you unless you yourself cooperate in the spoiling. None other can make you evil unless you conjoin in the suggestion or in the doing. Blame not the other for your fall. It is yourself who fall, and you will never fall, you would never have fallen, unless you had preferred that which brought about the fall. Such simple truths, and yet they comprise a code of divine conduct for us men on this earth. A child may understand these things because they are so clear, they are so obvious.

The doctrine of another chance! Think of the man — any one of us — who has made a mess of his life and wonders why ill fortune and misfortune and unhappiness and misery and other terrible things come upon him, until sometimes in the agony of self-reproach he cries, "Lord, deliver me from this hell." It is the old weak appeal to something where no help lies, for help is within. The divinity lies in your breast, the source of all strength and grandeur; and the more you appeal to it the more you exercise it, the more you strengthen your own self, advance in truth and

wisdom, rise above all the planes of weakness and sorrow and pain brought about by evildoing.

So you have made yourself; and in your next life you will be just what you are now making yourself to be. You will be your own heritage. You are now writing, as it were, your last will and testament for yourself. When a man realizes this wonderful fact, he no longer blames others, no longer sits in judgment upon his brothers. He no longer says: I am holier than thou — an attitude which is the sure mark of the weak and of the poor in spiritual life.

There is a wonderful French proverb which runs thus: *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*: "To understand everything is to forgive all." To understand all the hid causes, the results, the past destiny, the present strength, the temptation, the virtue, whatever it may be — to understand all this is to have divine knowledge, and it means to forgive. It is a wonderful proverb and must have been uttered first, I venture to say, by some human being who had a touch of illumination. I know myself by my own experience that when I have been hurt, or am hurt and think I am unjustly treated, I say



to myself, even when it seems to me that the wrongdoing unto myself is obvious: If I could read the heart of my brother who has wronged me, read back into the distant past and see what mayhap I did to him to wrong him, perhaps I would realize that he now is as unconscious of the wrong he does me as I was then of the wrong I did to him. I shall not increase the treasury of virtue and happiness and peace in this world by taking up the gauge of battle and injecting more fury and hatred into a hatred-ridden world. But I can do my part in strengthening myself, do my part in getting some illumination from above-within, from the god within me, by doing what I myself have taught: practicing what I preach. Peace and happiness come from this, and the sense of increased self-respect and the growth of pity.

Do you know, I sometimes think that pity or compassion is one of the most celestial visitors to the temple of the human heart. The old sages used to say that none but the gods really pay men exact justice, or what they think is justice and flatter themselves that they are right. The gods hear all, see all, feel all, understand all, and are filled with pity. Think, if any one of

us human beings were weighed in the strictest scales of karmic justice untempered by pity and wisdom, what chance do you think any one of us would have to escape condemnation? Does any one of you think that you are so spotless in virtue and holy strength that the scales would not fall against you? If so, you are very, very happy — or very, very blind! I think that if such spotless purity of past karma were yours, you would not be here as a man on this earth working out your own heritage — yourself.

True it is that in the future all the human race are going to be gods, and there is no reason on earth why we should not begin in the present instant of time to grow towards godhood. You win all, you gain all; you lose naught. From driven slave of past karma you become the orderer in time of your own destiny, for you are your own heritage. What a doctrine of comfort! What light it bestows!



THE RIGHT THOUGHT AND RIGHT ACTION

Helen Douglas

Many have regarded Theosophy as an abstract philosophy, valuable only to those who wish to indulge in mental gymnastics or lose themselves in a labyrinth of speculative thought. Those who thus judge Theosophy show a very superficial knowledge of it; and those who make such a use of it have failed to understand its deeper teachings. Far from being only theoretical, it is eminently practical, and only as the students of Theosophy find expressions for its teachings in their lives has their study been of any value.

One who earnestly desires to do right, to fulfill his obligations to his fellow-men, is very much handicapped if he is ignorant of the laws that govern the life of the individual and the race and their reciprocal relations. In its teaching of the divinity of man, the unity of all souls with the Oversoul, man's evolution under the laws of reincarnation and karma, Theosophy sets forth the highest law of conduct. To know that the soul reincarnates, or that brotherhood is a fact in nature, is of little value, unless one bases his conduct upon that knowledge. But equipped with such knowledge, one who really desires

to fulfill his highest possibilities finds his field of usefulness broadened and is able to work effectively for the benefit of humanity.

