

VOLUME IX

THE LIGHT OF LUXOR

THEOSOPHY, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICS



INDEPENDENT THEOSOPHICAL MAGAZINE





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MOVEMENTS AND
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Theosophy

We often speak of Theosophy as not in itself a religion, but the truth, which lies behind all religions alike. That is so; yet, from another point of view, we may surely say that it is at once a philosophy, a religion and a science.

C.W. Leadbeater

The Society

“The Theosophical Society was organized for the purpose of promulgating the Theosophical doctrines, and for the promotion of the Theosophic life. The present Theosophical Society is not the first of its kind.”

H. P. Blavatsky

Its Objects

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the latent in man.

In extinct religions the same idea of a Trinity is found. In Egypt it dominated all religious worship. “We have a hieroglyphical inscription in the British Museum as early as the reign of Senechus of the eighth century before the Christian era, showing that the doctrine of Trinity in Unity already formed part of their religion”. [S. Sharpe. Egyptian Mythology and Egyptian Christology, p. 14.] This is true of a far earlier date. Râ, Osiris, and Horus formed one widely worshipped Trinity; Osiris, Isis, and Horus were worshipped at Abydos; other names are given in different cities, and the triangle is the frequently used symbol of the Triune God. The idea which underlay these Trinities owever named, is shown in a passage quoted from Marutho, in which an oracle, rebuking the pride of Alexander the Great, speaks of: “First God, then the Word, and with Them the Spirit”.

[See Williamson’s The Great Law, p. 196.]

Annie Besant - Esoteric Christianity

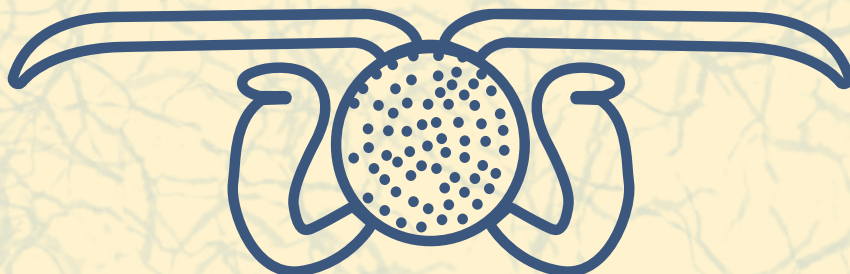


EDITORS NOTE

It has been more than a year since the last volume of The Light of Luxor eMagazine. This new volume looks at a very different topic touched by some theosophists. Considering that world and local politics affect us all in different ways, I thought it pertinent to share some articles written by different theosophists on topics of socialism and political topics in general. The first essay was written by the editor, and it provides a brief account of the influence the Theosophical society has had in the realm of politics and social movements. Two articles by Annie Besant are republished, one was a speech on the topic of Indian politics, and the second article is titled The Future of Socialism. Annie Besant having been a suffragette and a union leader before joining the Theosophical society had definite views on the topic of socialism. Her involvement in the Indian Independence movement make the speech India's Awakening interesting and important to read as it would give an insight into her work in politics and her love for India. Brailsford Bright Theosophy and Modern Socialism are cited in different non theosophical research papers and books; therefore, it is important to reprint this work. Lastly a leaflet published by The Theosophical Order of Service is reprinted, the leaflet titled: The Theosophical Society and The United Nations, A history of support. The last article in this volume was written by Anna F. Lemkow, titled Karmic Process in World Affairs. Written in 1991 for The Theosophist, this paper gives a sense that it was written recently.

Although I did not reprint any of his papers in this volume, as a recommendation for anyone interested in the topic of Theosophy and Socialism, Rohit Mehta wrote a book titled on Theosophy and Socialism. It was written in 1937 with a foreword by N Sri Ram. Rohit Mehta was and educator and an activist during the Indian Independence Movement.

