



## KARMA AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

UNFORTUNATELY, karma has become associated in the minds of many with passivity, lethargy, and fatalism. This is largely because the people of India, where belief in karma is almost universal, appear for the most part to be passive, lethargic, and fatalistic.<sup>1</sup>

It is true that social conditions in India are deplorable; it is also true that the passivity of the Hindus in the acceptance of their karma is partly to blame. However, the teachings of India's religious sages filter down through so much time-encrusted superstition that the character of the teachings changes radically in the process; by the time they are absorbed by the uneducated masses their psychological effect cannot be considered an optimum example of the results of belief in reincarnation. Moreover the enervating effects of India's climate are an important element in the psychology of its people and would affect their mental outlook and character no matter what their religious belief.

In reality there is no psychologically necessary association between apathy and belief in karma-any more than there is a psychologically necessary association between hypocrisy and Christianity. Christianity has developed multitudes of hypocrites, both in the present and in the past eras of its history, but this hypocrisy cannot be charged to the teachings of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Our Indian subscribers are invited to respond to this. The Editor of *A.T.* has never been to India and is therefore disqualified.

If an individual comes to accept the concept of karma, acquiescence and trust must characterize his inner attitude toward it, as it must characterize his inner attitude toward any law of the universe. But he cannot help but wonder to what degree he should acquiesce, to what degree he must accept the constrictions that are placed upon him. This problem becomes particularly apparent in situations involving physical karmic affliction.

Here, as elsewhere, the Cayce readings are interesting because speculative questions on ethical and practical implications of the reincarnation theory are given specific and tangible answers. We turn to them, then, with the questions: What treatment, if any, was prescribed for people suffering from a physical karmic penalty? What hope, if any, was held out for their cure?

Every reading in the Cayce files belies the view that passive acceptance must accompany the belief in karma. The consistent point of view throughout is: "This is your karma. Now here is what you can do about it."

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One of the most striking elements of the original documents is the way in which the statements of karma invariably flow into suggestions for treatment. In many cases of physical karma the reading holds out definite hope for cure. In other cases, where the karmic debt is more serious, it frankly states that a complete cure cannot be expected, but improvement can be achieved through effort; it then proceeds to outline the type of treatment.

An interesting case is that of a thirty-four-year old electrician afflicted with a disease finally diagnosed by the doctors as a hopeless case of multiple sclerosis. For three years he had been unable to work; he had become too blind to read or write, and often fell when he attempted to walk.

He was accepted as a charity patient by several hospitals in succession; meanwhile his wife clerked in a department store to support herself and their five-year-old son. Though no life reading was taken, the man was told in the physical reading that his condition was a karmic one. However, he was urged not to lose hope.

“Yes, we have the body here,” the reading began, using the same simple but extraordinary phrase with which the clairvoyant description of all physical readings began. “As we find, conditions here are very serious, but do not lose hope. For help is nigh, if you will but accept it.”

Then follow three pages of singular beauty and force. First there is given a pathological description of the condition in medical terms, then an essay on the recuperative energies within the body, then a reference to the fact that the man’s situation is karmic, followed by an exhortation to change his mental outlook and eliminate all hate and malice from his consciousness. The reading concludes with a careful prescription of treatment.

About a year later the man wrote again for another reading, reporting that he had religiously followed the prescription and had immediately noted an improvement. This improvement continued steadily for a period of four months, after which a relapse and decline of strength appeared. Apparently he had applied the material side of the prescription without paying much attention to the spiritual, for the reading calls him to task in no uncertain terms.

Yes, we have the body here; this we have had before. As we find, there have been physical improvements in the body, yet there is much, much to be desired.

As already indicated, this is a karmic condition and there must be measures taken by the entity to change its attitude toward things, conditions, and its fellow man.

So long as mechanical things were applied for physical correction, improvements were seen.

But when the entity becomes so self-satisfied, so self-centered, as to refuse spiritual things, and does not change its attitude; so long as there is hate, malice, injustice, jealousy; so long as there is anything within at variance with patience, long suffering, brotherly love, kindness, gentleness, there cannot be a healing of the condition of this body.

What does the entity want to be healed *for*? That it may gratify its own physical appetites? That it may add to its own selfishness? Then, if so, it had better remain as it is.

If there is a change in mind and purpose, and if the entity expresses the change in speech and action, and if there is the application of those material things suggested, we will see improvement.

But first there must be the change of heart, of mind, of purpose, of intent. . . . All of the mechanical appliances that you can

muster will not bring about complete recovery unless your purpose and your soul have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. . . . Will you accept, will you reject? It is up to you.

We are through — unless you make amends. We are through with this reading.

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It will be noted in the above passages that hope is held out for cure on condition that the man changes the contents of his consciousness and his spiritual purposes in life. What do you want to be healed for? the source of information asks, frankly and searchingly. So that you can gratify your physical appetites? So that you can add to your selfishness? In that case you might as well remain as you are.

This outspoken reading typifies the antiseptic moral outlook of a great physician, whose vision included far more than the mere temporary expedience of a personality. Not once, in more than 25,000 physical readings, did Cayce refuse to give suggestions for cure to an afflicted person, no matter how depraved or how infamous that person's sin had been. But many times, as in the present instance, infinitely compassionate though he was, he could not refrain from pointing out that disease has a morally corrective purpose, and that the moral fault that was its source must be corrected. The person who suffers from disease should make every effort to correct it with all the means at his command, but concurrently he should take the cue that life presents him to amend the inner weakness of his soul. The storehouse of nature and the miracle drugs of modern science may produce temporary relief, but in the path of the moral force of karma they must finally remain impotent. Ultimately, healing must come spiritually from within, or it cannot long endure.

The following case of blindness is another among the hundreds in the files that illustrate this consistent point of view.

Yes. Conditions here are mostly karmic. The better application of spiritual ideals in relationship to others will bring a great difference in the life experience of this entity.

While there will not be at first a great deal of change in the vision, we find that the body will be materially improved as adjustments are made in the inner self.

The conditions in the spinal system, as well as in the mouth and gums, have had much to do with the eye condition.

Then, as we find, there should be first the effort to manifest the fruits of the spirit and to apply the Christ consciousness in the daily experiences. Practice, then, brotherly love, kindness, patience, long suffering, gentleness.

Also have osteopathic adjustments especially in the 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st dorsals, the 3rd cervical, and 1st, 2nd, and 4th cervical. The adjustments here should be made in the orders indicated, and then those nerve centers that supply the teeth — especially in the area just under the ear connecting with the mastoid areas of the head — should have particular attention. . .

It will be seen in both of the above cases that the reading lays primary stress upon a change of consciousness and character as the *sine qua non* of a change of physical karmic condition. When it is remembered that the purpose of karma is moral education, it will be seen how natural and inevitable this approach to karmic therapeutics is. The "sin," of course, that karma corrects is not sin in the superstitious primitive sense of offended gods and spirits; nor sin in the sense of fundamentalist theologians, nor even sin in the sense of Victorian or Puritan morals. It is sin, rather, in a psychological sense; sin that is

universally definable and universally subject to a cosmic law.

Sin in this sense consists basically in selfishness or **separativeness**, and the self-exaltation may take many forms. It can consist of violence against the will or body of another; it can consist of violence against one's own body, through intemperance or neglect; it can consist of pride or exclusiveness of the spirit. These varieties of error are possible because of one cardinal error, one cardinal misunderstanding, one cardinal forgetfulness. For man is a spirit, not a body; sin arises from his forgetfulness of this fact as he identifies himself with his body. It is against this illusion of identity with his body that he must fight. **And the surest way of combating that illusion is not through the negative process of denial, but through the positive process of identification with spirit.**

In the attainment of this sense of identity with spirit one achieves what the Cayce readings and other mystic sources call the Christ-consciousness. It will be found in the above cited cases, and in almost every other case of physical karma in the Cayce files, that the primary recommendation for cure is that the sufferer shall attain, in some measure at least, this Christ-consciousness.

The Christ-consciousness is not, however, an exclusively Christian attribute. Christ, it must be remembered, is not the name of the man Jesus, but a term whose literal meaning is "the anointed one," and whose mystic or rather psychological meaning is that of the liberated or spiritual consciousness. Krishna and Buddha were, we may believe, equally the possessors of Christ-consciousness; and men are striving, dimly and confusedly, in all parts of the world, toward the possession of this consciousness no matter who their teacher and no matter by what name that degree of unfoldment is called.

It happens that the language in which the Cayce readings are couched uses the phraseology of the Christian tradition; this in all probability is because Cayce himself was brought up in the Christian faith; his conscious mind was steeped in Christian imagery and point of view, and thus every statement of his super-conscious mind while in the hypnotic state was filtered through this screen. Conceivably, had Cayce been born in a Buddhist country, he might have adapted his wisdom to the culture setting in which he found himself, and used a predominant Buddhist terminology. But this particularized style of expression does not limit the applicability of what he said.

Here, for example, is the enjoinder given to a man suffering from tuberculosis of the spine:

Remember, the source of this condition is the meeting of yourself; it is karmic. This can be met best in Him who, taking away the law of cause and effect by fulfilling the law, established the law of grace. Thus the need for the entity to lean on the arm of Him who is the law, and the truth, and the light.