His field of usefulness is broadened, for he finds that his work lies on the planes of thought and feeling as well as that of action. Right thought is too frequently ignored or valued merely as a prompter to right action. Thoughts have a value of their own. Not all of them find expression in action and that expression is of necessity limited. The acts of by far the large majority of people fall outside the criminal and civil law. One may keep all the ten commandments, but if his thoughts are not pure, if he is selfish or revengeful, he is certainly not doing his whole duty. There are many who conform to the accepted standard of conduct, but very few fulfill their highest possibilities. If we are seeking to lead a higher life than the world around us, we cannot accept its standards as our guides. We sin not only when we transgress some civil or religious law, but every time we do not live up to our highest ideals in thought as well as action.

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." No one will deny that a man's thoughts build his character, but more than this they help to build



of mankind, is a powerful potency for good. Although he cannot point to any special instance and say, "I have done this or that," he will have raised the level of humanity.

Humanity must be saved, not from some future place of torment, but from its present torturing conditions. He who would work for its salvation has a very real battle to fight. This battle is on the plane of thought and feeling. The result of his successes or failures will strengthen or weaken the force along the entire line. How do we overcome darkness? By idle exhortation or by bringing light? In this battle for humanity we are fighting doubt, ignorance and selfishness. The only way these can be successfully opposed is by meeting them with a strong force of trust, based on knowledge, and a steady flow of compassion.

This is the task we have before us. It must be accomplished first within ourselves. For one pure soul consciously fighting for the right, bringing truth to this plane by living it, then sending it forth, vitalized by his own life force is a more powerful factor for good than a library of disembodied precepts. We believe

in the divinity of man; we must live as divine souls; we must have confidence in ourselves and in humanity to overcome the present state of blinding ignorance and claim our birthright of divinity. We believe that Brotherhood is a fact in nature; we must live in that belief until the thought of humanity outweighs the thought of self, and brotherhood becomes a fact in our lives. This can be done only by diligently striving to change our old habits. This is difficult, but there is a great incentive. When we reflect that every evil, selfish or desponding thought is a blighting breath that makes the wretched more wretched; that every genuine unselfish, loving thought lightens the world's woe, there is no choice. One cannot sit, as did Hecate, and glory in the thought that he is the most wretched person in the world; but must take a mental inventory, recognize the parts of his nature that are to be overcome, and those that are to be developed. There is no need of being discouraged if we find the very thoughts we are trying to kill, recurring again and again. This is because the mind has formed a habit of bringing up the things we



used to call for. In meeting this we can make use of the very law which gives it force.

Everything that is evil, useless or ignoble has its counterpart in something that works for good. If, when we recognize a thought whose tendency is downward, we consciously build up its opposite, and force the mind to dwell on it we set up a habit in the other direction. Soon the good thought will always come up to counteract the bad one, and after awhile it will have crowded the other out altogether.

Thought may be divided into two kinds; verbal thought and real thought. Verbal thought is the kind that is gleaned from books, conversation, etc. It is held by an act of the memory and easily finds expression in words or on paper. Real thought springs from one's consciousness. It is the result of having lived. It abides, for it is part of one's self. It seeks expression in action oftener than in words, although thoughts are more far-reaching than actions and have to do with the world of causes instead of effects, actions are by no means to be overlooked. It is a very good

test of the genuineness of a thought to pursue it until we have realized it in the plane of action. Thoughts which do not prompt to action we may be sure are only verbal. Often when one earnestly tries to make his actions conform to his ideals he is horrified at the discrepancy between them. But if his motive is pure and he still persists in spite of repeated and unaccountable failures, he is winning a victory on the thought plane that will find expression in glorious action when the Karma that binds him is exhausted.

Universal Brotherhood Path

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CAMERON SCHMIDT – SCHOLORSHIP RECIPIENT

I would like to thank The Theosophical Society in Canada for the amazing opportunity that the scholarship has afforded me as a First Year Commerce student at Queens University.

I have greatly enjoyed my Management Calculus, Accounting and Marketing courses thus far, as well as the amazing professors at The Smith School of Business, and the multitude of diverse friends that I have made.

Outside of the classroom I have become a member of the Executive Team for the Queens Running and Reading Club, an after-school program for underprivileged youth at a local elementary school. I have also fueled my passion for sports by playing intramural hockey, soccer and dodge ball.





PASSING ON THE LIGHT

There is but one occultism, one truth. The fountain of wisdom on this earth is the Brotherhood of adepts, the spiritual heart of the world, from which streams unceasingly a flow of inspiration and enlightenment. It is the one supreme source from which have derived all the facets of truth that the religious and philosophical systems of the world contain. From there come forth not only the great sages and teachers from time to time as the guides and instructors of men, but also envoys or messengers, whether known or unknown, who work in the world for the benefit of mankind.