Julian Ochoa Sanchez



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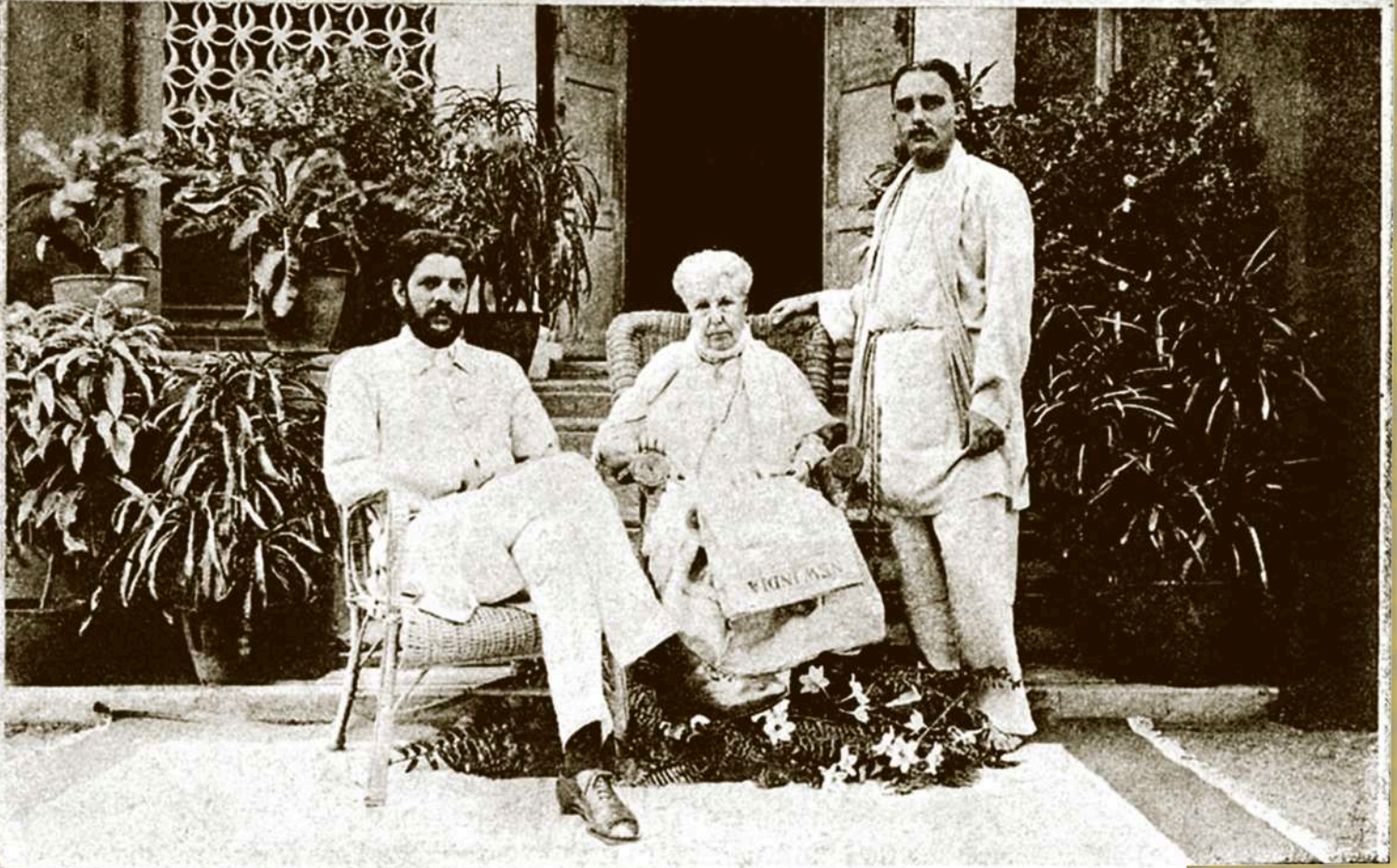
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FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE.



B. P. WADIA. ANNIE BESANT. G. S. ARÜNDALE.
INTERNED JUNE 16. 1917

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICS

BY JULIAN OCHOA SANCHEZ



The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875, and it has been known since then as a society that promotes the ancient wisdom and oriental tenets such as karma and reincarnation. Since its foundation the Theosophical Society has influenced all sorts of movements most particularly the new age movement; many esoteric groups have emerged using theosophical ideas and have gone beyond to create their own movements. The society has influenced painters, poets, actors and people in general. Its timeless teachings have left a wide legacy that has shed light in many aspects of society. One stream in which The Theosophical society has also had an influence be it subtle, direct or indirect has been in the socio - political arena.

It can be said that if there is any influence the Theosophical Society and its ideas have had in any political discourse or social movements across the globe can be traced back to the first object of the Theosophical Society: *“To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.”* This object alone indicates that the society is a Brotherhood open to all, something which was pioneering in the late 19th century. The Theosophical Society was founded in New York in 1875 ten years after the American Abolition of Slavery in 1865. Even though slavery was abolished in the 1860s discrimination in the United States Continued to be an issue that was only partially resolved in the 1960s with the civil rights movement. Nevertheless, in the present Universal Brotherhood is still

something that humanity is still far from attaining, therefore, the first object of the Theosophical Society is still relevant across the globe.

Even though the Theosophical society as an institution is politically neutral this has not stopped individual members from taking up different causes for the betterment of humanity. In 1883 Colonel Olcott was strong on the concept of TS neutrality in regard to politics by stating the following in an official letter to members:

“I would not have reverted to so stale a topic if I had not been forced to do so by recent events. — I am informed that in Upper India, some unwise members of the Society have been talking about the political questions of the hour, as though authorised to speak for our organization itself, or at least to give to this or that view of current agitations the imprimatur of its approval or disapproval...”

That our members, and others whom it interests, may make no mistake as to the Society’s attitude as regards Politics, I take this occasion to say that our Rules, and traditional policy alike, prohibit every officer and fellow of the Society, as such, to meddle with political questions in the slightest degree, and to compromise the Society by saying that it has, as such, any opinion upon those or any other questions.

The Presidents of Branches in all countries will be good enough to read this protest to their members, and in every instance when initiating a candidate to give him to

understand — as I invariably do — the fact of our corporate neutrality.

So convinced am I that the perpetuity of our Society — at least in countries under despotic or any degree arbitrary Governments — depends upon our keeping closely to our legitimate province, and leaving Politics “severely alone,” I shall use the full power permitted me as President-Founder to suspend or expel every member, or even discipline or discharter any Branch which shall, by offending in this respect; imperil the work now so prosperously going on in various parts of the world.”¹

In 1882 the Theosophical Society established its headquarters in Chennai, known then as Madras, the capital city of Tamil Nadu in India.² At this time India was part of the British Empire and many great thinkers in India joined the Society, many of whom became inspired by the Society and its objects to join in a national movement for independence in India that would later be called The India National Congress.³ Josephine Ransom states the following about the Society and its influence in India:

“It is admitted that The Theosophical Movement in India was the forerunner of the more recent political movement symbolised in the National congress, and that Theosophy sowed the seeds of a rapid nationalisation.”⁴

Theosophist A.O. Hume participated in the foundation of the Indian National Congress; he also became its General Secretary from 1884-1891. The National Congress Party became a main player in the Indian movement towards independence from the British Empire.⁵