"The law of grace" referred to here is likewise not the exclusive attribute of Christendom or of those who "believe in Jesus Christ"; grace can be achieved by a Buddhist or a Hindu or a Mohammedan as much as by a Christian. "The law, the truth, and the light" is a phrase usually applied by Christians to Jesus — but law and truth are equally applicable to other great religious teachers and their teachings, and light as a symbol of truth and of God and of his purest manifestations is a universal symbol.

Similarly the phrase, "until your soul has been baptized with the Holy Spirit," used in the case of the multiple sclerosis victim is typically Christian. But the idea behind it — **the flow of new life consequent upon the realization of one's divine identity** — has been phrased in dozens of

different images in all the esoteric religions of the world. When the Cayce readings speak, then, of Christ-consciousness, they are using the term most acceptable to people brought up in the Christian tradition. The term, however, refers to a psychological state or stage which could be called by a dozen other names.

[From *Many Mansions*, by Gina Cerminara, p. 86-93, Publisher: William Sloane Associates.]



## Rolling Back the Stone of Matter

[*Lucifer*, Vol. I, No. 3, November, 1887, pp. 173-180]

“ . . . . Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the consummation of the age?” asked the Disciples of the MASTER, on the Mount of Olives.

The reply given by the “Man of Sorrow,” the *Chrêstos*<sup>1</sup>, on his trial, but also on his way to triumph, as *Christos*<sup>2</sup>, or Christ, is prophetic, and very suggestive. It is a warning indeed. The answer must be quoted in full. Jesus . . . said unto them:—

Take heed that *no man* lead you astray. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall lead many astray. And ye shall hear of wars . . . but the end is not yet. *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places.* But all these things are the beginning of travail . . . . And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray . . . then shall

<sup>1</sup> Neophyte seeking the Christ-Consciousness; a more or less unconscious agent of the World Soul. — Ed., A. T.

<sup>2</sup> One who has *achieved* the Christ-Consciousness, an Initiate; a fully conscious agent of the World Soul, “a Co-worker with Nature”. — Ed., A. T.

the end come . . . . when therefore ye see the abomination of desolation which was spoken through Daniel . . . Then if any man shall say unto you, *Lo, here is the Christ*, or there; believe him not . . . . If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness, go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe them not. For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west: so shall be the *presence* of the Son of man, etc., etc.

Two things become evident *to all* in the above passages, now that their false rendering is corrected in the revision text: (a) “the coming of Christ,” means *the presence of CHRISTOS* in a regenerated world, and not at all the actual coming in body of “Christ” Jesus; (b) this Christ is to be sought neither in the wilderness nor “in the inner chambers,” nor in the sanctuary of any temple or church built by man; for Christ—the true esoteric SAVIOUR—is *no man*, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit *crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions*, and buried deep in the “sepulchre” of his sinful flesh; he who has the strength to roll back *the stone of matter* from the door of his own *inner* sanctuary, he *has the risen Christ in him*. The “Son of Man” is no child of the bond-woman — *flesh*, but verily of the free-woman — *Spirit*, the child of man’s own deeds, and the fruit of his own spiritual labour.

### TRANSMUTING THE STONE OF MATTER INTO THE GOLD OF SPIRIT

That which [the Alchemists and Fire Philosophers concealed] is transferred by the great Russian thinker from the realm of the metaphysical into the field of practical life. . . . the realization of the identity of subject and object in the man’s inner Ego, that which unites and blends the latter with the universal Soul — which is but the identity of subject and object on a higher plane, or the unknown Deity — all that Count Tolstoy has blended together without quitting the terrestrial plane. He is one of those few *elect* who begin with intuition and end with *quasi-omniscience*. It is the transmutation

of the baser metals — the *animal mass* — into gold and silver, or the philosopher's stone, the development and manifestation of man's higher SELF, which the Count has achieved. The *alcahest* of the inferior Alchemist is the *All-geist*, the all-pervading Divine Spirit of the higher Initiate; for Alchemy was, and is, as very few know to this day, as much a spiritual philosophy as it is a physical science. He who knows nought of one, will never know much of the other. Aristotle told it in so many words to his pupil, Alexander: "It is not a stone," he said, of the philosopher's stone. "*It is in every man and in every place*, and at all seasons, and is called the *end* of all philosophers," as the *Vedanta* is the *end* of all philosophies.

To wind up this essay *on the Science of Life*<sup>1</sup>, a few words may be said of the eternal riddle propounded to mortals by the Sphinx. To fail to solve the problem contained in it, was to be doomed to sure death, as the Sphinx of life devoured the unintuitive, who would live only in their "animal." He who lives for Self, and only for *Self*, will surely die, as the higher "I" tells the lower "animal" in the Lecture. The riddle has seven keys to it, and the Count opens the mystery with one of the highest. For, as the author of *Alchemy or the Hermetic Philosophy* beautifully expressed it: "The real mystery most familiar and, at the same time, most unfamiliar to every man, *into which he must be initiated or perish as an atheist, is himself*. For him is the elixir of life, to quaff which, before the discovery of the philosopher's stone, is to drink the beverage of death, while it confers on the adept and the *epopt*, the true immortality. He may know truth as it really

<sup>1</sup> This excerpt comes from "The Science of Life," which is signed by HPB, but is mostly a translation from a lecture of Count Tolstoy.

is — *Aletheia*, the breath of God, or Life, the conscious mind in man<sup>2</sup>."



## DEATH AND IMMORTALITY

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, No. 2,  
November, 1882, pp. 28-30]

The following letter states an embarrassment which may very likely have occurred to other readers of the passages quoted, besides our correspondent.<sup>3</sup>

### OCULT FRAGMENTS AND THE BOOK OF KHIU-TI

To the Editor of *The Theosophist*.

In the article on "Death" by the late Éliphas Lévi, printed in the October number of *The Theosophist*, Vol. III,<sup>4</sup> the writer says that "to be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of souls; *between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind*." In your explanatory note on this passage you quote the book of *Khiu-ti*, which says that "to force oneself upon the current of immortality, or rather to secure for oneself an *endless series of rebirths as conscious individualities*, one must become a co-worker with nature, either for *good*

<sup>2</sup> This is the key to the Count's meaning of the word Reason — it partakes more of Pistis, knowledge tinged with divinity, than the ordinary use of the word, Reason. There is something indomitable about man's Self-Consciousness if he will simply recognize this springboard to the gods; or as The Secret Doctrine says of the monad: It is not of this world or plane, and may be compared only to an indestructible star of divine light and fire, thrown down on to our earth as a plank of salvation for the personalities in which it indwells. It is for the latter to cling to it; and thus partaking of its divine nature, obtain immortality. Left to itself the Monad will cling to no one: but, like the "plank," be drifted away to another incarnation by the unrelenting current of evolution. (Vol. I, 174-5fn)

<sup>3</sup> We print NDK's entire letter so present-day theosophists can more easily understand the complexities HPB faced in trying to disentangle the misconceptions of both Eastern and Western students. — Ed., A.T.

<sup>4</sup> This occurs in the article "Stray Thoughts on Death and Satan" which has been reprinted by Theosophy Company in the *HPB Articles* set, vol. iii, p. 267.

or for *bad*, in her work of creation and reproduction, or in that of destruction. It is but the *useless drones*, which she gets rid of, violently ejecting and making them perish by the millions as self-conscious entities. Thus, while the good and the pure strive to reach Nirvana . . . the wicked will seek, on the contrary, series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings, preferring to be ever suffering under the law of retributive justice rather than give up their lives as portions of the integral universal whole. Being well aware that they can never hope to reach the final rest in pure spirit, or *Nirvana*, they cling to life in any form, rather than give up that 'desire for life,' or *Tanha* which causes a new aggregation of *Skandhas* or individuality to be reborn. . . . There are thoroughly wicked or depraved men, yet as highly intellectual and acutely *spiritual* for evil, as those who are spiritual for good. The *Egos* of these may escape the law of final destruction or annihilation for ages to come. . . . Heat and cold are the two 'poles,' *i.e.*, good and evil, *spirit* and *matter*. Nature *spews* the 'lukewarm' or 'useless portion of mankind' out of her mouth, *i.e.*, annihilates them." In the very same number in which these lines occur we have the "Fragments of Occult Truth,"<sup>1</sup> and we learn thence that there are seven entities or principles constituting a human being. When death occurs, the first three principles (*i.e.*, the body, the vital energy, and astral body) are dissipated; and with regard to the remaining four principles "one of *two* things occurs." If the Spiritual Ego (sixth principle) has been in life material in its tendencies, then at death it continues to cling blindly to the lower elements of its late combination, and the true spirit severs itself from these and passes away elsewhere, when the Spiritual Ego is also dissipated and ceases to exist. Under such circumstances only two entities (the fourth and fifth, *i.e.*, Kama Rupa and Physical Ego) are left, and the *shells* take long periods to disintegrate.

On the other hand, if the tendencies of the ego have been towards things spiritual, it will cling to the spirit, and with this pass into the adjoining *World of Effects*, and there evolve out of itself by the spirit's aid a new ego, to be reborn (after a brief period of freedom and enjoyment) in the next higher objective world of causes.