This fountain-source of wisdom is formed of the noblest spiritual and intellectual giants that humanity has ever produced — men who have become at one with the god within. Knowing each other they band together and thus form the great school of light and truth, the great Brotherhood. Called by various names in different ages, the higher ones are known in Buddhist countries as Dhyani-chohans; the ancient Persians referred to the members of this solar hierarchy as Amshaspends. Jewish mystics and Qabbalists spoke of them as Bnei 'Elohim, Sons of the Gods; and in other countries they were called Sons of Light, or Sons of the Sun as

in ancient Egypt.

Innumerable schools of occultism, all derivative from the mother-school, have existed in the past, exist presently, and will exist in the future. The Mysteries of the Greeks were one such school, as were those of the Persians and the Egyptians; the Mysteries practiced in the ancient Americas, such as among the Peruvians and the Mayas, were schools in the same sacred tradition. Both the Lamaism of Tibet and the Vedanta of Hindustan are essentially schools of occultism, although they are also systems of exoteric philosophy. The Rosicrucians of the mediaeval ages were originally a mystic theosophic and quasi-esoteric body; and the Martinists of France, existing even today, form one of the 'occultistic' schools. Then there are the so-called alchemical bodies, whether in India, Asia Minor, or in Europe, whose adherents, while possessing a modicum of spiritual aspiration, nevertheless yearn even more for powers or phenomena.

There are, moreover, in the Orient a number of quasi-occult groups, some larger, some smaller, which study in their own way the different remnants of mystical literature which past ages have brought into being in those countries. In Persia, Egypt, Syria and in parts of Turkey, similar



bodies exist, often very exclusive, and usually nothing is heard of them.

All such associations, in every country and every age, do a certain good work in their way in proportion to the amount of the ancient wisdom that they teach. But such truth as they do impart is too often seen through the distorting mental prisms of those who have wandered from the fountain-source. Only as they pass on faithfully the splendor originally received from the mother-school can they rightly be called schools of occultism. It may be added that there are in the world at the present time, in every one of the great continental masses, a few — a very few — genuinely esoteric schools connected with the Brotherhood.

A few intuitive scholars have suspected the existence of esoteric teachings in the archaic Mystery schools, but these have never yet been found in a coherent body. In the different literatures of antiquity we find an allusion here, a reference there, but a reasoned and explicit series of such teachings exists only in places to which no uninitiated student has hitherto consciously penetrated.

In recording the deeper truths for later generations, the ancient sages and seers adopted the use of metaphor or figures of speech, often in fantastic and curious tales: legends, fairy stories, mythological romances.

Plato, for instance, through the use of myth gave out many guarded hints regarding matters taught in the Mysteries; but because he himself knew what he was about and had received permission to do this, and did it under the cloak of metaphor, it was not a violation either of the letter or of the spirit of his oath.

It is actually by so using esoteric terms that the great teachers of past ages wrote letters to each other, and composed their books, passing them from hand to hand. Those who were initiated could understand what they read; to them it was intelligible and clear; but to the man who had not been received within the 'temple walls,' the teachings were merely speculative philosophy, or perhaps meaningless jargon.

These wisdom-teachings have come down in direct succession from sage to sage, ever since the Mysteries were first instituted among men in late Lemurian and Atlantean times — a step which became essential because mankind had lost the power of direct and conscious communion with their divine ancestors. Men were thus taught to raise the soul by an effort of the will combined with intense aspiration so that they might be brought into direct intercourse, spiritually and intellectually, with their own inner god — or with some other divinity. It was in this way that the noblest truths about man



and the universe were originally perceived, and thereafter 'sung' — to use the word of the Veda — i.e. formulated into human speech.

Why is it that in practically all the ancient literatures spiritual teaching was given in the vernacular of the battlefield? The Bhagavad-Gita, for instance, tells of the conflict between the opposing armies of the Kurus and the Pandavas. In the Germanic and Scandinavian mythologies there is the constant battling between the gods and the heroes; so also in the Greek, Egyptian, Persian, and Babylonian mythologies — all are alike in this respect.

The question is easily answered: to little children we give storybooks; to those who cannot understand the meaning of peace and quiet and the enormous strength that lies in these, we talk of battle and of fighting, because there is always a victor and a vanquished. Thus in the literatures of the world secrets of mystic truths were written in the epic vein in order to meet the mental characteristics of those ages. But behind all this there were the esoteric schools (1) which taught truth and compassion more directly, such as did Lao-tse of China: "The way of Tao is not to strive." This is the contrary of quietism, for quietism is usually spiritual stupefaction, whereas the whole effort should be to embody in one's life and in every fiber of one's being

an active spirit of compassion for all mankind.