In 1907 the new international president of the Theosophical Society was a former British suffragette and union leader, Annie

Besant, who had joined the Society in 1889 and became so active that she represented the Theosophical Society in the first parliament of religions in Chicago in 1893. From her previous work as a social leader, she had excellent communication skills which she used during her presidency of the TS and in her political activities in India.⁶ Annie Besant maintained her political connections from Ireland, many of whom joined the Indian National Congress and later moved to India to join Annie Besant. In 1915 Besant launched a nationalist magazine called *New India*.⁷ Besant lectured and wrote extensively on topics regarding India's path to independence from Britain via self-governance. Initially she proposed a *Home Rule*, autonomous self-governance under British rule using Ireland as an example.⁸ At this time the Indian National Congress was moderate and did not have a strong stance against the British, in 1916 Besant decided to create a new organisation more militant that would allow moderates, extremists and the general population to band together for a home rule under the *All-India Home Rule League*.

Besant and her comrades travelled across India organising people and recruiting them into their cause.⁹ In 1917 political tensions were so high in India; Annie Besant's movement was effective to the point that the British Raj decided to put her under house arrest from where she continued to organise the movement. Her home arrest made all the nationalist leaders to rally around her and it provoked anger among the people against the British. After her release from house arrest, in December 1917 Annie Besant was made president of the Indian National Congress.¹⁰ By 1919 due to legal changes made by the British Raj that gave the British extra powers to deal with the revolutionaries and nationalists. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi took over the nationalist movement, there was a need to

¹ The Theosophical society In Australia, (2026), “Neutrality in the Theosophical society,” <https://theosophicalsociety.org.au/statics/neutrality-in-the-ts> (1940).

² Ransom, J. (2007), “A Short History of The Theosophical Society,” TPH Adyar, Chennai India. Pg: 171.

³ Ibid, pg.207-8.

⁴ Ibid. pg. 208.

⁵ Ibid, pg: 207-8.

⁶ TS Adyar, (2024), “Annie Besant 1847-1933,” <https://www.ts-adyar.org/annie-besant-1847-1933> (2026).

⁷ Boissiere, P.M., (2017), “Annie Besant (1847-1933) Struggles and Quest,” Theosophical Publishing House London, pg: 279.

⁸ Ibid. pg: 282.

⁹ Ibid. pg:287-88.

¹⁰ Ibid. pg: 290-292.

take bolder actions against the British Raj and Gandhi was seen as the leader that would take the necessary steps to free India from British rule.¹¹ Gandhi knew of Besant and the Theosophical Society from when he was in England where he was temporarily an associate member.¹² Although Annie Besant did not live to witness the Indian independence on the 15th of August 1945, she was never forgotten in India. In 1928 Gandhi said the following of Annie Besant:

“Cultivate the great qualities of Dr. Besant, namely, firmness simplicity, self-control, etc. She is one of the greatest orators of the world, because she speaks what she believes and acts according to what she speaks... She has courage of her convictions and always puts her words into action. Imitate her unflinching determination and simplicity of life... Obtain the same strength and indomitable will that possesses which alone will bring Swaraj. India is not fit for Swaraj without these qualities. Remove India’s chain and then alone will we achieve our goal. Religion is interwoven in Dr. Besant’s life, and she has built a bridge between politics and religion. Swaraj without religion is of no use. It is Dr. Besant who has awakened India from her deep slumber, and I pray that she may live long to witness a free India.”¹³

In another sector of Indian Society The first Labour Union of India was founded in 1918 and it was The Madras Labour Union, which was founded by Theosophist and member of the Home Rule Movement B.P. Waidia. At this time many Indians worked in precarious conditions, the creation of the Madras Labour Union inspired workers to organise and form other unions across India. After several legal struggles the Trade union act was passed in 1926 which further strengthened the union movement in India.¹⁴

¹¹ Ibid. pg: 295.

¹² Theosophy wiki, (2026), “Mohandas K. Gandhi,” https://theosophy.wiki/en/Mohandas_K._Gandhi .

¹³ Agarwal, C.V. & Oliveira, P. (2021), “Annie Besant in India,” Olive Tree Publishing, pg: 430.

¹⁴ Times of India, (2022), “Trade Unionism in India,” <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/lawpedia/trade-unionism-in-india-46867/> (2026).

The Theosophical Society also played an important role in influencing the Nationalist movement in Indonesia. Theosophy entered Indonesia 8 years after its founding in New York with a Dutch officer in 1882. The Society took root in Indonesia in the early 1900s influencing colonialists and locals through its study of the different religions and philosophies. Religious pluralism in Indonesia was influenced by Theosophy. Like in India the Theosophical Society also influenced the nationalist movement of Indonesia. However, the TS influence in Indonesia was mainly within the Indonesian elites, the TS gave Indonesians a platform where to study their own rich and diverse culture, impulsing among Indonesians national pride.¹⁵

Influenced by the Theosophical society many non-governmental organisations and schools were created in Indonesia in the early 1900s with the aim of fomenting national pride among the local Indonesians which were under colonial rule from the Dutch Empire.¹⁶

The most prominent Indonesian political figure of the decolonisation period was Koesno Sosrodihardjo, also known as Sukarno. In 1945 he became president of Indonesia and was the leading figure against the war against the Dutch Attempt to recolonise Indonesia after it had lost the archipelago to the Japanese Empire during WWII.¹⁷ Sukarno's father was a long-term member of the Theosophical society and he inculcated theosophical principles and ideals of religious pluralism to Sukarno. This Theosophical influence was reflected in the religious tolerance Indonesia put into practice across the country under Sukarno.¹⁸ However, as a political strategy Sukarno banned the society as the Theosophical society was western in origin and

¹⁵ Bahri, M.Z., (2017), “Indonesian Theosophical Society (1900-40) and the Idea of Religious Pluralism,” Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 6, No. 1, Kyoto University pg: 141.