The "Fragments" teach that, apart from the cases of the higher adepts, there are two conditions: *First*, that in which the Spirit is obliged to sever its connection; and, *secondly*, that in which the Spirit is able to continue its connection with the fourth, fifth and sixth principles. In either case the fourth and fifth principles are dissipated after a longer or a shorter period, and, in the case of the spiritual-minded, the Spiritual Ego undergoes a series of ascending births, while in the case of the depraved no Spiritual Ego remains and there is simply disintegration of the fourth and fifth principles after immense periods of time. The "Fragments" do not seem to admit of a third or intermediary case which could explain the condition of Éliphas Lévi's "useless portion" of mankind after death. It appears to me also that there could be only two cases: (1) either the spirit continues its connection, or (2) it severs its connection. What, then, is meant by the "useless portion of mankind" who, you suggest, are annihilated by the millions? Are they a combination of less than seven principles? That cannot be, for even the very wicked and depraved have them all. What, then, becomes of the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh principles in the case of the so-called "*useless portion of mankind*"?

The "Fragments" again tell us that, in the case of the wicked, the fourth and fifth principles are simply disintegrated after long ages, while in your above quoted note you say that the "wicked will seek a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings," and again in the note to the word "Hell" you write that it is "a world of nearly absolute *matter* and one preceding the last one in the 'circle of necessity' from which 'there is no redemption, for there reigns *absolute* spiritual darkness'." These two notes seem to suggest that, in the case of the depraved, the fourth and fifth principles are born again in inferior worlds and have a series of conscious existences.

The "Fragments" are admittedly the production of the "Brothers," and what I could gather from them after a careful perusal seems apparently not to accord with your notes quoted above. Evidently there is a gap somewhere, and, as the "useless portion of mankind" have been so far noticed, a more exhaustive explanation of them after the method of the seven principles is needed to make your otherwise learned note accord with the "Fragments." I might mention again that at every step the words "matter" and

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in *The Modern Panarion*, p. 438; re-issued by Theosophy Company

“spirit” confound the majority of your readers, and it is highly important and necessary that these two words be satisfactorily explained so that the average reader might understand ... the difference between the two; what is meant by matter emanating from spirit, and whether spirit does not become limited to that extent by the emanation of matter therefrom.

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

N. D. K — , F.T.S.<sup>1</sup>

#### REPLY TO N.D.K.'S LETTER

\*\*\* The apparent discrepancy between the two statements, that our correspondent quotes, does not involve any real contradiction at all, nor is there a “gap” in the explanation. The confusion arises from the unfamiliarity of ordinary thinkers, unused to Occult ideas, with the distinction between the personal and individual entities in Man. Reference has been made to this distinction in modern Occult writing very frequently, and in *Isis* itself where the explanations of a hundred mysteries lie but half-buried — they were altogether buried in earlier works on Occult philosophy — only waiting for the application of intelligence guided by a little Occult knowledge to come out into the light of day. When *Isis* was written, it was conceived by those from whom the impulse, which directed its preparation, came, that the time was not ripe for the explicit declaration of a great many truths which they are now willing to impart in plain language. So the readers of that book were supplied rather with hints, sketches, and adumbrations of the philosophy to which it related, than with methodical expositions. Thus in reference to the present idea, the difference between personal and individual identity is suggested, if not fully set forth at page

315, Vol. I. There it is stated as the view of certain philosophers, with whom, it is easy to see, the writer concurs: “Man and Soul had to conquer their immortality by ascending towards the Unity with which, if successful, they were finally linked. . . . The individualisation of man after death depended on the spirit, not on his soul and body. Although the word ‘personality,’ in the sense in which it is usually understood, is an absurdity, if applied literally to our immortal essence, still the latter is a **distinct entity, immortal and eternal *per se***.” And a little later on: “A person may have won his immortal life, and remain the same *inner-self* he was on earth, throughout eternity; but this does not imply necessarily that he must either remain the Mr. Smith or Mr. Brown he was on earth. . . .” [p. 316.]

A full consideration of these ideas will solve the embarrassment in which our correspondent is placed. Éliphas Lévi is talking about personalities — the “Fragments” about individualities. Now, as regards the personalities, the “useless portion of mankind” to which Éliphas Lévi refers, is the great bulk thereof. The *permanent* preservation of a personal identity beyond death is a very rare achievement, accomplished only by those who wrest her secrets from Nature, and control their own super-material development. In his favourite symbolical way Éliphas Lévi indicates the people who contrive to do this as those who are immortal in good by identification with God, or immortal in evil by identification with Satan. That is to say, the preservation of personal identity beyond death (or rather, let us say, far beyond death, reserving for the moment an explanation of the distinction) is accomplished only by adepts and sorcerers—the one class having acquired the supreme secret knowledge by holy methods, and with benevolent

<sup>1</sup> [These initials stand for Navroji Dorabji Khandalavala, Pres. of the Poona Theosophical Society. It would appear from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 189-90, that Master K. H. contributed some of the material which is contained in the reply to Khandalavala's letter.—*Compiler*.{Boris de Zirkoff}]



motives; the other having acquired it by unholy methods, and for base motives. But that which constitutes the inner self, the purer portions of the earthly personal soul united with the spiritual principles and constituting the essential individuality, is ensured a perpetuation of life in new births, whether the person, whose earthly surroundings are its present habitat, becomes endued with the higher knowledge, or remains a plain ordinary man all his life.

This doctrine cannot be treated as one which falls in at once with the view of things entertained by people whose conceptions of immortality have been corrupted by the ignoble teaching of modern churches. Few exoteric religions ask their devotees to lift their imaginations above the conception that life beyond the grave is a sort of prolongation of life on this side of it. They are encouraged to believe that through “eternity,” if they are good in this life, they will live on in some luxurious Heaven just as they would be living if transported to some distant country, miraculously protected there from disease and decay, and continuing for ever the “Mr. Smith” or “Mr. Brown” they may have been previous to emigration. The conception is just as absurd, when closely thought out, as the conception that for the merits or the sins of this brief life — but a moment in the course of eternity — they will be able to secure infinite bliss, or incur the utmost horrors of perpetual punishment. Ends and means, causes and effects, must be kept in due proportion to one another in the worlds of spirit as in the worlds of flesh. It is nonsense for a man who has not first rendered his personality something altogether abnormal to conceive that it can be rationally thought of as surviving *forever*. It would be folly to wish even that it could be so perpetuated, for, how could human beings of ignoble,

miserable life, whose personality is merely a congeries of wretched and sordid memories, be happy in finding their misery stereotyped for all coming time, and in perpetual contrast with the superior personalities of other such stereotypes. The memory of every personal life, indeed, is imperishably preserved in the mysterious records of each existence, and the immortal individual spiritual entity will one day — but in a future so remote that it is hardly worth thinking about much at present — be able to look back upon it, as upon one of the pages in the vast book of lives which he will by that time have compiled. But let us come back from these very transcendental reflections to the destinies more immediately impending over the great majority of us whom Éliphas Lévi so uncivilly speaks of as “the useless portion of mankind”—useless only, be it remembered, as regards our special present congeries of earthly circumstance — not as regards the *inner self* which is destined to active enjoyment of life and experience very often in the future among better circumstances, both on this earth and in superior planets.

Now, most people will be but too apt to feel that unsatisfactory as the circumstances may be, which constitute their present personalities, these are after all *themselves* — “a poor thing, Sir, but mine own” — and that the inner spiritual monads, of which they are but very dimly conscious, by the time they are united with entirely different sets of circumstances in new births, will be other people altogether in whose fate they cannot take any interest. In truth when the time comes they will find the fate of those people profoundly interesting, as much so as they find their own fates now. But passing over this branch of the subject, there is still some consolation for weak brethren who find the notion of quitting their present personality

at the end of their present lives too gloomy to be borne. Éliphas Lévi's exposition of the doctrines is a very brief one — as regards the passage quoted — and it passes over a great deal which, from the point of view we are now engaged with, is of very great importance. In talking about immortality the great Occultist is thinking of the vast stretches of time over which the personality of the adept and the sorcerer may be made to extend. When he speaks of annihilation after this life, he ignores a certain interval, which may perhaps be not worth considering in reference to the enormous whole of existence, but which none the less is very well worth the attention of people who cling to the little fragment of their life experience which embodies the personality of which we have been talking.

It has been explained, in more than one paper published in this magazine during the last few months, that the passage of the spiritual monad into a rebirth does not immediately follow its release from the fleshly body last inhabited here. In the *Kama-loka*, or atmosphere of this earth, the separation of the two groups of ethereal principles takes place, and in the vast majority of cases in which the late personality — the fifth principle — yields up something which is susceptible of perpetuation and of union with the sixth, the spiritual monad, thus retaining consciousness of its late personality for the time being, passes into the state described as *Devachan*, where it leads, for very long periods indeed as compared with those of life on this earth, an existence of the most unalloyed satisfaction and conscious enjoyment. Of course this state is not one of activity nor of exciting contrasts between pain and pleasure, pursuit and achievement, like the state of physical life, but it is one in which the personality of which we are speaking is perpetuated, as

far as that is compatible with the non-perpetuation of that which has been painful in its experience. It is from this state that the spiritual monad is reborn into the next active life, and from the date of that rebirth the old personality is done with. But for any imagination, which finds the conception of rebirth and new personality uncomfortable, the doctrine of *Devachan* — and these “doctrines,” be it remembered, are statements of scientific fact which Adepts have ascertained to be as real as the stars though as far out of reach for most of us — the doctrine of *Devachan*, we say, will furnish people who cannot give up their earth-life memories all at once — with a soft place to fall upon.

