

# THEOSOPHICAL MANUALS

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## THE ANGEL AND THE DEMON

BY

A STUDENT

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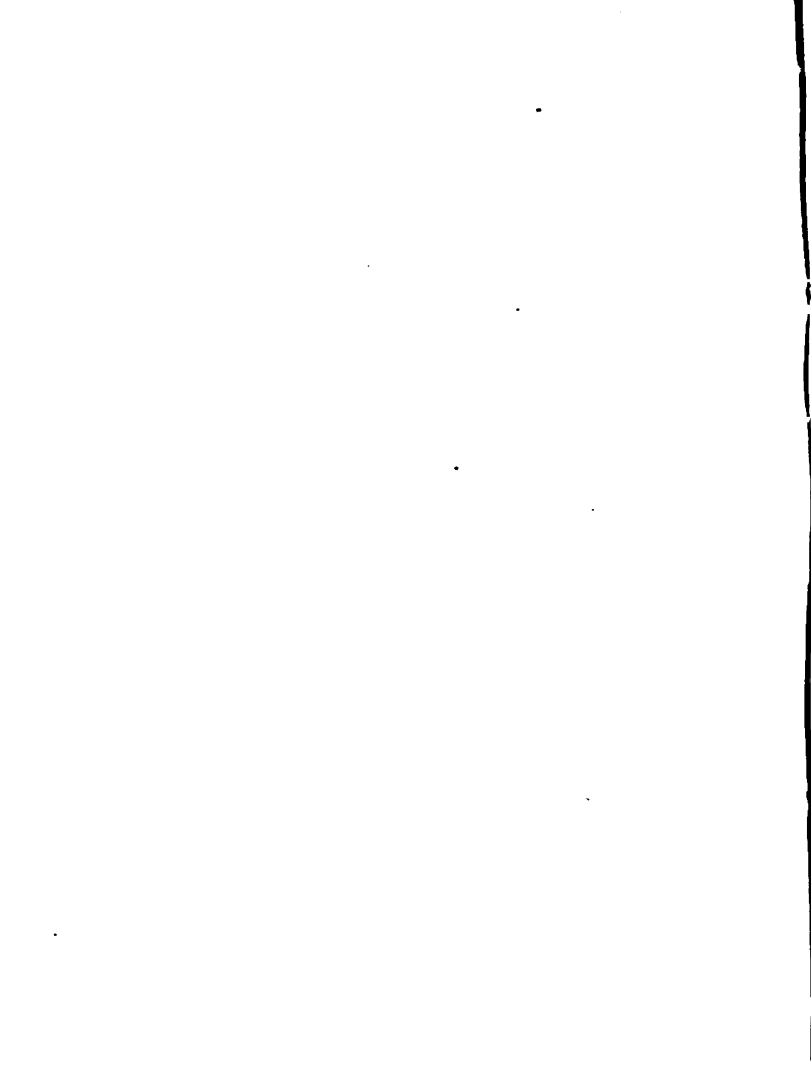
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## IV

### THE DEMON IN CRIME

UPON the subject of ordinary crime there is little more to be said. There remains only to make a classification of crimes, to note at what point the impulse to them runs over into what is ordinarily counted as insanity, and to study the part played by the Demon in their commission. Especially is such an examination desirable in view of the increasing prevalence of infantile or child crime, crime often of an astonishingly extreme, heartless and purposeless character.

What might be called ordinary crime is an act done in pursuit of some comprehensible aim. Whether it be theft, rape, murder, or what not, the object is clear, and the means employed to gain it have a fairly intelligent and balanced relation to the end. And, so far, though the criminal is mistaking the path of

his own welfare and permanent happiness, he is acting in harmony of aim with his evil instigator; he is not being swept off his feet by an impulse of whose source he is ignorant.

But what are we to say of those impulses to crime whose energy outruns that which is necessary to gain the intelligible and manifest end, or those which seem quite blind and to have no intelligible aim?

And what of those cases in which every vestige of normal humanity seems to have departed and where there remains only an utterly conscienceless creature devoid of any impulses save for self-gratification, possibly without the power to postpone even a small gratification that is immediate in order to retain the capacity for enjoyment of a greater, a little in the future? In passing, it may be noted that there is a whole abyss between such creatures, utter slaves of impulse, of the Demon — and the full initiates of selfishness who are not the slaves of, but utterly and consciously at one with, the Demon. The former, like the habitual drunkards, are slaves; the

latter freed in evil, of iron will, the dominators of such parts of their nature as would if gratified stand in the way of their attainment of their conscienceless power. They have subdued the animal, the beast, that it may not stand in the way of the fiend. The acts of such creatures are outside ordinary classification. And of some of the others we can make no real explanation (to call them "insane" is not an explanation) unless we assume that the human adversary, long permitted to guide and reign unchecked, at last acquires an absolute and, so to speak, contemptuous domination over the man, his original creator; who no longer needs to urge or reason with his tool, but treats absolutely as his own the organs of action of the man in whose body he dwells.

It is from a study of the utterly abnormal that we can get more light upon the nature and mode of life of the human vampire. As we have seen, its impulses are gratified at the expense of the life of the man, and by their gratification its gain runs *pari passu* with his loss. He may, and usually does, take his pleas-

ure in acts which nourish his demon, for men are more or less sensual and selfish. If his nature is very bad he may maintain the alliance, and if the pair let the lower sensual rule, the man is on a swift descent in the scale of life; if, still maintaining the alliance, he use his will and intelligence to restrain the lower and purely sensual evil in order that it may not obstruct his pursuit of power over his fellowmen, then he is still on the path of descent; but a path which, though longer than the other, is more dangerous, more irretraceable, because the compass of will is firmly, consciously and intelligently set thither.