¹⁶ Ibid, pg:142-144.

¹⁷ Deasy, R.M., Joebagio, H. & Susanto, (2020), “Romantica of Theosophy in Indonesian History,” International Journal of Education and Social Science Research, Vol 3, No. 01, pg: 120.

¹⁸ Muslim, F. A., Rochwulaningsih, Y. & Sudarsih, S., (2025), “Genealogy of Soekarno’s syncretic-eclectic thought: the intersection of culture values, religion and ideology (1916-1920), pg: 166-67.

was not seen politically favourable in a country that had just liberated itself from western colonialism.¹⁹

After World War II the United Nations was formed in 1945. In 1947 the Theosophical Society was invited to participate in a forum of international organisations. James Perkins was the TS delegate.²⁰

In 1956 the XIV Dalai Lama visited the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar, India. At that time, he was accompanied by the Panchen Lama, they met the president of the Theosophical Society. In 1959 the Dalai Lama went into exile, he visited the TS headquarters again to give a lecture. Although the TS has always remained neutral in the topic of Tibet and China, its sympathy and support for the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people is strong, as many TS members have been Buddhists and Buddhism has been an important religion in the study of Theosophy.²¹

In 1917 Annie Besant, along with W.P. Waida and others founded the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS), The purpose of the order is as its motto says: *“A union of those who love in the service of all that suffers,” its first objective was: “To work in the cause of educational, social, political and religious reform.”*²² In the present the TOS is a worldwide organisation and its activities vary from country to country. For example, in Australia, the TOS has focused on collecting money for different charitable causes. Including collecting money for the Olcott School in Adyar and the animal dispensary.

Geoffrey Hodson a prominent member of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand in 1943 he founded the New Zealand Vegetarian Society becoming its first president,

Hodson also founded other welfare organisations in New Zealand.²³

In more recent times the late international president of the Theosophical Society Radha Burnier was president of the TOS and was an active leader in assisting those that suffered in the 2004 Tsunami that affected Chennai. Burnier also became President of the Environmental Society in Chennai.²⁴

In 2007 The current International President was president of the TOS in America, the following is from the TS Adyar official website:

*“Tim’s involvement with the Theosophical Order of Service and the Chushul orphanage in Tibet led to an audience with the Dalai Lama, which resulted in the TS in America sponsoring his visit to Chicago in July of 2011 — a two-day event attended by 10,000 people. The event raised \$400,000, all of which was donated to educational projects aiding Tibetan communities worldwide.”*²⁵

To conclude it can be said that even though the Theosophical Society is not a political institution, from the fringes of the cultural milieu of the countries where it has active lodges specially India and Indonesia it had a significant influence in their independence movements. The first object of the society of brotherhood inspired many in India to take part in the Indian independence movement. In Indonesia religious pluralism was taken up by the Indonesian Nationalists as part of their movement to become independent from the Dutch Empire. The TS has inspired the formation of non-governmental organisations such as the Theosophical Order of Service and other civil society organisations that help the poor and the working classes in developing countries. Animal welfare organisations have also been formed with the intention of service to all living creatures. The Society remains neutral to politics but since its foundation its members have taken different causes in the service to humanity.

¹⁹ Deasy, R.M., Joebagio, H. & Susanto, (2020), “Romantica of Theosophy in Indonesian History,” International Journal of Education and Social Science Research, Vol 3, No. 01, pg: 120.

²⁰ Theosophy Wiki, (2026), “United Nations,” https://theosophy.wiki/en/United_Nations#cite_note-9.