### *Tetraktis* and the Seven

Whatever the transcendental metaphysical speculations and interpretations, which, of course, can be satisfied with *Tetraktis* on the plane of the Archetypal world, once that we descend into the world of the Astral and of the phenomenally occult, we cannot have less than seven principles upon which to base ourselves. I have studied the Kabala under two learned Rabbis, one of whom was an initiate, and there was no difference between the two teachings (the esoteric Eastern and the Western) in this instance. ....

Each symbol and glyph having *seven keys* to it, it follows that one party may be using one key to any subject under dispute, and then accuse another student who is using another key of deliberate misinterpretation.

Such is not *my* policy however. In esoteric matters I would rather seek conciliation than quarrel over mistakes made, whether real or imaginary; because the CAUSE and the triumph of truth ought to

be dearer to a true Occultist and Theosophist than petty successes over disputants. ...

I am repeatedly asked to show my authority — book, page and verse — for the esoteric doctrine of the “Septenary.” This is like saying to one in the midst of a desert prove to me that water is full of *infusoria* when there is no microscope to be got. Better than any one, those who make such a claim upon me, know that outside of the few places where secret MSS. Are stored for ages, no *esoteric* doctrines *were ever written and plainly explained*; otherwise they would have lost long ago their very name. There is such a thing as an “unwritten” Kabbala, as well as a written one, even in the West. Many things are *orally* explained, and always have been. Nevertheless, hints and allusions to it are numerous and scattered throughout the exoteric scriptures, and the classification depends, of course, on the school that interprets it, and still more upon personal intuition and conception. The question is not whether there are three, five or seven colours in the rays of the *spectrum*, for every one knows there are, in fact and nature, but one — the colorless white. And, though Science discerns very plainly seven prismatic rays as clear as are the seven notes in the scale; yet, one has heard of very great men of science who insisted there were only four or five until it was found out that they were color-blind.

H. P. BLAVATSKY  
[From the article “Tetragrammaton”]

## BIG BLUE UMBRELLA

### THIRD FUNDAMENTAL.....

It is said that the planetary chains... behave in heaven as do men on Earth; they generate their likes, get old, and become personally extinct, their spiritual principles only living in their progeny as a survival of themselves. .... [S.D. I, 154-55]

As the individual man lives through his life cycle and dies, his higher principles correspond in the development of a planetary chain to the cycling Monads.

They “pass into Devachan which corresponds to the ‘Nirvana’ and states of rest intervening between two chains. The Man’s lower ‘principles’ are disintegrated in time and are used by Nature again for the formation of new human principles, and the same process takes place in the disintegration and formation of Worlds.” [S.D. I, 173]

### PROGRESS — THROUGH KNOWLEDGE OR GOODNESS?

Question: — Is there any real need for a person who leads a pure, honest, and unselfish life, to study all the intricate problems of life, such as Karma, reincarnation, the origin of the human soul, etc., as set forth in Theosophy? Is not GOODNESS sufficient to secure final liberations?

Answer: — If you had said, is not *conscious* goodness sufficient to secure progress and final liberation, we should say — yes. But “goodness,” *per se*, is not sufficient. It affords *opportunity* for, but does not *secure* progress. The karmic effect of goodness is happiness. To progress, one must combine knowledge with goodness, and follow the Wisdom-Religion. To consciously assist nature, we must understand her laws and obey them.

Purity, honesty, and unselfishness will bring opportunity for progress, while knowledge will enable us to *use* that opportunity. Nothing is so likely to fall short of efficiency than goodness unaccompanied by knowledge; *e.g.*, indiscriminate charity assists vice as much as virtue, and prolongs the fierce struggle for existence even in this world. [The Vahan, January 1891]

## THE PRACTICE OF SELFLESS KINDNESS

Subhuti, when a disciple is moved to make, objective gifts of charity, he should also practice the Shila Paramita of selfless kindness, that is, he should remember that there is no arbitrary distinction between one's self and the selfhood of others and, therefore, he should practice charity by giving, not objective gifts alone, but the selfless gifts of kindness and sympathy. If any disciple will simply practice kindness, he will soon attain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi.

Subhuti, by what I have just said about kindness, the Tathagata does not mean that a disciple when making gifts should hold in his mind any arbitrary conceptions about kindness, for kindness after all a word and charity should be spontaneous and selfless.

Subhuti if a disciple bestowed as alms an abundance of the seven treasures sufficient to fill as many worlds as there are grains of sand in the Ganges river, and if another disciple, having realized the principle of the egolessness of all things and thereby had attained perfect selflessness, the selfless disciple would have more blessing and merit than the one who merely practiced objective charity. And why? Because Bodhisattvas-Mahasattvas do not look upon their blessing and merit as a private possession.

—Diamond Sutra



I am done with great things  
 And big things, great institutions  
 And big success, and I am for those  
 Tiny invisible molecular moral  
 Forces that work from individual  
 To individual, creeping through  
 The crannies of the world like  
 So many rootlets, or like the  
 Capillary oozing of water,  
 Yet which, if you give them time, will  
 Rend the hardest monuments  
 Of man's pride.

WILLIAM JAMES

## THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION

There can only be one permanent revolution — a moral one: The regeneration of the inner man. How is this revolution to take place? Nobody knows how it will take place in humanity, but every man feels it clearly in himself. And yet in our world everybody thinks of changing humanity, and nobody thinks of changing himself.

Tolstoy

Quoted in the *London Letter*

May 1972



## WHEREIN IS LOVE, THEREIN IS GOD

Once there dwelt in a city a bootmaker, Martin Avdeyitch. He lived in a small basement room with one window. The window looked on the street. Through the window one could see the people passing; though their legs alone could be seen, yet Martin *Avdeyitch* used to recognise the owners by their boots. Martin Avdeyitch had lived in his room for a long while and had many acquaintances. Rare was that pair of boots in the neighborhood that missed his hands. Some he soled, others he patched, some again he trimmed afresh, putting on occasionally a new heel or two. And often he used to see his work through the window. Of orders he had plenty, for Avdeyitch's work was solid; he always furnished good material, putting on it no higher price than he should, and stuck punctually to his promises. Whenever sure of being ready at the time fixed, he would accept an order; if otherwise, he would never deceive a customer, but would warn him beforehand. So Avdeyitch became known and had no end of work. Avdeyitch had always been a good man, but toward old age he took to thinking more of his soul and approaching nearer his God.

In earlier days, when Martin yet lived as a journeyman, he had lost his wife. A boy about three years old had been all that remained of her. Their elder children had all

died. At first Martin thought of sending his boy to the village, to live with his sister, but pitying the child, he changed his mind — “too hard for my Kapitoshka to grow up in a strange family,” he said to himself, “I’ll keep him with me.” Asking his master to discharge him, Avdeyitch went to live together with his little boy in a lodging. But God had not given him luck with children. Hardly had the child grown up sufficiently to be of help to his father, than he fell sick, burnt with fever for a week, and died. Martin buried his son and fell into despair. So much did he despair that he murmured against God. Such weariness got hold of Martin that more than once he implored God for death, and reproved Him for not taking him, an old man, instead of his beloved and only son. Avdeyitch even ceased to go to Church, Once an old village neighbor visited Avdeyitch, on his way from Troitza Monastery — a pilgrim in the eighth year of his travels. After conversing awhile Avdeyitch complained to him about his sorrows. “No desire, man of God, do I feel for life,” he said. “Death alone do I covet, and pray God for. Here am I, a hopeless man in all?”

And the Pilgrim answered: —

“Thou speakest not well, Martin, for it behooves us not to judge the acts of God. ‘Tis not as we fancy but as God decrees! And if God so willed that thy son should die and thou shouldst live, therefore must it have been for the best. As to thy despairing, this is only because thou seekest to live for thine own comfort alone.”

“And for what else should one live?” asked Martin.

Quoth the old man — “For God, Martin, thou shouldst live for God. He giveth life, for Him then we should live. Once thou livest for God, thou shalt cease fretting, and life shall seem to thee but a light burden.”

After a short silence, Martin asked: — “How should one live for God?”

Saith the old one: “As for this, Christ Himself showeth us the way. Canst thou not read? Well, buy the Evangels and read them, and thou shalt learn therein how one can live for God. It is all there.”

And these words found their way into Martin’s heart. And he went and bought a New Testament, in large print, and set himself to study it.

Avdeyitch had intended to read only on holidays, but no sooner had he begun, than he *felt his* soul so overjoyed that he read daily. At times he would go on reading so late at night that the oil in his lamp would be all burned out, and he still unable to tear himself away from the book. Thus Avdeyitch read every evening. And the more he read, the more it became clear to him what God expected of him, and how one should live *for God*; and he felt the burden on his heart becoming lighter and lighter. Hitherto when retiring to rest, he used to begin groaning and moaning for his Kapitoshka, but now his last thoughts became, “Glory to Thee glory, O Lord! Thy will be done.” And now all the life of Avdeyitch was changed. Hitherto, as a Sunday offering, he used to visit the inn, to get a glass of tea, and to occasionally indulge in liquor. He, too, had drunk with casual friends; and though never enough to get drunk, yet often retired in too good humor, talking nonsense, and even shouting to, and abusing people on his way home. But now all this had gone by; his life had become quiet and full of contentment. From morn till eve at work and when the task was done, taking his little lamp from the hook on the wall, placing it on his table, and then getting his book from the shelf, opening it, and sitting down to read. And the more he read, the better he understood it and the lighter and happier he felt in his heart.