Just as the original esoteric bodies became the great religious and philosophical schools of the past, just so the present theosophical movement was intended to be the spiritual-intellectual nursery from which will be born the great philosophical and religious and scientific systems of future ages — indeed, the heart of the civilizations of the coming cycles.

In every important age, theosophical movements in various parts of the globe have been founded. A few succeeded; most of them lived for a while, did some good, achieved a certain amount of the work that was to be done, and then failed, becoming a church, a sect, a dogmatic set of beliefs. Such periodic efforts to instill into men's hearts the ageless verities will continue throughout future time, until human beings shall have so evolved that they will welcome light when it comes, and will honor it as the most precious gift that they have.

Thus it was that in 1875 two men of buddha-like soul took upon their shoulders the challenge of making themselves karmically responsible in a sense for the sending out of a new message which, by the force of its innate vigor and the persuasive power of its truths, would induce men to think. From then on science began to have stirrings of new ideas;



fresh impulses were injected into the thought-atmosphere of the world and, not least, the ideal of working toward an eventual universal brotherhood among all peoples took firm hold. The chief objective was to have these ancient spiritual principles work as a leaven in human thought, in the religious and philosophical strata and, ultimately, in the social structure itself. H. P. Blavatsky was inspired to write her masterworks, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* — not for the purpose of founding another religion, but to restate once again and in fuller measure the archaic wisdom-tradition of mankind in its more esoteric aspects. As such, she was one of the links in the serial line of teachers who come at certain stated periods for the passing on of esoteric light and truth. She came at the beginning of a new Messianic cycle and the ending of an old one, and thus was the messenger for the age to come.

This succession of teachers, the one following the other, has continued through countless centuries. There is nothing amazing about it; it is simply an illustration of one of nature's laws, that just as generation succeeds generation, and one genus in evolutionary time comes after some other genus, so is there a chain of wise men continuing the flow of truth down the ages. In Sanskrit writings this is called the

guruparampara, of which there are two kinds: first, those sages who rise one above the other, as it were, in progressively greater wisdom and spiritual dignity; and second, those who follow each other in time, and in one line of succession in the outer world of men.

The same pattern was known to the Greek poets and philosophers, Homer and Hesiod both speaking of the Golden Chain connecting Olympus and earth, and later Greek mystical writers referred to it as the Hermetic Chain. This passing on of the torch of light from hand to hand has always been, and always will be — as long as the call comes from the hearts of men. When that call dies, the chain of succession remains intact, but the teachers no longer work openly.

The guardians of mankind — name them as you will, masters, mahatmas, adepts or elder brothers of the race — work wherever they see the slightest chance to do good, to cultivate the spiritual nature of their fellow human beings. Obviously, any society or group of people, or any individual, who tries to follow a noble pathway in life will receive their help, if worthy of it. Worthiness is the test, the sole test. Whenever the right call is made, it will be answered. But any call merely for self-benefit most emphatically is not the 'right call.' The only call they recognize is



that given by those whose hearts yearn for light, and whose minds seek wisdom and whose souls are swayed by compassion. And further, the call must be made solely in order to lay such wisdom and light as may be received on the altar of service to humanity. There is not a single earnest heartbeat that remains unanswered, not a single soul-aspiration to help that is not faithfully registered.

Thus is the Brotherhood of adepts the guardian and custodian of the primeval wisdom, whose members are sworn to preserve it in secrecy and in silence until someone knocks at the portals with the right knock. They in turn receive light from others higher than they; and so on forever is this theosophia — the wisdom of the gods — transmitted to men along the Golden Chain of Mercury, the interpreter.



THE STILL, SMALL PATH

All esoteric schools have taught as the very foundation of their being: "Man, know thyself!" It has ever been thus, and the key to this lies in many things. It lies in the study of the suffering that the knot of personality experiences before its intricate labyrinth of selfishness is overpassed; it lies also, on a more exoteric plane, in the perusal of the majestic literatures of past ages: the brain work, the heart work, the work of the soul, of the seers and sages of every era. Greatest of all, it lies in the study of love for others and utter forgetfulness of self. Therein rests the mystery of Buddhahood, of Christhood: forgetfulness of self, absorption in love all-encompassing, unbounded, frontierless, of all that is.

Some people imagine that the path of spiritual attainment is far away over the mountains of the future, almost unreachable, when in reality there is a relatively narrow frontier between ordinary life and that followed by the neophyte or chela. Essentially the difference is one of outlook, and not of metaphysical distance. It is the same difference that exists between the one who falls under the sway of temptation and thereafter becomes its bondslave, and the other who

successfully resists the temptation and thereafter becomes its master.