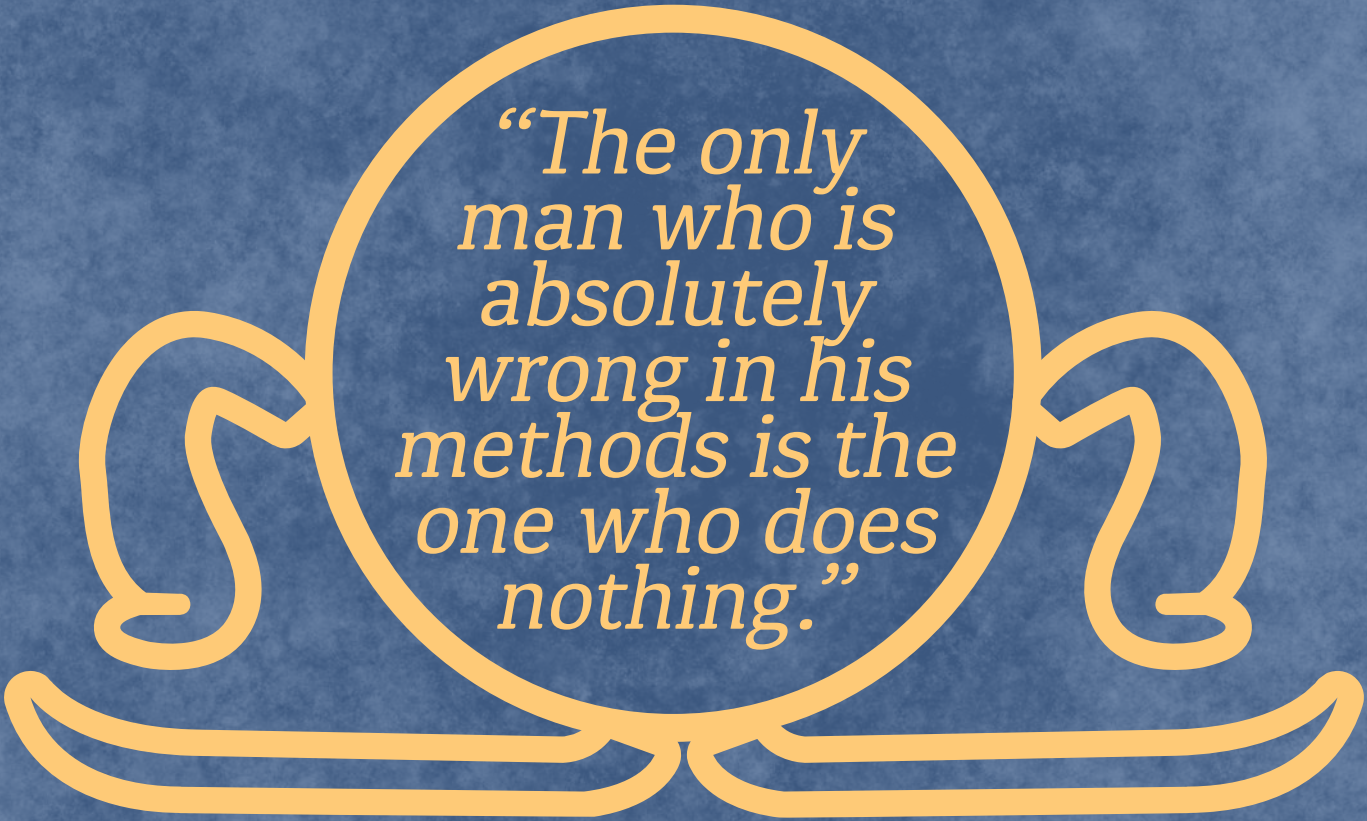
²¹ Theosophy Wiki, (2026), “Tenzin Gyatso, the XIV Dalai Lama,” https://www.theosophy.wiki/en/Tenzin_Gyatso,_the_XIV_Dalai_Lama.

²² Theosophy Wiki, (2026), “Theosophical Order of Service,” https://www.theosophy.wiki/en/Theosophical_Order_of_Service.

²³ NZ Vegetarian Society, (2026), “History,” <https://www.vegetarian.org.nz/about/history>.

²⁴ TS Adyar, (2024), “Radha S. Burnier,” <https://www.ts-adyar.org/radha-s-burnier-1923-2013> (2026).

²⁵ TS Adyar, (2024), “Tim Boyd,” <https://www.ts-adyar.org/tim-boyd> (2026).



*“The only
man who is
absolutely
wrong in his
methods is the
one who does
nothing.”*

H.P. Blavatsky

INDIA'S AWAKENING

BY ANNIE BESANT

(Delivered in 1910)



Brothers:

For many long years past I have urged on you, and on those like you in all parts of India, the necessity of a spiritual awakening before the awakening of a material prosperity became possible. You know that during many years past, since the Theosophical Society was founded on these shores, the importance of religion, the necessity of spiritual knowledge, has been constantly insisted upon, has been constantly urged; and in doing this, those who brought the renewal of the message were only treading in the footsteps of their far-off predecessors, who have ever declared that from the Spirit come forth all things that exist, and that without the life of the Spirit not even animal, vegetable or mineral life were possible. That profound truth in the ancient philosophy of India is the only foundation for progress of every kind. One Spirit, and one only one Life and none other; every form from the one living Essence, every being rooted in the everlasting One. In the past, I have sometimes traced for you, the steps of India's descent; how from the time of her great spirituality, when the life of the Spirit was seen as the sun in the Heavens, how from that time downwards, with the decay of spirituality, went also the decay of the desirable things. And I remember how often I have pressed upon you how first there came the lessening of the spiritual life, then the decay of the original side of intellectual thought, of the creative intelligence, and only when those had gone far down into the twilight, came the slow decay of ma-

terial prosperity. You may remember that I have put it to you that the awakening, the reviving, of Indian life must follow the order in which the descent had gone.

First of all, the reviving of true spirituality, of true religion, of the vital understanding of the profoundest truths of all existence; then, after that had made its way to an appreciable extent, must come the training, the culture, the guidance of the intelligence, so that a wisely planned and wisely guided education might train the future workers of the land. I remember saying to you that when the spiritual life has again become potent, when the educational life has again become pervasive, then only can material prosperity safely return. To men with the knowledge of the One, with the unselfishness which grows out of the realisation of the common life, to their hands only can be safely entrusted the material guidance of the people. It is along that line that Indian progress has gone for many a year past.

First, the great revival of religion. It began with the revival of Buddhism in the Island of Ceylon, where, as you may remember, education swiftly followed after the re-awakened faith. Then came the great revival of Hinduism that has spread from one end of the land to the other, from the Himalayas to Tuticorin, and everywhere is recognised as a fact. Then followed the recognition that in a rightly directed education lay the only way of training for the motherland citizens who would be worthy of her past and therefore capable of build-

ing her future; out of that will, arise all the varied activities of a full and rich national life, and we shall see the nation, which India never yet has been, but which India shall be in the days that are dawning.

Now the change to the material awakening has come somewhat more swiftly than most of us expected. I should say it has come a little too soon, were it not that I believe that over the destinies of nations the hands that guide are so wise and so loving that nothing can really come either too soon or too late. But, to our eyes, looking with purblind vision, we should sometimes be almost inclined to say that events are travelling in India a little more rapidly than is well. For we need for the wise guiding of a material movement, men trained from boyhood in religion and in true wisdom, so that the brain may be balanced and calm, the hands strong and steady; for the moment you touch the popular mind and the popular heart you awaken forces that are apt to go beyond the control of wisdom, and it needs a nucleus of wise and steady thinkers in order that a popular movement may find its way aright.