Once, it so happened that Martin sat up later than usual. He was reading the Gospel according to St. Luke. He had read the sixth chapter, and had come upon the verses: "And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy shirt<sup>1</sup> also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. "Then he read those verses wherein the Lord saith: —

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the sand; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

Read Avdeyitch these words and his soul felt overjoyed. Taking off his spectacles, he laid them on the book before him, and leaning on the table fell into deep thought. He tried to fit his life to the precepts. And then he asked himself:

"Is my house built on rock or on sand? If on rock, well and good. Aye, it is easy enough, sitting here alone to fancy that one has done everything as God commands; but forget this for a moment and there's sin again. Nevertheless, I'll try. Too good, not to — and may God help me!"

Thus ran his thoughts; he half rose to go to bed, but felt unwilling yet to part with the Book. So he went on reading the

<sup>1</sup> "In the Slavonian text the word is "shirt," not "coat," as in the English texts.

seventh Chapter. He read about the centurion, read all about the son of the widow, read the reply to John's disciples and came to that place, where a Pharisee asked Jesus to eat with him; and finally read how the woman "which was a sinner" anointed His feet and washed them with her tears and how He forgave her sins, At last he came to verse 44 and began to read "And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head; and since the time I came in, she hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed my feet with ointment." And having read these verses he repeated to himself: "*Gave no water for the feet, gave no kiss, nor did he anoint His head with oil. . . .*"

He took off his spectacles once more, placed them on the Book, and fell into deep thought again.

"That Pharisee, there, must have been one of my sort. I too never used to remember anyone but myself: how to indulge in tea, to sit in warmth and comfort, and no thought of others. Thought of himself only; as to his guest, no care did he feel for him. And who, that guest? Why the Lord Himself. Would He but come to me now, could I ever act as he did?"

Placing both arms on the table, Avdeyitch fell unconsciously into a half slumber.

"Martin!" he suddenly heard, as if something had breathed near his ear.

Startled in his sleep, "Who's here?" he cried. Turning round he looked at the door — and saw no one. He fell asleep again. Suddenly he heard distinctly a voice saying:

"Martin, I say, Martin! look out on the street to-morrow for me. I will come."

Then Martin awoke, arose from his chair and began to rub his eyes, not sure whether he had really heard these words, or only dreamed them. Then he turned off his lamp, and took to his bed.

On the morrow Avdeyitch arose before twilight, said his prayers, kindled his fire, put his *stshy*<sup>1</sup> and *kasha*<sup>2</sup> into the oven, made his *samovar*<sup>3</sup> boil, donned his apron, and taking his seat under the window commenced his work. There sat Avdeyitch, working, but thinking all the while of what had happened. And his conclusions were twofold: one moment he thought that it was all fancy, at another that he had heard a voice, truly. Well, he argued, such things have happened before.

Thus sat Martin at his window, working less than looking out of it, and no sooner would a pair of boots of foreign make pass by than, straining his body, he would try to catch a glimpse through the window, not of the legs alone but of the face too. There goes the *dvornik* (porter) in new felt boots,<sup>4</sup> there comes the water-carrier, and finally an old invalid soldier of the Nicholas period, in worn-out and mended felt boots and leggings, armed with a snow-shovel, stood before the window. Avdeyitch recognised him by those leggings. Stepanitch was the old man's name, and he lived with a neighboring merchant, on charity. His duty was to help the porter. Stepanitch commenced to shovel away the snow from before the window; Avdeyitch looked at him and then returned to his work.

"I must have lost my senses in my old age!" laughed Avdeyitch to himself. "Stepanitch is cleaning away the snow and I am here fancying Christ is coming to visit me. I must be a doting old fool, that's what

<sup>1</sup> Cabbage broth.

<sup>2</sup> Thick porridge of buckwheat.

<sup>3</sup> Brass tea-urn to boil water in.

<sup>4</sup> *Valenki*, thick felt boots without soles.

I am." Nevertheless, having drawn his needle through about a dozen times, Avdeyitch was again attracted to look through the window. And, having looked, he saw Stepanitch who, placing his spade against a wall, was trying to warm himself or perhaps get a rest.

"The man is old, broken down, perchance too weak even to clean off the snow," said to himself Avdeyitch, "warm tea might be welcome to him, and, as luck has it, there's the samovar ready to boil over." So he stuck in his awl, rose, placed the samovar on the table, poured boiling water over the tea, and tapped with his finger on the window-pane. Stepanitch turned round and approached the window; Avdeyitch beckoned to him and went to open the door.

"Walk in and warm thyself," he said. "Feel cold, hey?"

"Christ save us, I do, and all my bones aching!" In walked Stepanitch, shook off some snow, and, so as not to soil the floor, made a feeble attempt to wipe his feet, himself nearly falling.

"Don't trouble to wipe; I'll scrub it off myself; that's our business. Come and sit down," said Avdeyitch. "There, have some tea." Filling two glasses, he placed one before his guest, and pouring tea out of his own glass into his saucer, proceeded to blow on it.

Stepanitch emptied his glass, turned it upside down on its saucer, and placing on it the bit of sugar he had not used,<sup>5</sup> he rendered thanks for the tea. But he evidently longed for another glass.

"Have some more," said Avdeyitch, filling the two glasses again, for himself and

<sup>5</sup> Though they drink tea immoderately, the lower classes of Russia do not sugar it, but bite a piece off from a lump which serves them for several glasses, the guest leaving his remaining piece in the manner described.

guests. Thus he talked and drank, yet never losing sight of the window.

“Art thou expecting anyone?” enquired the guest.

“Do I expect anyone? Seems queer to say — whom I keep expecting. Not that I really expect anyone, only a certain word stuck in my heart. A vision, or whatever it was I cannot say. Hearken thou to me, brother mine. Last night I was reading the Gospel about Father Christ, all about how he suffered and how he walked on earth. Thou hast heard of it, hast thou not?”

“Aye, heard of it, we have heard,” answered Stepanitch. “But we are dark people<sup>1</sup> and have not been taught to read.”

“Well, then, I was reading just about this very same thing, how he walked the earth, and I read, you know, how he visited the Pharisee and the Pharisee failed to give him a reception. And I was reading this last night, thou brother mine, and, while reading, fell a-thinking. How is it that he could receive Christ, our Father, without any honors. Had this happened as an example to myself or anyone else, methinks nothing would have been too good with which to receive him. And that other one, offering no reception! Well, that’s what I kept thinking about, until I fell a-napping like. And while napping, brother mine, I heard my name called, lifted my head and heard a voice, just as if someone whispered, ‘Expect me, I’ll come tomorrow,’ and that twice. Well, believe me or not, but that voice remained fixed in my head from that moment — and here I am, chiding myself for it, and still expecting Him, our Father.”

Stepanitch shook his head wonderingly and said nothing, but emptying

his glass, placed it this time on its side,<sup>2</sup> but Avdeyitch lifted it up again and poured out more tea.

“Drink more and may it give thee health. So then I think to myself, when He, the Father, walked the earth, He scorned no man, but associated more with the common people, visiting rather the simple folk and selecting his disciples out of the ranks of the poorer brethren, the same as we sinners are ourselves, journeymen and the like. ‘Whosoever shall exalt himself,’ says He, ‘shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. You call Me Lord,’ says He, ‘and I,’ He says, ‘will wash your feet for you. If any man desire to be first, the same shall be servant of all. Because,’ says He, ‘blessed are the poor, the meek and the merciful.’”

Being an old, and soft-hearted fellow, Stepanitch forgot his tea. And there he sat listening, big tears running down his cheeks.

“Come, have some more tea,” said Avdeyitch, But Stepanitch, crossing himself,<sup>3</sup> rendered thanks, pushed away his glass and arose to depart.

“Thanks to thee, Martin Avdeyitch,” he said; “thou hast entertained me well and fed both soul and body.”

“Pray thee come again; a guest is ever welcome,” replied Avdeyitch. Stepanitch departed, and Martin pouring out the last drop of tea, cleared away the tea things and sat down once more to his table under the window, to backstitch a seam. There he sat backstitching, but still looking out through the window, awaiting the Christ, thinking of Him and His doings, his head full of Christ’s various discourses.

<sup>1</sup> The Russian peasant, and the lower classes call themselves “dark” or ignorant people. They also often use the plural pronoun “we” instead of the pronoun “I” when speaking of themselves.

<sup>2</sup> An act of politeness, denoting that he had enough tea.

<sup>3</sup> Making the sign of the cross, which people in Russia do before and after every meal.



Two soldiers passed by, one in regimentals, the other in his own boots; passed the proprietor of a neighboring house, in brightly polished overshoes, and finally the baker with his basket. All passed and vanished, and now a woman in woollen stockings and village shoes walks past the window and stops at the partition wall. Avdeyitch looks up at her from under the window panes and sees an unknown female poorly clad, with a baby in her arms, placing herself with her back against the wind and trying to wrap up the baby but having nothing to wrap it in. Her garments are thin and worn. And Avdeyitch through his window, hears the child crying, and she trying, but unable, to hush him. Arose Avdeyitch, opened the door, passed up the staircase and called: "Goody; hey, my goody!" The woman heard him and turned round.