Anyone can enter upon the path, if his will, his devotion and yearnings are directed toward being of greater service to others. The only thing that prevents him from taking that most beautiful step is his convictions, his psychological and mental prejudices which distort his perspective. We are all learners, all of us have illusions. Even the mahatmas and adepts have illusions, albeit of an extremely subtle and lofty character, which prevent them from going still higher — and this is one of the reasons they are so compassionate towards those who are seeking to tread the very path along which they have successfully advanced in former days.

The quickest way to overcome these illusions is to cut the root of them, and that root is selfishness in its multiform forms. Even the yearning for advancement when it is for self alone is based on selfishness which in turn produces its own subtle and powerful mayas. Therefore every ambition to succeed, unless it be washed clean of all personality, will inevitably defeat itself, for the way of inner growth is self-forgetfulness, a giving up of personal ambitions and longings of any and every kind, and a



becoming an impersonal servitor of all that lives.

It should be stated, however, that the purpose of genuine occultism is not to 'produce disciples' or to turn refractory human material into individuals striving for mere self-advancement. Rather is it to regenerate our imperfect human nature into becoming at first nobly human, and finally godlike — and this along the archaic and traditional lines of teaching and discipline which have been recognized and followed for ages past.

Chelaship is a vision, out of which arise conviction and definite action. All the rules of moral conduct that one may read about in the great literatures of the ancient philosophies as well as in theosophical writings, are simply powerful aids to help the aspirant cleanse himself of selfishness. The real code of ethics is an unwritten one, and therefore not subject to dogmatisms, not easily enslaved to conventional notions or misconstruction by minds debating and quarreling about mere words. In essence it is of the extremest simplicity, for the most beautiful and the most comprehensive truths are always the simplest. There are times when I throw my pen aside and say to myself: let us have just the simple truths that the little ones with their unspoiled natures and their direct and quick perception can grasp. It

is difficult permanently to deceive a child. But when it is said that the neophyte must regain the child state, this does not mean childishness or stupidity! It is the child's heart that we need — trusting, intuitive, and alert.

Intellectual training is very valuable and a great help, but to become as a 'little one' is the most difficult lesson for human beings to learn. The brain-mind is a good instrument when guided and trained, but is a tyrant when left to its own devices and impulses, for it is always selfish; its vision is necessarily limited to the swirl of the lower and restricted field of consciousness of the manasic knot of personality. In the higher nature lies the higher understanding, and it alone can arrive at the inner meaning of the teachings. The lower mind can achieve some success in the brain-mind comprehension of them, but only when helped from the inner understanding. An individual may be quite sincere, quite willing to know, quite ready to experiment and to investigate, but the buddhic splendor may be completely absent. The only test of fitness is that which is given by the individual himself. If the light of buddhi be shining even by so much as a fugitive glimmer, that is enough. There is then in that individual the esoteric right to know.

Self-conquest is the path of growth. The whole truth is contained in these



few simple words. It is a slow growth as with all great things; and if it is to be attained, it must be an unfolding of the man himself. There is no other path than that of inner development, no easy way: the one who cannot control himself in the affairs of daily life and does not know who or what he is, cannot control the events and experiences that inevitably arise around anyone who succeeds, even in small degree, in approaching that "straitest of all gates."

Here is a strange paradox: if one would be master of himself he must be utterly selfless, and yet he must be himself utterly. The lower self must be wiped out — not killed, but wiped out, which means withdrawn inwards and absorbed by the higher self. For the higher self is our essential or real being, and the lower is but a ray therefrom — soiled, rendered unclean, so to say, because it becomes attached to this world of multomyriad illusions.

The man most easily deceived is the man most infolded in maya; and such are often the so-called worldly-wise. You cannot deceive an adept, as he would instantly see the attempt at deception; and the reason is that you cannot, as it were, throw hooks of personal attachment into his being. Nothing one can do or say will affect him or attract him to your thought if it is in the slightest degree selfish, nonuniversal. He is

above those illusions, has fought through them, found them out and rejected them. Yet the masters feel, even before we ourselves would realize it, the slightest moving of the true chela spirit. The call upon them is tremendous, and a quick magnetic sympathy is thereupon established.

Taking the thought a step further: when a neophyte makes a deliberate and actual choice with all the strength of his being, he kindles a light within, and this is the buddhic splendor; and, as said, it is sensed understandingly and watched and cared for by the teachers, and thus he is an 'accepted chela.' How long will he remain such? None is picked out by perambulating magicians wandering the world, selecting whom they may think to be proper material — not at all. The choice is in the individual: he chooses his path; he makes his resolve; and if the buddhic light is seen, be it only a spark, he is accepted, although that fact may be unknown to himself for the time being. Thereafter all depends upon him, whether he succeed or fall by the wayside.