But in other cases the Demon may impel a man to acts which, even in the moment of their doing, may horrify him; acts which because of their not rare anti- (rather than in-) humanity we call insane. As a (now) separate center of life, its acts may be marked by utter want of relationship with the ordinary or original tastes and habits of its creator; and its performances, attempts and impulses bear not only no such relation, but also none to his



strength, reason or judgment. From that point of view we are justified in calling such acts insane, though they may be sane and well-based enough from the Demon's standpoint, since for a time they increase its strength and now independent viability. It may therefore urge the man to crimes of the most purposeless or ill-judged character, often of the most extreme ferocity and causelessness, and to attempt which, by reason of his inadequate strength or the vigilance of society or of his victim's friends are foredoomed to failure. Much light will come upon the study of crime as soon as crime is thus considered and its real author's often quite separate individuality taken into account.

Let us make a rough classification of crimes and the impulses to them.

(1) There is that simple and comprehensible form of crime which consists in taking what is desired from the property of another. The thing desired may be anything from a necessity to a luxury, and of course its degree of criminality lies in the nearness to one or the

other extreme. In the insane variety of it, known as kleptomania, that which is taken is useless to the thief, and the act is an irrational gratification of the desire to possess, apart from any contemplated employment of the stolen article. The Demon, unable to make his creator a conscious and rational thief, adopts the simple method of compelling him (usually her) to act as such for a reason that is below his rational consciousness. Kleptomania is an instructive example of the working of the Demon independently of the man, though the man in his extreme weakness of will has to be a conscious spectator. Insanity, that is, irrational action, with respect to the man, the act is with respect to the Demon, sane; for it is (from its standpoint) a perfectly rational and natural and uncomplicated gratification of the desire to possess, to take.

But when a man is hindered in the carrying out of his desires, whether by a person or by blind circumstance, irritation arises. Irritation may also arise from the thwarted desire for comfort, apart from any concrete desired

object. Hence the irritability of the gouty man. Irritation may break forth presently as increased effort, since it is a banking up of the force of desire, and may then act rationally in the attainment of an object; or, if the object be unattainable by actions (as comfort in the case of gout) may break out irrationally — as where the unoffending cat is kicked, or the wife and children snubbed and snarled at. In an extremem form, irritability may become rage, and here the banked-up force always breaks forth irrationally — that is, with more or less unrelationship to the attainment of an object. For this reason it has to be classed as an (at any rate temporary) insanity. It is, however, ordinarily called insane only when wholly causeless, and if extreme may amount to mania. In any case, rage is of course a disintegrative process, and is an affair of the Demon. For though Nature is always slowly disintegrating our bodies, it is only done in this violent and conscious way when the disintegrative force has been entitaded or synthesized under human influence. Rage receives the

name of mania when it is a long continuing condition, very violent and wholly out of control. As a rule the ordinary personality of the man disappears, and his functional place is absolutely taken by the Demon *in propria persona*, liberated from all control and no longer needing or condescending to avail itself of the cloak of rationality or imitated virtue. With respect to *it*, mania is not insanity. There is a pleasure in the expenditure of force; (that is why sneezing is pleasant); rage, in its course, has for the same reason a pleasure of its own. In mania the Demon must experience this pleasure in the expenditure of its victim's physical and psycho-physical force.

It is a physical case of the same process which, on another plane, in time brings about even its own destruction and dismemberment into the bundle of elementary forces of which it was never more than a temporarily focalized synthesis. If the man was in total alliance with it, he is then of necessity shorn of all the now dismembered elements that made up his personal consciousness and is again at the foot of

the ladder of human evolution. Probably this may take place alike before or after death; if before, there remains nothing but a gibbering idiot.

It belongs to this view of the case that all forms of criminally insane action are only insane and purposeless with respect to the man. Examined with respect to the Demon they become perfectly comprehensible. But until the Demon is scientifically recognized, the word "insane" must cover a hiatus of knowledge.

In still other cases, the expelled force may cause irrational movements of the body, beyond, but strictly in line with, those of rage; and a convulsion will result. This is called epilepsy, and is really a sort of rage of motion so extreme as to drown consciousness.

(2) Our second class is therefore made up of crimes committed in rage or mania, and either having no human object or a relation of great excess to their object.

(3) Lastly, we come to crimes of cruelty *per se*; that is, where the cruelty is not for the gaining of any observable or easily compre-

hensible end, but apparently motiveless. They are cases where the pleasure of the cruelty is not even comprehensible to the man who commits it, however real it be.

In the simpler varieties of such cases, crimes of cruelty of this nature serve to gratify the sense of power-holding, power-wielding. The desire to gratify this sense, in cases where selfishness is quite complete, where the Demon rules in unobstructed alliance with the man, and where facile opportunity presents, will certainly lead to crime of this kind. The alliance, that is to say, the presence of the normal consciousness of the man, differentiates such crimes from those due to mania, though that word is often here also applied.

They are also done to rectify the sense of powerlessness, as where a boy who has been worsted by a bigger boy tortures a smaller.

In still another class of cases this does not appear to be the whole of the motive. May it not be that there is a direct transference of life-energy from the victim to the operator, that the latter gains strength and life as the

victim yields them in his pain, that we are in fact dealing with true vampirization? The gained life, though at first passing to the physical man who is working, is afterwards of course appropriated by his Demon, the *real* operator, and sooner or later intense reaction follows; since the subsequent acts of the man proceed on the supposition that the new strength is permanently his, whereas it is already passing in, to the Demon.

Now, taking all of these forms of crime into consideration, do they not of themselves suggest the existence of an evil consciousness separate from that of the man, his instigator to their performance? And does not such a hypothesis make clear much that would be otherwise inexplicable?

The simpler and more venial acts of selfishness are performed by the man from the standing-ground of his elemental nature, in that department of his being where resides the impulse to selfishness and to seeking of sensation that is pleasant. While standing therein

he gradually lights up a center of consciousness about which such impulses group themselves, and this center remains alive, active, fermenting, when the man has temporarily gone up higher in his nature. Products of this invisible fermentation, in the shape of sudden impulses, occasionally inject themselves into his consciousness when it is otherwise occupied, and to these he is apt to yield, thinking the resulting acts to be of his own volition. By this the center continues to grow, preserving a line of impulses that are continually stronger, and may ultimately sweep him into crime. And in the commission of each such act the Demon (which is this center) gains power. It may grow constantly, absorbing more and more of the life of the man, until at last he is well-nigh powerless. Then, if he knows nothing of the philosophy of life, is ignorant that he is a soul capable of triumphing over anything in his own being, he must perforce continue to identify himself with the Demon he has created and which is his all-absorbing vampire.