Let us, then, at this moment of immense importance to India's future, consider what ought to be the line most wisely to be followed in the great rush which is coming upon us. I pause a moment on the sentence just uttered, of the hands that guide, and the wisdom and the love which shape a nation's destinies. It is no new thought to you, who have grown up in the atmosphere in which the celestial and the physical worlds are mingling—it is no new thought to you that the Devas, the Shining Ones, mingle in the affairs of men. Nor should it be a new thought to you—although to many it may now seem strange—that every nation also has its own Devas who guide its affairs, who shape its present and its future.

Let me then remind you that in the vast unseen hierarchy who mingle in human affairs, there are Devas of many grades, as well as the great Rishis who are the planners and regulators of events. First of all, there is the plan of the Lord Himself; of Ishvara, the Ruler of the system, who sketches, in the dawn of the creative days, the plan of evolution along which His uni-

verse shall go. Out of the innumerable conceivable in the mind of the Supreme, some are chosen by the Ishvara, who builds a system, as the material for His system, and woven into the plan for His unfolding. No pen, save that of His finger, writes that wondrous drama, which slowly is unfolded in the history of the evolving universe, written so that none may change, written so that none may amend, written by a wisdom inconceivable to us, and by a love of which the deepest love of the human heart is but the faintest and most shadowy reflection.

Then the working out of that plan is given into the hands of those whom we may call His ministers, the great Ones who come into the system, from systems long gone by, to co-operate with Him in the shaping of a new humanity; into their hands His plan is given, and theirs the brains of wisdom and the hands of strength that bring that plan into the details that we call history. They plan out the working and give to every nation the acting of a part in that great plan; to the Deva who rules the nation, and who has under his control a hierarchy of lesser Deva's, that part is given to be worked out in the history of the people. Now the plan is for all humanity, and not for one nation only, and each nation, in turn, has its part to play; each nation, in turn, is cast either for the moment's weal or the moment's woe; and those only can read aright the history of humanity, who know the powers that work behind the veil ; for you cannot manage a household unless you know the will of the householder, and before you can realise the wisdom of household guidance, you must know the wants of the children and of the other members of the house. So in the history of peoples you cannot judge by the Statesmen, the Generals, the Admirals, and the Monarchs, who all work out the various tasks that are given them to do.

You must look behind them to those who guide, to the great Householder, the supreme Grihastha of the system. When we come to India, we know that all this is true of India and of India's Deva-King, who stands high above the nation and work-sout, millennium after millennium, the parts which are given to him for his nation to play in the world's history; these parts

have outlined the nation's story through all the difficulties, the dangers, the humiliations of the past. On that I may not dwell long now. Partly tomorrow morning, in speaking of Kurukshetra. I shall have to explain the "how" and the "why" of the difficulties through which India has passed. For the moment I leave them untouched, to turn to that which immediately concerns us now, to the present and its working. First of all, in order that India might again take her place amongst the nations of the world, mightier even than in the past—a glorious past—there came the spiritual messengers, the messengers who were to revive the varied religions of the land. That has been done to a great extent as regards Hinduism and Buddhism. But you must remember that the other religions must also have, and to some extent have had, each in its own place, the advantage of the same spiritual and enlivening influence. Look at the community called Zoroastrian, and see how it has, of late years, become spiritualising in its tendencies instead of materialising as in the past. The great faith of Islam is the one which only shows in a very limited measure the enlivening influence of the new spiritual impulse, yet there also the same working is beginning, and there also there are signs of the spreading of the same influence, so that Islam also shall take her place, spiritually alive and spiritually potent, to bear her part in the re-shaping of India as she is to be. That work is not finished, in fact never will be finished; it is rather ever continuing, but all the first great steps— are taken and success in that is assured.

Passing to education, there an immense amount has been done and far more has yet to be done, as I shall show to you in a few moments. We have only begun the very A B C of the educational reform which is necessary in order to make India what she should be. Now when a nation does not move sufficiently swiftly along the path of progress, when she does not rouse herself enough to the voice that appeals, that warns, and that counsels, then the Deva of the nation takes other means in hand, in order to awaken his people and make them see along what lines their path should be trodden. And these other means used by

the Deva are goads. They are like the whip that touches the horse when he is too lazy, and what you look on as national misfortunes, as things that you even cry out against with insistence and with passion, these are very often, rightly seen, the goads which make a nation move a little faster towards the goal on which the Deva's eyes are fixed. This is especially true just now, and will serve my purpose well as an illustration with regard to education. Education is a matter that belongs to the nation when rightly understood. Fathers and guardians are the people who ought to fashion the national education. How long have I been urging upon you to take this matter of education into your own hands, and not leave it for others to guide and plan. How long, in my travels up and down through the country, have I urged upon you the importance of this question of national education. I remember how, about three years ago, when I spoke in Bombay, I urged on every man and on every woman, mother and father, that on them lay the heavy responsibility of the education and the training of the child. I remember how there I urged upon you that your own interests, if nothing else, should stir you to the guidance of your children's education; for you do not want to continue to overcrowd, as you are doing, the ranks of the so-called learned professions and the ranks of the Government service. Those are not things which make nations great, however necessary they may be, and however necessary they are, for the mechanism and administration of the nation. The things that make a nation great, from the material standpoint, are not the learned professions and Government service, but scientific agriculture, well-devised manufactures, thoughtfully planned arts and crafts, and the innumerable forms of workmanship that go to the building up of national wealth. But along the lines on which education has been carried on, this has been left on one side, mind you, the blame for that does not lie on the Government; it lies on the people. It is useless and idle to blame Government, when you are the people who can do it, if you have the heart, the will, and the perseverance. Out of your pocket comes every rupee that the Government spends on education. Out of your pocket come the far too few rupees that