It is a matter of the rarest occurrence for one immediately to know that he has been accepted, for the usual rule is that he is tested in a hundred thousand different ways, these tests arising out of the ordinary events of life and the aspirant's reactions to them. Once, however, that he



becomes cognizant of his teacher, the path becomes both easier and more difficult—easier because there is the new conviction that at least a certain success has been attained, and also because of the courage and self-confidence that arise out of this fact; vastly more difficult because from now on he is under more direct training and guidance, and small lapses and little backslidings, for which large indulgence is allowed in the beginning, have henceforth very serious consequences.

Moreover, no teacher makes himself known to his disciple without the latter's having previously received many instructive premonitions from his own inner being. The reason is clear: no one ever becomes accepted, until he has actually been accepted by his own inner divinity, i.e. until he has become more or less aware of the stirring within him of a wondrous mystery.

A certain stage of progress is of course necessary before such a choice can be made; but every normal being can make such a choice, because in him spirit and matter have attained a more or less stable equilibrium. In other words, chelaship may be undertaken at any stage by anyone who can arouse the Christ-light in his mind and heart. His resignation of the lower selfhood on the altar is what counts; and no human cry for help ever passes

unheard, if that cry for more light be impersonal. The test is impersonality.

Let us not imagine, however, that, because the words renunciation and sacrifice are often used, these imply the loss of anything of value. On the contrary, instead of a loss, it is an indescribable gain. To give up the things that belittle, that make one small, petty, and mean, is to cast away our fetters and take on freedom, the richness of the inner life and, above everything else, self-conscious recognition of one's essential unity with the All.

It should be clearly understood that this training, which is one of study and of discipline arising in the spiritual and intellectual movements of the student's own soul, has never included and never will include any interference with or encroachments upon his family rights or duties. Chelaship is nothing weird, nothing queer or erratic. If it were, it would not be chelaship. It is the most natural path for us to strive to follow, for by allying ourselves with the noblest within we are allying ourselves with the spiritual forces which control and govern the universe. There is inspiration in the thought.

The neophyte's life is a very beautiful one, and grows steadily more and more so as self-forgetfulness comes into the life in ever-larger degree. It is also a very sad one at times, and the sadness arises out of his inability



to forget himself. He realizes that he is very, very lonely; that his heart is yearning for companionship. In other words, the human part of him longs to lean. But it is just the absence of these weaknesses that makes the master of life: the ability to stand alone, erect and strong in all circumstances. But never think that the mahatmas are dried-up specimens of humanity, without human feelings or human sympathy. The contrary is the case. There is a far quicker life in them than in us, a far stronger and more pulsing vital flow; their sympathies are enlarged so greatly that we could not even understand them, although some day we shall. Their love encompasses all; they are impersonal and therefore are they becoming universal.

Chelaship means trying to bring out the master living in our own being, for he is there now.

There will come a time, however, if one progress far enough, when even the family duty will have to be dropped, but the circumstances then will be such that the dropping will actually be a benediction to the individual as well as to the one towards whom the duty formerly lay. Yet let no one be deceived by the dangerous doctrine that the higher a man goes, the less is he bound by the moral law. The direct converse of this is the truth; the doing of wrong to another is never right.

At no step along this sublime path is there ever exterior compulsion of any kind; only such lofty compulsion as springs forth from the aspirant's own yearning soul to advance ever farther and farther inwards and upwards forever. Each step is marked, during its earlier course, by dropping something of the personal shackles and imperfections which keep us enthralled in these realms of matter. We are told with reiterated insistence that the grandest rule of life is to foster within one's own being undying compassion for all that is, thus bringing about the winning of selflessness, which in its turn enables the peregrinating monad ultimately to become the Self of the cosmic spirit without loss to the monad of its individuality.

In the above lies the secret of progress: to be greater one must become greater, to become greater one must abandon the less; to encompass a solar system in one's understanding and life one must give up, which means outgrow and surpass, the limits of the personality, of the mere human. By abandoning the lower selfhoods we pass into the larger selfhoods of selflessness. No one will progress a single step to the more expanded selfhood which already is his own higher nature, until he learns that 'living for self' means descending into still more compacted and restricted spheres, and that 'living for all that



is' means an expansion of his own soul into becoming the larger life. All the mysteries of the universe lie latent within us, all its secrets are there, and all progress in esoteric knowledge and wisdom is but an unfolding of what is already within.