In the ordinary case, death will separate the two, since they are of diverse nature. The Demon must remain where it was created, where its impulses hold it—in the earth's atmosphere, reinforcing, by community of feeling, the like elements in living men. The man, the all-potential soul, goes to its own place ("heaven") for a while, heaven because existing now in its own unclouded spiritual nature, released from the body whose forces and sensations instigated it in its ignorance to sensuality and selfishness in its search for pleasure. Freed, it may take another and more glorious part in the work of the universe. But when its hour comes, it must by the law of its own being reincarnate on earth — by that Law which presses it through endless experiences in countless successive births until it learns the real way to live and the real purpose of life.

So it must come in contact with the evil impulses which at death it left behind in the earth's atmosphere — perhaps even with the Demon, if in the last life it had created one

with so strong a central impulse of life that it could remain that much time as a conscious unit, not splitting up into the separate evil elemental impulses of which it is a fusion and focus. So the whole is drawn gradually into the infant body and brain little by little as fast as their growing structure permits. And from this time the Angel too, the man's better self, his guide, ultimately to be his redeemer, begins anew his part of that battle whose field is the man's embodied life. So the fight of the former life is resumed, though the man, in the throng of events and sensations that is anew upon him, loses the memory of it, albeit he is the same combatant, with the same ally, the same enemy; albeit he takes up the combat where and as he left it before.

In the end, virtues and unselfishness yield joy, inner peace and the love of men; vices and selfishness their exactly proportioned pain and loneliness. By this joy and pain is mankind slowly and with many and many a lapse led along the path of life through the jungles of experience until it awakes into the vast light,

feels about it the protecting and guiding presence of the Angel of light, outgrows need for the punishing and rewarding hand of Nature, becomes its own teacher and law-administrator, and redeems not only itself but all the lesser things which until then travail and wait.

This is the doctrine which the Church has partly preserved whilst mutilating.

Of the individual Demon it has made the grotesque and hideous figure of the cosmic Devil, and thus placing him beyond reach of the power of man, has used him as a *fear*-inspiring weapon; for on the *fears* of its adherents have the Churches in past times largely lived.

The doctrine of Reincarnation it has voted a heresy\* — for the public, though some of the Fathers have taught it.

The doctrine of the Angel it has glozed, though to this day it is a part of its written teaching.

The terrene atmosphere in which man leaves, after death, his baser impulses and his Demon,

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\* Council of Constantinople, in the year 551.

the sum of them, while he sojourns a while in oneness with his Angel — one portion of this it has called Purgatory and claims to possess over it a sacerdotal regnancy.

Hell, which is the *state* of that man whose life is evil and who lives in fear, it has made a *place* of eternal pain and relegated sojourn therein entirely to after death.

Heaven, which, as Jesus Christ said, "is within you," it has treated similarly, though it is really — whether enjoyed before or after death — the *state* of illumination, of oneness with the Angel — the *Divine Self*.

The idea that thought and meditation and nature and life and joy and pain, and above all the spiritual *aspiration* towards the Inner God, are the real spiritual educators, it has shadowed, because it does not desire that men should come to believe that there is no need (or at best a wholly secondary need) for an orthodox ritualistic teaching Church and priesthood, and that the proffered intermediaries are futile.

But in viewing these facts let us not lose

sight of the many noble souls in the Church, searching for truth; men whose purity of motive and loftiness and aspiration do, and did, in spite of all limitations of creed, enable them to reach towards the light. But the laity, who have so long had to live on half truths and distorted truths, are entitled to the original and unadulterated teaching: Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion.

PSYCHIC AND COGNATE STATES  
AND PRACTICES

**WE** can now, in taking another step forward, sum up what we have said of the two powers concerned in human life.

The man who has to any real degree awakened to sense of responsibility and begun to make conscious choice between good and evil, is focussing his higher and lower nature, is creating himself or mirroring himself in the universal spiritual and the universal material. The two nascent centers of consciousness forthwith enter upon their own cycle of growth. Each widens out; from the first they are in touch respectively with all that is best and worst in the mental atmosphere, an atmosphere made up of the contributions of all past and present civilization.

It has been necessary to speak hitherto as if the energy of matter and that of spirit were diverse in essence and absolutely at war. They are however in truth but one, the force of one divine plan working itself out in two stages. The form only of its work changes with the advent of human life.

Assuredly the cosmic purpose cannot be *defeated*; but it can be and has been *delayed*; and it may be long yet ere the Demon, the lower aspect of human life, man-created, is crushed under the wheels of progress. Until then it is like an intelligent power in human life, the universal opponent of good. From it come all the subtlest inspirations to evil in human life, the germs of ideas, systems, philosophies, which some other ages than our own would recognize as insane or base, but which now command ready adherents and defenders; and suggestions to practices which can only wreck mind and body. Tendencies to ambition, crime and cruelty are fanned; antagonisms between men and classes and nations accentuated.

Though some few men are its conscious servants, most of its instruments know not what they do.

Of late years we are hearing more and more of what is called psychism. An actual change in human consciousness, a sensitivity to a new order of impressions, is going on. Specially marked in America, there are many indications of it all over the Western world. It is in the normal course of evolution, and therefore inevitable; but the transition period is full of danger. It is (abstractly speaking) a step towards the integration of humanity into an organism. Mind is becoming more sensitive to mind, more receptive of thoughts and feelings and impulses from without. Mental poise is more easily disturbed, insanity more frequent than ever before. Semi-degenerate minds, with a bent to evil which in other times might never have shown itself, become the sudden victims of those "suggestions from the air" of which we have spoken. The temptations of morphine and the like drugs — eminently stimulators of the psychic nature, though sub-



sequently they *infallibly* involve it in the general ruin — were never so marked.