build the Colleges and Schools, save the Missionary Establishments. If, instead of sending your boys to Government Colleges and Missionary' Schools, you built your own schools, and had your own teachers, you might guide education exactly as you would. It is not that there is not money enough in the country. I know it is said that India is poor; so she is, in a sense, poor, that is, as regards the masses of her people. But not too poor to build Colleges and Schools for your children while you are able to maintain, as you are doing, large crowds of men as mendicants, in the full strength of vigorous life, who are innocent of all sacred learning, innocent of the light, who have nothing of the Sannyasi but the cloth that covers them, and who are yet fed and sheltered by the crore. India is not poor so long as your Chetties and Bantias can give lakhs upon lakhs of rupees for the restoration of ancient temples and the gilding of their pinnacles. You do not need to increase your charities, that is not wanted; but oh! if you would only turn them into channels that fertilise instead of channels that corrupt, India would have wealth enough to educate her sons and daughters, and to make possible a new life in the future.

I do not speak against the restoration of temples. That is well. It is well that man should worship, rightly, nobly and rationally. I do not speak against the restoration of temples, but I do speak against the mere restoration that leaves the priesthood ignorant and profligate. I do speak against the restoration of a temple where no school lives under its shadow, and where children are not taught by those whose duty it is to teach—less gilding on the pinnacles of temples, and more gilding of learning in the hearts of boys and girls. And if you would still keep your temples in order, but spend some of the money that is wasted on vast crowds of idle mendicants on the education of your children how rapidly would India rise in the scale of nations, and how quickly she would claim her right place among the peoples of the world.

And that is your work. Last year in speaking on "Theosophy in relation to Politics," I urged upon you the formation of Educational Boards in every district of India. Now Government has nothing to do with

that. You do not need to ask for Government permission or authority. You have only to gather a few of your cleverest men and Princes together and make them into an Educational Board, for a definitely outlined area. What is wanted, is not Government help. It is your work. What is wanted is self-devotion, energy, initiative, the willingness to go through years of drudgery; for only in that way can true education be built up. This has not yet been acted on. The idea, when spoken about anywhere, causes a good deal of cheering, but only in a few places has there been any real earnest work, even in starting an Indian school.

Hence a goad was needed, and it has been applied. An Education Commission goes all round the country. The Education Commission presents its report, and the representative of the vast majority of those whose children have to be educated under the new law presents a minority report—a minority of one. Now, certainly, if you weigh heads, instead of counting them that minority might outweigh many, for that one was Mr. Justice Gurudas Bannerji. He knew very well what sort of education was wanted by the people, but he was only one, and the English majority shaped the Education Bill, and passed the Act When it was passed, a number of very wise protests were made — thoughtful, well-considered and rational—but why only protests? Why were not the protests followed by the formation of Boards, which should do that which the protestors wished? The protest was wisely made. Such protests are necessary, but they should be followed by action, for thought that is not followed by action acts like a gangrene in the human mind. Better remain silent, better not even think, if you are not prepared to act; better not think, unless you are prepared to put your activity into action, for in the higher spheres, as you know thought produces action; down here, thought, and especially talk, without action, does not get a nation very far along the line of progress. So all the energy flows out in the talk, and nothing is done. The national Deva thought something more in the way of pressure was wanted, and the Education Act became law. And very well it did. You do not approve of it, nor do I; but still it was wanted, because nothing else would stir the people

into action. That was why I said that where a people would not move by exhortation and advice, some goad was used in order to stir them into activity.

Now that you find education has become dearer, that to educate the boys strains to breaking the narrow incomes of the fathers; now that you see Higher Education is being more and more blocked to the class that needs it most—a class hereditarily learned, but always poor and now largely shut out from the costly education of the day; now that the education question has come in this form: “You must take this costly education or nothing”—you must begin to say: “No, it shall not be nothing. It shall be something, created by my own hands and out of my own money and brains.” But in order that the goad may serve its purpose well, it is necessary that there- should be hot and bitter feelings in the hearts of many of the people affected. It is that which makes the steam that drives the engine. It is that which presently makes the piston to go backwards and forwards and the wheels to turn. It is that which gives force, though it also causes an immense amount of excitement and foolish talk. These things are necessary, in order to generate the forces which make the engine of the nation move. So that, the Education Act is, as I regard it, a goad to make us struggle against it, as we are obliged to struggle at Benares, in keeping our fees low. I am glad it has passed, because it has—I hope it has—given the impulse which will make men take the education of their children into their own hands.

But now, how? By beginning at the right end and not at the wrong. First, by making your Educational Boards all over the country ; next by creating Colleges and Universities, and most of all by making such a public opinion, especially among the Indian Princes, the great merchants, and employers of labour, as shall induce them to recognise the degrees given by the Indian Universities as valid credentials for those who are seeking employment. Until you have done that, you have done nothing. It is no good even making a University, unless you have made a body of people who are prepared to take its graduates when they have taken their degrees, and thus open to them means of livelihood. It is no

good beginning with boys. You must begin with men.