"Wherefore standest thou with that little child in the cold? Come into the warm room, where thou canst wrap him at thine ease. Here, come down here! "The woman looked surprised. She sees an old man in his working apron, and with spectacles on his nose inviting her into his shop. She followed him. Reaching the bottom of the landing, they entered the room, and the old man led the woman to his bed. "Sit down here, my goody, nearer to the oven — just to warm thyself and feed the baby."

"No milk left; had nothing myself to eat since morning;" sadly muttered the woman, preparing nevertheless to feed the babe.

Shook his old head Avdeyitch, upon hearing this, went to the table, got some bread and a bowl, opened the oven-door, poured into the cup some *stshy*, got out from the oven a pot with *kasha*, but found it had not steamed up to the proper point yet, returned with the *stshy* alone, and placed it on the table with the bread; and taking a wiping-cloth from a hook, he laid it near the rest.

"Sit down," says he, "and eat, my goody, and I'll take meanwhile care of thy infant. I had babes myself — so I know how to deal with 'em."

The woman crossing herself, went to the table and commenced eating, and Avdeyitch took her place on the bedstead near the baby, and began smacking his lips at it, but smack as he would he smacked them badly, for he had no teeth. The little child kept on crying. Then it occurred to Avdeyitch to startle it with his finger; to raise high his hand with finger uplifted, and bringing it rapidly down, right near the baby's mouth, and as hastily withdrawing it. The finger was all black, stained with cobbler's wax, so he would not allow the baby to take it into its mouth. The little one at last got interested in the black finger, and while looking at it, ceased crying and soon began to smile and coo. Avdeyitch felt overjoyed. And the woman went on eating, at the same time narrating who she was and whence she came.

She was a soldier's wife, she said, whose husband had been marched off somewhere eight months before and since then had never been heard from. She was living as a cook when her baby was born, but since then, they would not keep her with it.

"And now it's the third month that I am out of a situation", she went on. "All I possessed is pawned for food. I offered myself as wet-nurse, but didn't suit — was too lean, they said. Tried with the merchant's wife, yonder, where a countrywoman is in service, and she promised to have me. I had understood it was from to-day, and so went, but was told to come next week. She lives far. I got tired out and wore him out too, the poor little soul. Thanks to our landlady, she pities the poor and keeps us for the sake of Christ under her roof. Otherwise I know not how I would have pulled through."

Heaving a sigh, Avdeyitch asked: "And hast thou no warmer clothing?"

"Just the time, my own one, to keep warm clothing! But yesterday I pawned my last shawl for twenty copecks."

Approaching the bed the woman took her child, and Avdeyitch, repairing to a corner in the wall, rummaged among some clothing and brought forth an old sleeveless coat.

"There," he said, "though it be a worn-out garment, still it may serve thee to wrap him up with."

The woman looked at the coat, looked at the old man and began weeping. Avdeyitch turned away too, crawled under the bed and dragging out a trunk rummaged in it and sat down again, opposite the woman.

And the woman said: "Christ save thee, old father, it is He perchance, who sent me under thy window. I would have had my child frozen. When I left the house it was warm, and now, behold the frost is beginning. It's He, the Father, who made thee look out of the window and take pity on hapless me."

Smiled Avdeyitch, and said: "Aye, it's He who made me. It's not to lose time, my goody, that I keep on the look-out."

And then Martin told the soldier's wife also his dream, how he had heard a voice promising him that the Lord would visit him that day.

"All things are possible," remarked the woman, and arising put on the coat, wrapped up in its folds her little one and bowing, commenced again to thank Avdeyitch.

"Accept this for the sake of Christ," answered Avdeyitch, giving her a twenty copeck piece, to get back her shawl from the pawnshop. Once more the woman crossed

her brow, and Avdeyitch crossed his, and went out to see her off.

The woman was gone. Avdeyitch ate some broth, cleaned the table, and sat down to his work again. His hands are busy, but he keeps the window in mind and no sooner a shadow falls on it than he looks up to see who goes by. Some acquaintances passed along, and some strangers likewise, but he saw nothing and no one out of the ordinary.

But suddenly, Avdeyitch sees stopping opposite his window an old woman, a fruit-seller. She is carrying a wicker basket with apples. Few remain, she must have sold them all, for hanging across her back is a bag full of chips, got by, her no doubt, at some building in construction, and which she now carries home. But the heavy bag hurts her, it seems; trying to shift it from one shoulder to the other, she drops it down on the curb, places her wicker basket on a street post, and proceeds to pack the chips tighter in the bag. As she is shaking the bag, there suddenly appears from behind the street corner a small boy, in a ragged cap, who seizes an apple and is in the act of disappearing unperceived, when the old woman abruptly turning round, grasps him with both hands by the coat sleeve. The boy struggles, trying to get away, but the old woman seizing him in her arms knocks off his cap and catches him by the hair. The boy cries at the top of his voice, the old woman swears. Losing no time to put away his awl, Avdeyitch throws it on the floor, makes for the door, runs up the steps, stumbles and loses his spectacles, and reaches the street. On runs Avdeyitch, on goes the old woman, shaking the small boy by his hair, cursing and threatening to drag him to the policeman; the small boy kicking and denying: "I did not take thine apple; why shouldst thou beat me, let go!" Then Avdeyitch endeavored to separate them, and taking the boy by the hand, said "Let him go, *babooshka* (grandmother), forgive him for the sake of Christ."

"I'll forgive him so that he won't forget it till the next switches! I'll take the rascal to the police." And Avdeyitch began to entreat the old woman.

"Let him go, *babooshka*," he said. "He won't do it again. Let go, for Christ's sake!"

The old woman let the boy go, who prepared to run away, but now Avdeyitch would not let him.

"Beg granny's pardon," he said, "and don't do it again. I saw thee take the apple." The boy burst into tears and begged the old woman to forgive him.

"Now, that's right. And there, have the apple now." And Avdeyitch, taking an apple out of the basket, gave it to the small boy. "I'll pay thee for it, grandmother," said he to the old woman.

"Thou wilt spoil the dirty urchin" said the woman. "His best reward should be of such a nature that he could not lie on his back for a week."

"Nay, nay, mother," said Avdeyitch, "not so. This may be according to our law, but it is not according to the law of God. If he deserves flogging for a stolen apple, then what should be the punishment for our sins?"

The old woman was silent.

And Avdeyitch told the old woman the parable about the Lord who loosed his servant and forgave him his debt, the servant going forthwith and laying his hands on *his* debtor, throttling him and casting him into prison. The old woman stood and listened, and the boy stood and listened. "God commands that we should forgive our brothers their trespasses," said Avdeyitch, "that the same should be done unto us. Forgive all, let alone an unreasoning child."

The old woman shook her head and sighed.

"That's so, that's so," she said, "but children have become too unruly nowadays."

"Just why we old people should teach them better!" said Avdeyitch.

"I say so, too," replied the old woman. "I had seven of them, myself, but only one daughter is left to me out of them all." And the old woman began telling where and how she lived with her daughter, and the number of grandchildren she had. "See," she went on, "my strength is almost gone, and still I work, pitying the chicks, for my grandchildren are very good and none love me better than they. As to Aksyutka, she won't leave my arms for anyone. 'Granny, dear granny, my heart' . . . says she." And the old woman softened entirely. "Of course, that's a child's doings. God be with him," she added, looking at the boy.

As she prepares to hoist the bag of chips on her back, the little boy, making up, says,

"Let me carry it, granny, for you; I am going your way." Shook her head reflectively the old one, nodded and placed the load on the boy's back.

And both went along the street, the old woman actually forgetting to ask Avdeyitch for the price of her apple. Avdeyitch stood looking at them and kept listening to their dying voices, as they went on holding converse together.

Having seen them off, Avdeyitch returned to his room, found his spectacles on the steps unbroken, picked up his awl and sat at his work once more. After working for a little time he could no longer thread the bristles through the holes, and saw the lamp-lighter passing on his way to light the street lanterns.

"Time to light my lamp," he thought; so he trimmed it, hooked it on to the wall and continued his work. One boot was now

ready; he turned it on all sides and examined it; it was all right. He gathered his tools, brushed off the parings, put away the bristles, stray bits and strings, took down his lamp, placed it on the table and got from the shelf his Gospels. He tried to open the book on the page which he had marked the night before with a bit of morocco leather, but it opened at another place. And no sooner had Avdeyitch opened it than he remembered his last night's dream. And no sooner did it come back to him than it seemed to him as if someone moved about behind him, softly shuffling his feet. Turns round our Avdeyitch, and sees something like people standing in the dark corner — men of whom he is yet unable to say who they are. And the voice whispers into his ear:

“Martin! Hey, Martin. Knowest thou me not?”

“Know whom?” cried Avdeyitch.

“Me”, said the voice, “it is I.” And out from the dark corner emerged Stepanitch, smiled, vanished cloud-like, and was no more.

“And that is I,” said the same voice, the woman with the little child coming out of the dark corner; and the woman smiled and the little child cooed, and they too were gone. “And that is I,” said the voice, followed by the old woman and the little boy with the apple, and both smiled and forthwith vanished too.