Along with this drug-habit, the special evils or confusions produced or favored by the period of transition, a transition that will end in an understanding and wise use of new powers just beginning to germinate, are hypnotism, psychism, as the word is popularly used, "faith-" and "mind-healing" and mediumism. We will consider them *seriatim*.

As a horse that has once been down is never again exactly as before, so a once hypnotized human being is never again exactly as responsible for his actions. Whether the hypnotic state was induced by the direct gaze of the operator, or by some mechanical method, the subject's will has been to a greater or less degree loosened from its hold in conduct. Conduct is forever after more liable to slip beyond volition. Moreover, the mind, once thoroughly opened to suggestion, remains open, remains more negative than it was before, more sensitive to suggestion spoken and unspoken, to the silent influence of others

and to the currents of thought and impulse with which the atmosphere is full. It is a little nearer insanity, a little more liable to the reception of wild and fanatical ideas and more ready to carry them into action. The volume of evil trying to get into human life finds in such a mind a readier and sometimes a completely ready channel, and the outcome has often been the assassin's bomb or bullet. Hypnotism is, in fine, an ally and instrument of the forces seeking the confusion and destruction of society.

And instead of recognizing its danger we permit its exhibition on public platforms to hundreds every evening of the year. How many of these immediately begin to practise on their own account?

What is ordinarily called psychism stands somewhere between hypnotism and mediumism, related to both and readily passing entirely into one or the other. At present, in the immense majority of the persons in whom one or more of the psychic faculties are opening, we are dealing with what is practically

a disease, one of arrested development or of degeneration. The mind is not in sound and normal relationship with the body, with the apparatus of sensation. It is loose and incoherent in its operations, suggestible, and profoundly affected by subtle surroundings to which normal persons are almost insensitive. Nor can it close itself at will to external influence. Judgment is very often feeble; and vanity, of which such persons are peculiarly the prey, leads to the further cultivation by exercise of a faculty that had better have been disregarded. Epilepsy and hallucinations are common; and the very fact that some of the "powers" upon which the psychic prides himself are often exhibited by patients in the later stages of exhausting fevers, by victims of alcohol or morphine, by those near death or in the hypnotic state, might teach him something of their real nature and cause. He is however extremely likely to take the title of Professor, to write books upon a subject of which he has not the slightest comprehension, and to take money for talking verbose and mischievous

nonsense to people who are envious of his malady. When he actually teaches anything it is usually some trick in self-hypnotism, methods of disturbing and permanently impairing the breathing mechanism, or some futile and half understood gleanings from books of Indian magic. Those who follow his instructions naturally fail to achieve the promised "development," since the teacher does not know how he came by his own. What they do achieve is loss of health, of mental balance, of self-control, and of will-power—even though great increase in the last is one of the prominently advertised rewards! The lunatic asylum sees the last of no few of them.

Mediumship is an extreme degree of a morbid disrelationship of mind and body. At its culminating moments in the séance room the union is almost suspended. The body becomes semi-conscious or unconscious, the will altogether ceases to act; and the mind passes into a state which in most cases can only be described as a mixture of dream and

delirium. At best it becomes the recipient of a set of impressions which it wholly misunderstands and misinterprets. Some degree of this condition remains permanent, and the extreme degree may at any time supervene. Mediums who for money or other similar reason cultivate their malady nearly always end in some form of obvious mental disease or in epilepsy. The circles which may depend on them for "spiritual instruction" get at best platitudes; at worst, because of their intensely expectant receptivity, seeds of suggestion which may later ripen into overt act.

Of morphinism and of the similar use of cocaine and hashish we need not say very much, for they have practically no defenders. But these forms of psychic debauchery are greatly extending their sway. They ultimately induce the pathological psychic and mediumistic conditions of consciousness. But from the first they are of course really wrecking mind and body.

Comparatively lately it has been noticed that by the continual repetition of and dwelling

upon certain quasi-philosophical or religious formulae the mind can be made to act upon the subconscious bodily processes. Whatever the variations in these formulae, their common element, expressed or implied, is concerned with physical health. The mind is held upon the idea, feeling, and picture of that, and in some cases the desired result follows. But some other results, neither desired nor suspected, also usually follow — namely a diffuse hypnotic state and a gradual loss of the power of generous mental ratiocination. The mind has set in a mold and too often intellectual progress ceases. The formulae furnished by the founders of the various sects are repeated, varied, diluted, in the mind. And these occupations more or less effectively hide the fact that no real thought is going on, no fresh ground being opened, no seeds being received from the higher nature.

In such cases inquiring and perhaps initially spiritual minds that might have found and disseminated real light, have been closed and stultified.

Such are some of the special confusions of our time, flourishing because of the special conditions now obtaining in men's minds. The remedy lies in the popularization of that deeper knowledge of psychology, of human nature, that Theosophy alone can offer.

VI  
DEATH,  
ITS LIGHTS AND ITS SHADOWS

**I**N the lower kingdoms of nature, death comes easily; the instrument of sensation is relinquished without pain. And in the normal course of evolution the sense of individuality is, so far as necessary, readily merged into the common, larger, higher consciousness that belongs to a community — whether the community consist of separate units like a hive of bees, or of only partially separate units like the cells of an organ in the body or the several organs themselves. Mergence is a natural process, as natural as death; but mergence does *not* mean obliteration of the Self.

But man has demonized both by his fierce mental establishment of himself in sensation. In sensation and in egotism lies the only life he can conceive. Back of all the casual



thoughts and doings of the hour, sound continuously two deep notes — fear of death, and self-centered egotism. He does not recognize that there is no need to hold to this false self, no need to make “self-realization” a very cult of the day. Self is an eternal unit, and it can only realize itself by going with the current of evolution. Its essential consciousness can be no more *submerged* by mergence than is that of a member of an orchestra who, that a symphony may result, sinks his individuality in the body of which he is a necessary part. Man will not leave himself in the hands of nature and follow her path so clearly indicated.