How little our human troubles which plague us so greatly — such a burden of sorrow — seem when we allow our minds to dwell upon these infinitely comforting realities. No wonder the Christian writer declared that not even a sparrow falleth from heaven without its being known to the divine; not even a hair of our heads but is counted and cared for. How much more so then we ourselves. Even this world of phantasmagoria and shadows is an intrinsic and inseparable part of the Boundless from which we sprang, and towards the divine heart of which we shall one day return on the wings of the experiences that we have been through, wings that will carry us over the valleys to the distant mountain peaks of the spirit.



PASSING ON THE LIGHT

There is but one occultism, one truth. The fountain of wisdom on this earth is the Brotherhood of adepts, the spiritual heart of the world, from which streams unceasingly a flow of inspiration and enlightenment. It is the one supreme source from which have derived all the facets of truth that the religious and philosophical systems of the world contain. From there come forth not only the great sages and teachers from time to time as the guides and instructors of men, but also envoys or messengers, whether known or unknown, who work in the world for the benefit of mankind.

This fountain-source of wisdom is formed of the noblest spiritual and intellectual giants that humanity has ever produced — men who have become at one with the god within. Knowing each other they band together and thus form the great school of light and truth, the great Brotherhood. Called by various names in different ages, the higher ones are known in Buddhist countries as Dhyani-chohans; the ancient Persians referred to the members of this solar hierarchy as Amshaspends. Jewish mystics and Qabbalists spoke of them as Bnei 'Elohim, Sons of the Gods; and in

other countries they were called Sons of Light, or Sons of the Sun as in ancient Egypt.

Innumerable schools of occultism, all derivative from the mother-school, have existed in the past, exist presently, and will exist in the future. The Mysteries of the Greeks were one such school, as were those of the Persians and the Egyptians; the Mysteries practiced in the ancient Americas, such as among the Peruvians and the Mayas, were schools in the same sacred tradition. Both the Lamaism of Tibet and the Vedanta of Hindustan are essentially schools of occultism, although they are also systems of exoteric philosophy. The Rosicrucians of the mediaeval ages were originally a mystic theosophic and quasi-esoteric body; and the Martinists of France, existing even today, form one of the 'occultistic' schools. Then there are the so-called alchemical bodies, whether in India, Asia Minor, or in Europe, whose adherents, while possessing a modicum of spiritual aspiration, nevertheless yearn even more for powers or phenomena.

There are, moreover, in the Orient a number of quasi-occult groups, some larger, some smaller, which study in their own way the different



remnants of mystical literature which past ages have brought into being in those countries. In Persia, Egypt, Syria and in parts of Turkey, similar bodies exist, often very exclusive, and usually nothing is heard of them.

All such associations, in every country and every age, do a certain good work in their way in proportion to the amount of the ancient wisdom that they teach. But such truth as they do impart is too often seen through the distorting mental prisms of those who have wandered from the fountain-source. Only as they pass on faithfully the splendor originally received from the mother-school can they rightly be called schools of occultism. It may be added that there are in the world at the present time, in every one of the great continental masses, a few — a very few — genuinely esoteric schools connected with the Brotherhood.

A few intuitive scholars have suspected the existence of esoteric teachings in the archaic Mystery schools, but these have never yet been found in a coherent body. In the different literatures of antiquity we find an allusion here, a reference there, but a reasoned and explicit series of such teachings exists only in places to which no uninitiated student has hitherto consciously penetrated.

In recording the deeper truths for later generations, the ancient

sages and seers adopted the use of metaphor or figures of speech, often in fantastic and curious tales: legends, fairy stories, mythological romances. Plato, for instance, through the use of myth gave out many guarded hints regarding matters taught in the Mysteries; but because he himself knew what he was about and had received permission to do this, and did it under the cloak of metaphor, it was not a violation either of the letter or of the spirit of his oath.

It is actually by so using esoteric terms that the great teachers of past ages wrote letters to each other, and composed their books, passing them from hand to hand. Those who were initiated could understand what they read; to them it was intelligible and clear; but to the man who had not been received within the 'temple walls,' the teachings were merely speculative philosophy, or perhaps meaningless jargon.

These wisdom-teachings have come down in direct succession from sage to sage, ever since the Mysteries were first instituted among men in late Lemurian and Atlantean times — a step which became essential because mankind had lost the power of direct and conscious communion with their divine ancestors. Men were thus taught to raise the soul by an effort of the will combined with intense aspiration so that they might be brought into direct intercourse,



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spiritually and intellectually, with their own inner god — or with some other divinity. It was in this way that the noblest truths about man and the universe were originally perceived, and thereafter 'sung' — to use the word of the Veda — i.e. formulated into human speech.