And great joy crept into Martin's heart, and making the sign of the cross he put on his spectacles and began reading there where the Book had opened. And on the top of the page he read:

“For I was hungered and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger and ye took me in.” And further down the page he read: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.” (Matt. xxv )

And Avdeyitch knew that his dream had not deceived him, but that on that day the Saviour had indeed come to visit him, and that he had indeed received Him,

[This story by Count Leo Tolstoy is reprinted from *Lucifer*, Vol. V, p. 310.]



## The Nature of Man, The Freedom of Man

There are only two modes of causality cogitable —

- 1 the causality of nature, or
- 2 the causality of freedom.

The first is the conjunction of a particular state with another preceding it in the world of sense, the former following the latter by virtue of a law. Now, as the causality of phenomena is subject to conditions of time, and the preceding state, if it had always existed, could not have produced an effect which would, make its first appearance at a particular time, the causality of a cause must itself be an effect — must itself have *begun to be*, and therefore, according to the principle of the understanding, itself requires a cause.

We must understand, on the contrary, by the term freedom, in the cosmological sense, a faculty, of the spontaneous origination of a state; the causality of which, therefore, is not subordinated to another cause determining it in time<sup>1</sup>. Freedom is in

<sup>1</sup> Compare HPB's use of the word "radiation" as contrasted to "emanation." (*Transactions*, p. 94-5) *Pure* freedom is the Father of all other levels or types of freedom. A *self*-conscious being would necessarily have a Transcendental Self and a shadow Self, a higher and lower Ego. This is the key to man's freewill which is always "transcendental" to the plane upon which it manifests, or as said in *What is Truth?*, "Absolute truth is *the symbol of Eternity*, and no *finite* mind can ever grasp the eternal, hence, no truth in its

this sense a pure transcendental idea, which, in the first, place, contains no empirical element; the object of which, in the second place, cannot be given or determined in any experience, because it is a universal law of the very possibility of experience, that everything which happens must have a cause, that consequently the causality of a cause, being itself something that has *happened*, must also have a cause. In this view of the case, the whole field of experience how far soever it may extend, contains nothing that is not subject to the laws of nature. But, as we cannot by this means attain to an absolute totality of conditions in reference to the series of causes and effects, reason creates the idea of a spontaneity, which can begin to act of itself, and without any external cause determining it to action, according to the natural law of causality.

It is especially remarkable that the practical conception of freedom is based upon the *transcendental idea*, and that the question of the possibility of the former is difficult only as it involves the consideration of the truth of the latter. Freedom, in the *practical sense*, is the independence of the will of *coercion* by sensuous impulses<sup>1</sup>. A will is *sensuous*, in so far as it is *pathologically affected* (by sensuous impulses); it is termed *animal (arbitrium brutum)*, when it is *pathologically necessitated*. The human will is certainly an *arbitrium sensitivum*, not *brutum*, but *liberum*; because sensuousness. does not necessitate its action, a faculty existing in

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fulness can ever dawn upon it. To reach the state during which man sees and senses it, we have to paralyze the senses of the external man of clay." — ED., A. T.

<sup>1</sup> This "Mind" is *manas*, or rather its lower reflection, which whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being, with *kama*, becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of the free will in physical man." ("Psychic and Noëtic Action — I)

man of self-determination, independently of all sensuous coercion.<sup>2</sup>

It is plain, that, if all causality in the world of sense were natural — and natural only, every event would be determined by another according to necessary laws, and that consequently, phenomena, in so far as they determine the will, must necessitate every action as a natural effect from themselves; and thus all practical freedom would fall to the ground with the transcendental idea. For the latter presupposes that, although a certain thing has not happened, it *ought* to have happened, and that, consequently, its phenomenal cause was not so powerful and determinative as to exclude the causality of our will — a causality capable of producing effects independently of and even in opposition to the power of natural causes, and capable, consequently, of spontaneously originating a series of events.<sup>3</sup>

Here, too, we find it to be the case, as we generally find in the self-contradictions and perplexities of a reason which strives to pass the bounds of possible experience, that the problem is properly not physiological,<sup>4</sup> but *transcendental*. The question of the possibility of freedom does indeed concern psychology; but, as it rests upon dialectical arguments of pure reason, its solution must

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<sup>2</sup> By *manasic* or noëtic "individuality we mean that self-determining power which enables man to override circumstance." But if we call it "the higher Self-conscious Will," then having shown that will has no "special organ," how can it be connected with "molecular" motion at all? (*vide* "Psychic and Noëtic Action — I")

<sup>3</sup> Even if one has this *action* of freewill only occasionally, they will nevertheless find their life *remarkably* changed by this mysterious, *universalizing* influence. Their life will take on meaning and a definite *plan*. — ED., A. T.

<sup>4</sup> The Editor J.M.D. Meiklejohn, says in a footnote that this is "probably an error of the press, and that we should read *psychological*." While the word "psychological" may be better — and is supported by the following text' "physiological," broadly interpreted as pertaining to the "lower quaternary" would be usable. Action that exceeds the laws of "experience," is born from the noëtic — from within-without. — ED., A. T.

engage the attention of transcendental philosophy. Before attempting this solution, a task which transcendental philosophy cannot decline, it will be advisable to make a remark with regard to its procedure in the settlement of the question.

If phenomena were things in themselves, and time and space forms of the existence of things, condition and conditioned would always be members of the same series; and thus would arise in the present case the antinomy common to all transcendental ideas — that their series is either too great or too small for the understanding. The dynamical ideas, which we are about to discuss in this and the following section, possess the peculiarity of relating to an object, not considered as a quantity, but as an *existence*; and thus, in the discussion of the present question, we may make abstraction of the quantity of the series of conditions, and consider merely the dynamical relation of the condition to the conditioned. The question, then, suggests itself, whether freedom is possible; and, if it is, whether it can consist with the universality of the natural law of causality; and, consequently, whether we enounce a proper disjunctive proposition when we say — every effect must have its origin either in nature or in freedom, or whether *both* cannot exist together in the same event in different relations. The principle of an unbroken connection between all events in the phenomenal world, in accordance with the unchangeable laws of nature, is a well-established principle of transcendental analytic which admits of no exception. The question, therefore, is: Whether an effect, determined according to the laws of nature, can at the same time be produced by a free agent, or whether freedom and nature mutually exclude each other? And here, the common, but fallacious hypothesis of the *absolute reality* of phenomena manifests its injurious influence in embarrassing the procedure of reason. For if, phenomena are things in themselves, freedom is impossible.

In this case, nature is the complete and all-sufficient cause of every event; and condition and conditioned, cause and effect, are contained in the same series, and necessitated by the same law. If, on the contrary, phenomena are held to be, as they are in fact, nothing more than mere representations, connected with each other in accordance with empirical laws, they must have a ground which is *not* phenomena. But the causality of such an intelligible cause is not determined or determinable by phenomena; although its effects, as phenomena, must be determined by other phenomenal existences. This cause and its causality exist therefore out of and apart from the series of phenomena; while its effects do exist and are discoverable in the series of empirical conditions. Such an effect may therefore be considered to be free in relation to its intelligible<sup>1</sup> cause, and necessary in relation to the phenomena from which it is a necessary consequence — a distinction which, stated in this perfectly general and abstract manner, must appear in the highest degree subtle and obscure. The sequel will explain. It is sufficient, at present, to remark that, as the complete and unbroken connection of phenomena is an unalterable law of nature, freedom is impossible — on the supposition that phenomena are absolutely real. Hence those philosophers who adhere to the common opinion on this subject can never succeed in reconciling the ideas of nature and freedom.

#### **Possibility of Freedom in harmony with the Universal Law of Natural Necessity**

That element in a sensuous object which is not itself sensuous, I may be allowed to term *intelligible*. If, accordingly, an object which must be regarded as a sensuous phenomenon possesses a faculty

<sup>1</sup> Intelligible: (in metaphysical systems such as those of Plato or Kant) denoting that metaphysical realm which is accessible to the intellect as opposed to the world of mere phenomena accessible to the senses.  
<http://www.wordreference.com/english/definition.a.sp?en=intelligible>

which is not an object of sensuous intuition, but by means of which it is capable of being the cause of phenomena, the *causality* of an object or existence of this kind may be regarded from two different points of view. It may be considered to be *intelligible*, as regards its *action* — the action of a thing which is a thing in itself, and *sensuous*, as regards its effects — the effects of a phenomenon belonging to the sensuous world.<sup>1</sup> We should, accordingly, have to form both an empirical and an intellectual conception of the causality of such a faculty or power — both, however, having reference to the same effect. This two-fold manner of cogitating a power residing in a sensuous object does not run counter to any of the conceptions, which we ought to form of the world of phenomena or of a possible experience. Phenomena — not being things in themselves — must have a transcendental object as a foundation, which determines them as mere representations; and there seems to be no reason why we should not ascribe to this transcendental object, in addition to the property of self-phenomenization, a *causality* whose effects are to be met with in the world of phenomena, although it is not itself a phenomenon. But every effective cause must possess a *character*, that is to say, a law of its causality, without which it would cease to be a cause. In the above case, then, every sensuous object would possess an *empirical* character, which guaranteed that its actions, as phenomena, stand in complete and harmonious connection, conformably to unvarying natural laws, with all other phenomena, and can be deduced from these, as conditions, and that they do thus, in connection with these, constitutes a series in the order of nature. This sensuous object must, in the second place, possess an *intelligible* character, which guarantees it to be the cause of those actions, as phenomena, although it is not itself a phenomenon nor

subordinate to the conditions of the world of sense. The former may be termed the character of the thing as a phenomenon, the latter the character of the thing as a thing in itself.