So, tied as he is to sensation and self by nearly every mental thread, death appears to him — even when there is some dim light of faith or hope — as a purely horrible amputation. If he would but find his own proper central consciousness, he would find it to be divine, with knowledge of its eternity and without fear of anything. But he has created abnormal and persistently conscious entities

in the various centers of sensation, ever seeking to absorb his whole vitality; and, behind them, a still more efficient focus of artificial selfhood, *the* Demon, at once himself because made of his own essence of consciousness, and yet not himself. It is not the eternal inner man and must some time fade out.

The pain of death is rarely at the moment of death. By then, often long before then, the pain is over. The real pains of death are the pains of all the smaller and greater maladies of later life, the aches, the sense of disability. *These* are the snapping and wearing through of the threads by which man has so strongly tied himself to his body. Death need not be feared for its pain. In the ordinary case, passion for selfhood in sensation and power also lapses into abeyance, and nothing hinders perfect and blissful spiritual rest. If the man has died the victim of the alcohol or morphine habits, he will still—unless that habit has altogether absorbed his humanity, a *very* rare case—have his rest in freedom, meeting his old habit again only after rebirth and being

then, probably, the better able to deal with it. No slightest struggle is ever lost, however apparently futile.

But there can be no such rest for those who have entirely silenced their higher consciousness, who have wholly merged it in the lust for power. Such either remain as evil entities in the world's atmosphere, co-workers of evil, and inspirers of evil everywhere; or they reincarnate at once. The connexion in such cases between the eternal man and the created Demon is so close that it only dissolves — once dissolution begins — after ages of mental agony, *pari passu* with the dissolution of the Demon. And then the spiritual monad must begin again the slow long task of weaving the fabric of mind.

Short of this unusual case, the center of this passion awaits the conclusion of the time of rest, and then on rebirth invades the soul that created it. If it be very strong, its attempts at domination, alternating with the man's better nature, give rise to those startling transitions of conduct of which Steven-

son has depicted a variety in his story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Man's fear of death has been used, and also accentuated for still more effective use. Time was when there was no such fear. But that was a time when Reincarnation was as naturally and frankly credited as we now credit tonight's sleep with being the precursor of tomorrow's awakening, a time when the life of sensation did not seem the only possible kind of life. But as sensation gradually overlapped and came nigh to extinguishing spirituality, the clear intuition of Reincarnation dimmed down to a mere belief or faith in it. The spirit of the age at last seized an opportunity, declaring Reincarnation a baseless heresy and at the same time developing and enforcing the conception of a hell from which only confession and final absolution could save. All the circumstances worked together, and since then the fear of death has darkened all the years of life. It is pictured in men's imaginations and on the canvases of artists as a black specter mowing down hu-

man beings with a scythe; as a gulf, gloomy and yawning, into whose sullen and sunless waters fall the shivering souls just divorced from the sunlight of life; as the portal to the pit and to the furnaces in which an angry God wreaks his wrath on his own creatures. It is silence, finis, chill and putrescence, a conception which we enforce on the very children and on the mothers of the unborn by the black and barbaric symbolism of our funerals and by the broken columns of our graveyards. Such are our pictures of nature's merciful rest-fields, of the opportunity she gives us for a blissful sleep filled with dreams more realistic than reality the while she renews in us the strength our own passions have wasted! Naturally, such evil pictures of death, of which the very air is full, with which we are hypnotized ere we are born, have driven some to the mad philosophy *Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.* And others into despairing faith in dogmas that proclaimed themselves as necessary intermediaries at the hour of death between souls and their Source. That

many churchmen have been men of noble hearts does not alter the fact that the demon of lust for power, with an intelligence of which men are mostly unaware, gradually saw its chance to inspire the dogmas to be used in its service.

Long since there were men who sought selfish power with a concentration and intensity we can now hardly conceive of, sought it life after life with absolute devotion until every spark of human feeling was dead, until they became bitter and uncompromising opponents of every breath of influence that might awaken man to his power and dignity. Transcendentalized in evil, they live yet, intensely intelligent forces of opposition to enlightenment. Working on receptive human minds, they instil ideas whose source is profoundly veiled save for the very few. And from this source come the last touches of man's horror of death.

Strictly speaking, death as it exists is abnormal for humanity. Man should not die like the animals. He is a soul, and if he held himself

accordingly, his mind would so animate his body that for long years repair would equal waste. But by tying it down in sensualism, he has limited its power. The body must suffer in its death the result of that disharmony which one or another overgrown appetite and passion induces. It is only when held in control by a mind and will that stand consciously superior to it, that it ceases to be but one of the animals, subject to the laws of the merely animal life, and acquires a new power of reparation. It must be long before humanity reaches that point; but a transitional degree in which death makes no break in consciousness is possible for the near future, possible for many now living. Let those who have not reached that point remember that death is but sleep. The break in consciousness that occurs when life closes, and again when a new life opens at birth, is like that on both sides of deep sleep. In deep sleep, between the dreams of early night and morning, the man comes to his own real nature *as a soul*. It is the soul's breathing time and opportunity — and hence

the importance of the last thoughts ere rest. Death too is followed by dreams and then by the soul's full awakening to itself. Immediately after memory has brought up all its stores and the lessons of the just closed life have been learned in that clear retrospect, the light of consciousness is turned down for a moment while the scenery is idealized, spiritualized, for that new act which is a gracious dream. As that comes to its close, the soul awakes to its full consciousness. At birth the light again goes down, and when again it burns up fully, a new life in flesh has begun. New and vivid sensations blot away the memory of the spiritual rest and dream, and slowly the old powers of thought return with developing brain. What is there to *fear* in all this? Death is release, and infancy and youth the opportunity for wiser beginnings that may end in the great victory, that *will* so end when parents and teachers know the secrets and possibilities of their high duty.



## VII

### THEOSOPHY THE MOST SERIOUS MOVEMENT OF THE AGE

**T**IME was when a few thought Theosophy to mean antiquarian research *only*, merely an elegant scholastic weighing and tasting of the religions and philosophies of antiquity. It was proposed to make an intellectual toy of it by that few, an item at the drawing room tea-table talk. The Movement was smoothly commended and patted on the back.