Why is it that in practically all the ancient literatures spiritual teaching was given in the vernacular of the battlefield? The Bhagavad-Gita, for instance, tells of the conflict between the opposing armies of the Kurus and the Pandavas. In the Germanic and Scandinavian mythologies there is the constant battling between the gods and the heroes; so also in the Greek, Egyptian, Persian, and Babylonian mythologies — all are alike in this respect.

The question is easily answered: to little children we give storybooks; to those who cannot understand the meaning of peace and quiet and the enormous strength that lies in these, we talk of battle and of fighting, because there is always a victor and a vanquished. Thus in the literatures of the world secrets of mystic truths were written in the epic vein in order to meet the mental characteristics of those ages. But behind all this there were the esoteric schools (1) which

taught truth and compassion more directly, such as did Lao-tse of China: "The way of Tao is not to strive." This is the contrary of quietism, for quietism is usually spiritual stupefaction, whereas the whole effort should be to embody in one's life and in every fiber of one's being an active spirit of compassion for all mankind.

Just as the original esoteric bodies became the great religious and philosophical schools of the past, just so the present theosophical movement was intended to be the spiritual-intellectual nursery from which will be born the great philosophical and religious and scientific systems of future ages — indeed, the heart of the civilizations of the coming cycles.

In every important age, theosophical movements in various parts of the globe have been founded. A few succeeded; most of them lived for a while, did some good, achieved a certain amount of the work that was to be done, and then failed, becoming a church, a sect, a dogmatic set of beliefs. Such periodic efforts to instill into men's hearts the ageless verities will continue throughout future time, until human beings shall have so evolved that they will welcome light



when it comes, and will honor it as the most precious gift that they have.

Thus it was that in 1875 two men of buddha-like soul took upon their shoulders the challenge of making themselves karmically responsible in a sense for the sending out of a new message which, by the force of its innate vigor and the persuasive power of its truths, would induce men to think. From then on science began to have stirrings of new ideas; fresh impulses were injected into the thought-atmosphere of the world and, not least, the ideal of working toward an eventual universal brotherhood among all peoples took firm hold. The chief objective was to have these ancient spiritual principles work as a leaven in human thought, in the religious and philosophical strata and, ultimately, in the social structure itself. H. P. Blavatsky was inspired to write her masterworks, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* — not for the purpose of founding another religion, but to restate once again and in fuller measure the archaic wisdom-tradition of mankind in its more esoteric aspects. As such, she was one of the links in the serial line of teachers who come at certain stated periods for the passing on of esoteric light and truth. She came at the beginning of a new Messianic cycle and the ending of an old one, and thus was the messenger for the age to come.

This succession of teachers, the one following the other, has continued through countless centuries. There is nothing amazing about it; it is simply an illustration of one of nature's laws, that just as generation succeeds generation, and one genus in evolutionary time comes after some other genus, so is there a chain of wise men continuing the flow of truth down the ages. In Sanskrit writings this is called the guruparampara, of which there are two kinds: first, those sages who rise one above the other, as it were, in progressively greater wisdom and spiritual dignity; and second, those who follow each other in time, and in one line of succession in the outer world of men.

The same pattern was known to the Greek poets and philosophers, Homer and Hesiod both speaking of the Golden Chain connecting Olympus and earth, and later Greek mystical writers referred to it as the Hermetic Chain. This passing on of the torch of light from hand to hand has always been, and always will be — as long as the call comes from the hearts of men. When that call dies, the chain of succession remains intact, but the teachers no longer work openly.

The guardians of mankind — name them as you will, masters, mahatmas, adepts or elder brothers of the race — work wherever they see



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the slightest chance to do good, to cultivate the spiritual nature of their fellow human beings. Obviously, any society or group of people, or any individual, who tries to follow a noble pathway in life will receive their help, if worthy of it. Worthiness is the test, the sole test. Whenever the right call is made, it will be answered. But any call merely for self-benefit most emphatically is not the 'right call.' The only call they recognize is that given by those whose hearts yearn for light, and whose minds seek wisdom and whose souls are swayed by compassion. And further, the call must be made solely in order to lay such wisdom and light as may be received on the altar of service to humanity. There is not a single earnest heartbeat that remains unanswered, not a single soul-aspiration to help that is not faithfully registered.

Thus is the Brotherhood of adepts the guardian and custodian of the primeval wisdom, whose members are sworn to preserve it in secrecy and in silence until someone knocks at the portals with the right knock. They in turn receive light from others higher than they; and so on forever is this theosophia — the wisdom of the gods — transmitted to men

along the Golden Chain of Mercury, the interpreter.





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