Now this active subject would, in its character of intelligible subject, be subordinate to no conditions of time, for time is only a condition of phenomena, and not of things in themselves. No *action* would *begin* or *cease* to be in this subject; it would consequently be free from the law of all determination of time — the law of change, namely, that everything *which happens* must have a cause in the phenomena of a preceding state. In one word, the causality of the subject, in so far as it is *intelligible*, would not form part of the series of empirical conditions which determine and necessitate an event in the world of sense. Again this intelligible character of a thing cannot be immediately cognized, because we can perceive nothing but phenomena, but it must be capable of being cogitated in harmony with the empirical character; for we always find ourselves compelled to place in thought, a transcendental object at the basis of phenomena, although we can never know what this object is in itself.

In virtue of its empirical character, this subject would at the same time be subordinate to all the empirical laws of causality, and, as a phenomenon and member of the sensuous world, its effects would have to be accounted for by a reference to preceding phenomena. External phenomena must be capable of influencing it; and its actions, in accordance with natural laws, must explain to us how its empirical character, that is, the law of its causality, is to be cognized in and by means of experience. In a word, all requisites for a complete and necessary determination of these actions must be presented to us by experience,

<sup>1</sup> Kant here clearly separates the world of *Maya* from the world of *Noumena*. — Ed., A. T.

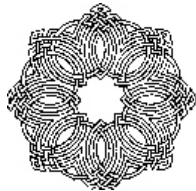
In virtue of its intelligible character, on the other hand, (although we possess only a general conception of this character), the subject must be regarded as free from alle sensuous influences, and from all phenomenal determination, Moreover, as nothing happens in this subject — for it is a *noumenon*, and there does not consequently exist in it any change, demanding the dynamical determination of time, and for the same reason no connection with phenomena as causes — this active existence must in its actions be free from and independent of natural necessity, for this necessity exists only in the world of phenomena. It would be quite correct to say, that it originates or begins its effects in the world of sense *from itself*, although the action productive of these effects does not begin *in itself*. We should not be in this case affirming that these sensuous effects began to exist of themselves, because they are always determined by prior empirical conditions — by virtue of the empirical character, which is the phenomenon of the intelligible character — and are possible only as constituting a continuation of the series of natural causes. And thus nature and freedom, each in the complete and absolute signification of these terms, can exist, without contradiction, or disagreement, in the same action.

IMMANUEL KANT

*Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 299-304

J.M.D. Meiklejohn translation,

1900 edition of Wiley Book Company, NY



## Guest Editorial

### SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

To understand in a practical way the problem of spiritual evolution we must understand that in the: philosophy of Theosophy spirit and matter are neither

different nor opposing, forces but are the same thing from different viewpoints. Looked at from the point of view of matter, spirit appears as matter; from the point of view of spirit, matter appears as spirit. Neither can exist without the other, neither can work without the other.

Spiritual evolution therefore: means the evolution of matter from the point of view of spirit, it is not evolution of the spirit but of spirit-matter from the point of view of spirit. Material evolution is evolution of spirit-matter from the point of view of matter. If we understand this we see that there is no real difference between the true scientist and the true philosopher; they are approaching the same thing from different angles.

If we apply this to ourselves, we ask: Are human beings spiritual or material? And we find that they are both. From one point of view our body is composed of atoms, molecules, cells, organisms, etc.; from another point of view it is composed of living intelligences of different degrees of perception, possessing different capacities of expression.

We are not bodies. We are composed of thoughts and desires, and they produce actions. But there is something else in us that helps decide what thoughts are right, what desires are good, what actions are correct. It is the *voice of conscience* and for many of us this is the supreme judge of what is right or wrong. We find out, however, that there are times when it does not speak correctly to us, and that it changes from time to time. It evolves. Yet it is higher and more compelling than the words that come from any teacher, priest, prophet or sacred book, for it is the voice of our own accumulated experiences of the past which have been assimilated by us. Sometimes we use the word “intuition” as if it pertained necessarily to the voice of conscience but this is not always correct.



The voice of conscience tells us when our actions are not charitable, but it may not always speak the full truth, for it is only our own accumulated experiences speaking, but its voice with reference to actions is that they should be charitable. With regard to our feelings it tells us that they are often inharmonious and they ought to be harmonious. Harmony is therefore the keynote of right feelings. Usually we are suffering from cold or heat, popularity or unpopularity, joy or depression, and there is in us a lack of rhythm and harmony. When the voice of conscience reminds us to make our feelings harmonious, we find that our actions become charitable. With regard to our thoughts it tells us: "Your thoughts are hurried and impatient and this disturbs you." The energy and force of impatience affects our thoughts, so that the keynote of right thought is patience.

It is with these three that the voice of our conscience deals and we identify ourselves with this voice.

Behind the voice of conscience however, there is something else: a being or an entity, something that speaks in a language different from that of the voice of conscience, although it speaks **through** that voice. The voice of conscience, having been created by our accumulated experiences from our actions, desires and thoughts of the far past, can advise us as to our, present thoughts, desires and actions. Attention to it enables us now and then, at rare intervals, to hear that other "still small voice" of the god within which speaks with even greater authority. Though, while it speaks, things may not be clear to us and its message once delivered leaves us somewhat confused, its urge is so tremendous that we act in accordance with it.

This still small voice has three aspects, three definite ways of speaking to the accumulated experiences of our lower nature:

- a. By the light of reason;
- b. Through intuition;
- c. Through the will.

Reason, in the Platonic sense, can regulate and control our thoughts in the light of our accumulated experience. When Reason and Intuition begin to work together, there comes into existence that higher kind of action which is creative, which is **will action**. These three great lights — reason, intuition, and will — illumine the field of conscience.

To act by will through the two channels of intuition and reason; three qualities are necessary, three qualities which make actions charitable, emotions harmonious, thoughts patient.

The dominant virtue or characteristic of reason is *Energy*. The soaring energy of reason breaks the fetters of mortality, making time and space irrelevant in *one area of our life*. There is a kind of rolling, enduring *movement* of the mind that destroys the material limitations of time and space and transforms all other energies. This mysterious energy of reason makes us realize the immortality of other beings and ourselves.

Heart knowledge gives birth to intuition. It is to the mind what the sun is to the candle. But the knot in the heart is no simple matter of solution, but all of us can make a start. Intuition is the faculty of expressing heart knowledge, and illumines the whole subject in one flash. Reason grows like a giant Sequoia, but intuition arrives like a hologram — complete. Just as Reason cannot grow in the snares of Impatience, so Intuition cannot dwell in a heart full of discord.

That quality in us which we call **will** is often not real will, but obstinacy. Real will is creative. It creates harmony, concord

and unity which are the outer marks of right action. It is the golden fire at the core of intuition. When the active will of the spirit begins to operate, all our actions become charitable, and, in retrospect, look much like “sacrifice.” The rolling stream of movement becomes a “sacred” stream with no “we’s and they’s, or thou’s and mine. Intuition tinged by will destroys the pairs of opposites in reference to feelings, all rights and wrongs, pleasures and pains, correct and incorrect things vanish and resolve themselves into a unity. Only the blissful aspect of rhythm exists. When the *energy* of reason is active, all our thought processes — through their patience — become pure and compassionate. Creative will is the pristine power of the soul who always creates, living by creative activity.

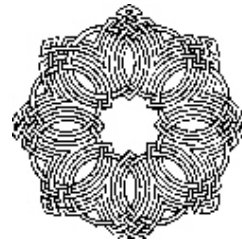
The stumbling block in us, is an oversimplified view of the voice of conscience. Seeing it as a “Don’t do this, Don’t do that” phenomenon based on our past experiences, is too narrow a view. Should we not ask, “Is it passionate or dis-passionate”? In a context of Unity, choosing sides will not land us on the sunny side of the street. The article, “Is Denunciation a Duty,” spells this out for those of us who hope to grow wings some day. *The Secret Doctrine* has this to say of Conscience:

In Esoteric parlance, they are called *Chitkala*, some of which are those who have furnished man with his fourth and fifth Principles from their own essence; and others the *Pitris* so-called. ... The root of the name is *Chiti*, “that by which the effects and consequences of actions and kinds of knowledge are selected for the use of the soul,” or conscience the *inner* Voice in man. (S.D.I, 288fn)

When the prompting is dispassionate and unentangled, it will reflect the threefold phases of the soul.

If we think of Charity for action, harmony for emotion, and patience for thought these are three powers that can set our house in order. Then we might think of dispassion for the voice of conscience, energy for reason, heart knowledge for intuition, and will for creative activity. These are the great Paramitas, the seven virtues, the seven aspects or stages of the spiritual path. These Keys are all within us. None of them are outside. They are all within our power, for the longest journey begins with the initial step.

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A human being is part of a whole, called by us the “universe,” a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few people near us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

— ALBERT EINSTEIN