By others again Theosophy was believed to be the door to the mysterious, the uncanny, the supernatural; and often the meetings of the Society's branches were crowded with the devotees of strange cults. Even yet there are groups of people who have appropriated its name and that of H. P. Blavatsky, the great Foundress of the Society, to aid the promulgation of teachings and practices with

which it has not only nothing to do, but which it utterly condemns.

After a while it was found to be not so comfortable a topic; it was found to be making an inconvenient demand on its hearers that they should not only talk but *do* something, in themselves and for others. So it gradually became *tabu* with the mental featherweights. And not only that, but in many quarters bitterly hated and fervently denounced, awaking a hostility which has no counterpart in our time. The utmost skill, inspired by the intensest venom, was exerted in the preparation of attacks on the teaching and life of the Foundress of the Society, attacks continued later from the same sources against her successors W. Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley.

Why was and is this? Indifference we can understand; intellectual opposition we can understand; but why an intensity of rancor directed against no other Movement of the day? There are other philosophical and ethical Movements; there are Movements for the promotion of every possible kind of belief and un-

belief. But against none of them has the storm of hostility raged so fiercely or under so many forms as against the Theosophical Society. Where is the difference? Can it be that Theosophy throws light where light is least desired?

Putting aside for the moment that which Theosophy does for the individual as such, we must note that it has as yet barely begun its wider work, which is that of unveiling to men as a race their possibilities and their destiny, the way to unfold the one and reach the other, the way to make earth the heaven it might so quickly and so easily become.

Theosophy teaches, and will more and more fully teach, men how to separate the true from the counterfeit coin in all the things and pretensions and persons that claim attention. It will show the existence of spiritual factors concerned in human life to which the general humanity has hitherto been blind. It has only begun to do that, but it will go on until the uttermost secrets and essences of the forces that war for and against human welfare are

known, and are seen as the threads upon which all past history has been threaded, are seen in their continuing action today. Men are well-nigh totally ignorant of the nature of these two forces by which, because of their ignorance, their national and international life is guided.

At least it must be granted that the darkness is dense enough to need some light. The momentary mood of a senate or of a ruler, precipitating a war, or, by tactful word and act, allaying a coming storm — do we know anything of the inner springs, the hidden psychology, of one or another phase of mood and temper at that critical moment? Upon that hour, that vote, that word, hung, it may be, the fate of countless lives; there was the possibility of the shedding of unmeasured blood, of the making of a wound that decades could not heal, or a friendship of nations that might constitute a bulwark of general peace for centuries.

What may be the force *behind* the crazy idea in the brain of an assassin when he aims

his weapon at a man through whom shines a ray of the higher life of a whole nation? Or what, at the very instant of his deed, swerves his hand a hair's breadth? Must we say *Chance?* We use the word far too freely, even from the standpoint of our present ignorance. Must we think that great issues in which all civilization may be concerned, really turn on accidents and trifles, or even did ever once turn on them? Can anything be chance which is of important bearing on human welfare? If so, then all may be, and we may as well give up the search, give up the attempt to understand history as anything more than a string of recorded facts.

The very continuance of human evolution may be at stake; often, whether it shall be delayed or quickened. At those points where two roads are always parting, a nation may take the path to enlightenment, to spiritual freedom, to international brotherhood, to the moral growth of every one of its individuals; the atmosphere may be cleared all over the civilized world; or it may take the path to

where the darkness grows denser, bigotry and dogma gain a new lease, the bonds of spiritual slavery are tightened; the civilization of a whole people may be well-nigh blotted out. Can we believe that accident and trifles guide the choice at the point where these paths diverge? Surely it must be exactly here that the great intelligent Forces making for light and darkness are in tensest conflict.

May it not be that if we habitually tested all that happens in the light of that idea, tried to unveil in that way the hidden side of events, we should at last become so clear-eyed in our observation, so penetrating in our deduction, we should narrow down to *nothing* the area of chance? Suppose we see what history looks like when examined with the hypothesis that there is everywhere at work a divinely intelligent force making for human progress, peace and civilization; that the great Leaders of humanity have always felt its pressure in their hearts and have consciously tried to *serve*, not trying to get power or reputation for themselves; and that it is everywhere opposed —

though it can not be wholly stayed — by a power of exactly opposite tendency, inspiring men to ambition and love of gain, and gradually obliterating in them all love for their fellow men and humanity as a whole; that some few may even serve it knowingly as the other is served knowingly by many: is it not then likely that those who for their own ends knowingly use and serve it, would rather that at any cost men should ascribe events to chance, to the will of God, to Kismet, and remain ignorant, than that their own ways should be revealed and opened up and that poor hypothesis of chance forever discarded? And that they should resort to any methods to defame the names and honor, and obscure the work, of Teachers who will lay bare these deeper and hidden springs of life and conduct?

It of course true that by *apparent* chance much is wrought. "For want of a nail the shoe was lost," and for want of a shoe the horse was lame, and the general was late and the battle lost and the empire destroyed. Yes, true enough; but why was the nail lost? If

we would intelligently study great events, we must always look back to the missing nail; and it is there, where the smallest effort will effect the greatest result, that the real work is done. It is there that the influences contend to pull the vital nail out or to keep it in.

Man lives under two strains of feeling or impulse. Take away one; let the lower be no longer opposed by the higher, and he springs backward to the human animal, selfish, cruel, sensual—the natural animal accentuated by human intelligence. Take away the other; let the higher be no longer fettered by the lower, and all his deeds and thoughts become those of a god; his humanity is lighted up by his divinity.

These are the two forces whose varying resultant makes the character of each individual. They are the representatives of the vaster world-forces making for evolution and retrogression or decay. One of them is the force always working to spiritualize matter, to raise it and make it conscious on ever higher levels; the other is the force in matter aiming at



the intensification of itself. One is the evolutionary force or current, a divine force making for progress in every kingdom; in the human kingdom for universal brotherhood, for mental and spiritual health, making in fact not for a *new* heaven and a *new* earth, but for a new heaven *on* earth; the other an opposing force or current working downward, backward, evil as the other is divine, making for the extinction of human life as the other makes for its growth and splendor. Both belong to life; but that fierce tendency to sensation whereby matter progresses, should, by the time human life is reached, have ceased. In human consciousness, it is, in its lower forms, lust and sensuality; in its higher, but not less evil form, selfish, cold ambition and love of power over others. Men can consciously serve whichever they will; that one towards which is their natural bent, will, in any case, use their acts to further its intelligently designed effects. The blacksmith unconsciously drove his nail loosely, and the empire fell. One of the two forces was concerned in the fall, and it used

the man who drove the nail. Both forces are ever present, one as an inspiration to good; the other psychologizes and inspires to evil. One tends to awake the soul to its work; the other plays progressively downwards to the lowest elements in human consciousness, elements which, in aiming at the intensification of their own consciousness, must finally wreck the man's. Those who serve it consciously and with their full intelligence have said, "Evil be thou my good."

The key that in man releases one or the other, gives it another point of advantage over its opponent, is *thought*, an idea.

A belief may not seem to weigh much in determining men's actions; their conduct is not as their creed. But the belief, the creed, does slowly work; does bite into, does mold, character; does release, little by little, one or the other stress.

Take a single example. If a man believe that his will can, with time, dominate his failings, he will begin to use it, will gain dignity of character from his successful attempt,

will be ashamed of his yieldings. His will will grow with use; he will feel his manhood; new ideas of his possibilities will come to him, new ideas of the possibilities even of all humanity. As fast as his failings and sensualities are swept out of the way, his mind will clear, his intelligence grow.

But if he is taught that his single will cannot avail, that he must look outside himself for aid, he will be full of self-excuses for his slips. Why should he respect himself? His will will not grow; instead of willing, he may be beseeching *aid*. His mind will dwell on the idea of his weakness until it is psychologized and the weakness becomes real. The habit of looking for divine aid instead of divine companionship, of looking that the path shall be trodden *for* him instead of *by* him, will become ingrained. He will entirely miss the development of character that the other man achieved.

Further; his thought of human incapacity and feebleness will infect others, even when they do not know it. The infection of the

thought and example of the one man is to inspire others to make some struggle for themselves, to make them ashamed of their failings. The other man gives them no such stimulus. From him they will be infected to consider their failings as natural and inevitable in human nature; they will live contentedly with them and enjoy life as they find it.

Paint the picture on a large scale. Conceive a whole nation taught the one or the other idea; all the most spiritual men, the spiritual and intellectual leaders, taught and teaching that the human will is inadequate to secure human ennoblement and the dignity of self-conquest, and that intermediaries and external auxiliaries have to be sought; or taught and teaching the opposite—that it is man's duty and power and dignity to conquer all the lower elements of his nature that are in the way of his growth. What will be the difference in the two nations in a thousand years?

One of the most interesting of national records is easily studied in the case of India.

We have enough of the records of the ancient Aryan civilization of India to know that it was happy, and sufficiently prosperous to permit of the happiness. We have enough too, to know that it was a spiritual civilization rather than a material. The people habitually lived in their religious consciousness, habitually felt themselves in presence of the Divine. That was the secret of their happiness. They tried to do the simplest daily actions so as to give them a spiritual significance. The hymns that have survived abundantly show this. Holding all nature to be divinely ensouled, they tried to symbolize this and keep it present to their minds by religious ceremonies strictly designed for this purpose, in which the elements of nature — “earth,” “air,” “fire,” and “ether,” and “water” — were thus symbolically employed; and certain of their number were specially concerned with the conduct of the ceremonies. These men, in the purer days, explained the symbolism to the people, and, from the elevation of their character, were teachers by right.

The light of the earlier days gradually passed away. If we compare the picture of today, and in the time of Gautama S'âkya Muni, the Buddha, with that which we get from the hymns, we can easily trace the transitional steps. The earlier teachers were dispossessed by men, who, ambitious of the power which the former had by right of simplicity and elevation of character, *gradually induced the people to believe that the Divine could not be approached except by way of the ceremonies*, and who made the ceremonies more elaborate and finally incomprehensible in order that they might stand as the people's only salvators. They arrogated to themselves a special and inimitable access to the divine Presence. The resulting abasement of the spiritual dignity of the far earlier time can easily be traced.

But what was the half truth that completed what the lowering of former spiritual ideals had begun? This: that the spiritual life was the real, because permanent; the material the illusionary, because transient; and that the ma-

terial passions were the enemies of the spiritual life.

It was and is the half of a truth, or better perhaps, a full truth misunderstood and misapplied. The *true* deduction is that the physical life should therefore be lived in the constant joy of its spiritual possibilities, developed joyfully *into* the spiritual; that since the divine will was manifesting in physical life, obedience to that will lay in living the physical life with all its noble possibilities, fully; *and that the passions were not only no part of full physical life, but in the way of it, its enemies.* The *false* deduction, inevitably drawn consciously or unconsciously by the people, was that the physical life was a useless and painful encumbrance, to be shuffled through as best they could and in reliance on the priests to keep them connected with the spiritual.

And a further result was the development of self-torturing fakirism and sadhuism. From the idea that the *passions* of the flesh must be suppressed, which was right, to the idea that the *health* and *welfare* and almost *life* of the

flesh must be suppressed, which was wrong; from the idea that as the former was pleasing to the Divine, to the idea that the latter was also, and that it was the condition for cognition of the Divine: these were easy steps.

Easy, that is, to naturally spiritual people. A little of this history has been repeated in our Western civilization. But we are not a naturally spiritual people. And consequently we have partially revolted. If we had had the true teaching — that *physical life should be developed at the expense of the sensual passions* — all might have gone well. But we have been taught that not only sensual passion but physical life in its perfect and legitimate fulness, are incompatible with spiritual consciousness. Half believing it, we have made our choice, and, thinking to select full physical life, have really selected the passional life.

Such is the power of ideas in molding individual and national character, in releasing one or other of the springs of action, in elevating or debasing men and nations.



So in studying the two forces at work to raise or lower human life, we can begin by tracing to their sources the ideas current among men which mold their actions consciously or unconsciously to themselves. We can note whether the teaching which they are offered from many quarters is such as to raise or lower their sense of human dignity; to call out to its fulness, or to paralyse, their will. And so we can judge of the source whence it comes.

Upon all this, Theosophy is beginning to throw its light. For that reason the Theosophical Movement is the most serious Movement of the day. It is so because it deals with matters not dealt with from any other quarter. Its work is an unveiling; evil unveiled is condensed, stirred to intense activity; and if the man allies himself therewith, he thereby becomes the enemy of that teaching and that person by which or by whom the evil was unveiled. But if he ally himself with the good, he will take up the conflict and be the friend of that through which his eyes were opened.

Theosophy calls upon us to watch, to think, to open our dull eyes. And to the Theosophist the task is not so hard; for he knows that the actuating power playing through and used by the enemies of Theosophy and of its Teachers, is precisely that which Theosophy will unveil as the foe of human progress, the dark thread running back through all history.

## CONCLUSION

**WE** have now finished our survey and can look back at the general result and draw some practical lessons in life.

Urgently does the world need the help of those who have found a ray of light in the dark perplexities of being. And that ray comes from within, perceived by self-study.

Once, it may be amongst all peoples, there existed a belief in rebirth, and they lived their life as an arc of a larger circle than we among whom that belief no longer exists.

But may it not be true? Here and there through these pages we have spoken of heredity; may we not be inheritors of our own minds and characters?

Whence our characters? From our parents? But how if we differ from them?

Whence that spiritual something which is "I": is that made up of two pieces from two people? I can rule my mind, hold it on to or turn it off from anything; I can rule and ennoble my character; I can control my feelings and my acts; who and whence am "I"? That "I" is free in all thoughts, feelings, and acts. There is the soul, the dominator of its own destiny. Even as infants differ in form from one another so do they show from very birth some domination of the indwelling soul over their acts; each one thinks after its kind, is selfish or unselfish, loving and love-seeking, or indifferent, after its kind. Does it not seem, does not every man's knowledge of himself tell him, that each is overshadowed from the first by a *soul*, an "I", that uses that body, and brain, and correspondent mind, as fast as their growth permits, and from the first molds them to suit itself?

And whence that pre-existing tendency to have such or another bent of mind and feeling? May it not have been acquired through the slow molding of life after life on earth?

Let every man search himself and see if he do not find himself as soul saying "I have never not been; I can never not be, for I am conscious life itself; never strange to me was this life of earth, nor any of my fellows. I have known it and them always."

Then there may come to him a picture of some distant time when he and they shall have brought back the Golden Age of love and wisdom, and the universe shall have grown vast to their gaze; when life shall be like a spring morning in its divine promise, and new things be born in beauty every hour.

The writer is a believer in Theosophy, through which this new light shall come to men. The revival of Theosophy in the modern world will bring to all hearts a great hope. Theosophy is nothing new, need be nothing strange, tells of nothing which all may not find in themselves. It is the teaching of and concerning the soul of man and those lower souls in the other kingdoms that are always reaching up to become man. He who fully knows himself as a soul knows Theosophy.

It brings hope because the path it shows is for all. No one following it fails to find opening in himself more and more of the truths of life, a fuller consciousness of his own divinity, a richer happiness — fails to attain an even nobler stature of manhood. His nature will outgrow the littlenesses, spites, whims, prejudices, dislikes, belittling proclivities, and empty and fruitless wishes that before obscured it. He will become the dominator of his body and it will reveal itself to him as the divine Temple of his soul, the reservoir of unsuspected powers. He will become constantly aware of his divine Companion, constantly the recipient of that divine flood of light and strength.

Theosophy does therefore bring a message of hope, joy, and peace to discouraged humanity, showing the way, through understanding and action, to liberation from all the sources of its pain. For the power that a man has, through his past, it may be through many lives, conferred upon that which we have called "the Adversary," he may, since

it is his own, recall and devote to noble service. All the processes of nature move to a divine end, save where, being placed under man's direction, they have been misused and desecrated.

The paths are one not many; the goal is one. To practise Brotherhood is to find joy; to seek the "Companion" is to find joy and to get inspiration to brotherly action; to seek and find in the heart the life that is joy, is to come, unawares it may be, on the Companion; and the joy radiates and precipitates into acts of altruism; all these are the path to wisdom whereon the helper, the mystic, and the sage, blend, and there arises a teacher of mankind.

The *immediate* future of humanity lies with the children we are now bringing up. Their minds are plastic, their habits unformed, their thought uncrystallized. From the very first it is possible to teach them easily what to us is so difficult to realize. The Companion of Light with his shining sword, the subtle imp of evil, the divine Law forever operating in the

reward of good and the punishment of evil, the Golden Age to come, the conscious throbbing productive mother-life of nature, the universal Brotherhood of being; these things can be taught them from the very first and they will learn with joy. Thus learning their path will be easy and pleasant; nothing need be unlearned; they will grow up in physical and mental and psychic health, feeling at home in the universe, the comrades of all therein, prepared when their times come to launch out into the deepest mysteries of being, returning with the Golden Fleece and spreading among all creatures the light they have gained. Blessed are the workers among children, for they may create the living Temples of the new humanity. .



*There is no Religion Higher than Truth*

**The  
Universal Brotherhood  
and  
Theosophical Society**

*Established for the benefit of the people of the earth & all creatures*

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**OBJECTS**

This BROTHERHOOD is part of a great and universal movement which has been active in all ages.

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Its subsidiary purpose is to study ancient and modern religions, science, philosophy and art; to investigate the laws of nature and the divine powers in man.

\* \* \*

THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York, 1875, continued after her death under the leadership of the co-founder, William Q. Judge, and now under the leadership of their successor, Katherine Tingley, has its Headquarters at the International Theosophical Center, Point Loma, California.

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