Now I will tell you why I object to boys being thrown into political conflicts. They may ruin their whole lives in a sudden surge of excitement, and in then manhood bitterly reproach those who took advantage of their inexperience. While education is under the control of Government, and the fate of every boy is in the hands of the officials of his town, it is cruel to fling the lads against them. A boy dismissed from School or College, and refused a leaving certificate, has his education ruined and his future livelihood destroyed. When people unaccustomed to political action suddenly plunge into it, they are apt to think after they act instead of before. Here lies one of the dangers in India’s Awakening, and that is who I said, I fear it has come, too soon. Those who are trained in politics, as in my past life I have been—for I have taken a large part in the political struggles of the people in England, and I worked there in difficult times side by side with my old friend, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh—make it, as we made it, one of the rules of political life never to tell another man to go where there was risk, where we did not go in front; never to tell a procession to go where there was danger, unless we walked in front, so that we should be the first people on whom blows fell. It was the glory of Charles Bradlaugh, when he lay on his death-bed, that despite his struggles- and difficulties, there was not one home that had been made desolate by him, not one man who had gone to jail for the work that he had asked him to do. The front is the place of the leader; it is the place of the man, and not the place of the boy.

There is another reason why it is bad to send boys to the front. There can be no wise politics without thought beforehand. People who shout first and think afterwards make a mob, they do not make a political party; and that is the thing that the boy does. How much do you think a boy of this height (pointing to a boy about four feet) knows about the good or the evil of the Partition of Bengal? He shouts out and protests. It is bad training for the future. In the College, students should discuss political questions, social questions

and economic questions. They should debate them, discuss them, and talk them over in every possible way. We train them to do that in the Central Hindu College. But we do not allow them to protest against the Government. And the reason is a very simple one. When they have discussed these questions beforehand, when they have talked them over, then, when they have gone out into the world, they will be ready to form rational opinions. But if, before they study and understand the questions of the day, they shout out their approval or disapproval out of empty heads, they make a great deal of noise, but noise of no value, like bladders which, when beaten, make a noise, but collapse if you prick them with a pin. I do not want India to work along those lines. Train your boys to think first and then to form opinions, not to call out first and then wonder what they have been shouting for. That is bad moral training. It puts boys on wrong lines, and it takes away that profound sense of responsibility which, ought to be at the heart of every one who mingles in political life. For remember what playing at politics means. Remember that it means playing with property; it means playing with liberty; it means playing with the lives of men. Leaders in the political arena have to remember all that, when they take the responsibility of calling men to action. When you have a man like Mr. Gokhale—who has trained himself by years upon years of study and of self-denial, by his self-sacrificing work in the Fergusson College, for twenty years, on seventy-five Rupees a month and a retiring pension of twenty-five Rupees a month, when YOU have a man trained in that way, and one who studies every subject to the very bottom before he speaks about it, then you have a man who may be trusted and of whom a nation may well be proud, a worthy Header in the political arena.

In the matter of education, why not begin to act? You know you send your boys still by thousands and thousands to Missionary Schools, and it is a disgrace — not to the Missionaries, for they are doing work which they honestly think to be to the glory of God and for the good of all men; they believe that their religion is much better than yours, and I am bound to say that they Hove it better, because they work for it

much harder, as a rule. You ought to remember that your religion is the oldest of all living religions, and the most perfect in its range and in its details. Surely, it is not for you to take the children, whose bodies you have given, and, robbing them of their birthright, put them into other hands and mould them in an anti-Indian fashion. The Missionaries do not make many Christians. Here and there they do, as in Trichinopoly, but, as a rule, they do not make many converts. But I tell you what they do. They dig up the roots of devotion and religion in the plastic soil of the boy's heart. They wither them with ridicule, they trample them down with sarcasm, and when the boy grows up, he grows up an unbeliever in all religions, a bad Hindu and not a Christian—a kind of hybrid, who is of no use to his country. When you de-spiritualise an Indian, you denationalise him. Why does that go on? Because you do not care. It sounds hard to say so, but it is true. If you cared, it would not last for another month. What does it want to brings about the change? A few men in every town to band themselves together into an Educational Committee; a few rich merchants to be visited and asked to subscribe so much per month for some years, and then the putting up of a building for a school, and the sending of the boys. There is one difficulty in your way—the recognition of the school by the Government, and that is a serious difficulty as things are, for unless the school is recognised, the pupils of the school are not permitted to go on into the University. Still, if you would work well and steadily and perseveringly, you would, I think, be able to win recognition in the long run and, if not, to do without it. I have in my mind what happened in Trichinopoly two or three years ago, when I got a few people together who said that they would collect monthly subscriptions in the town to have a College of their own. The Roman Catholics have a College, and some other missionary body has a College, but the Hindus and the Mussalmans have no College of their own. Did they succeed? Not a bit of it. I myself drew up a proposal for the Madras University. The University took it into consideration. But where were the funds? The people of Trichinopoly did not care enough to keep their children from the Missionary Schools and Colleges, to supply

the small sum, comparatively that is wanted to make a College there, where the Hindu and Mussalman boys might learn apart from Christian influence. Not long ago in another southern town, there was a College for sale, and for sale without money. It is not often that you can buy anything without money. The Government wanted to get rid of it, but the Government asked for a body of Hindu gentlemen who would pledge themselves to conduct the College. But they could not get them. The College went a-begging and still is in Government hands.

These are the things which you have to take seriously, especially now that the people are awakening. For things are going on swiftly and unless you bestir yourselves to make your educational mechanism, the tide of enthusiasm will flow into channels that will be harmful instead of useful. Do not call your boys out from the present schools until you have others in which to receive them. When you can say to your son: "My boy, walk across the road to that school, which is our own," then by all means do it. Then you can do without Missionary schools. Otherwise you will find yourselves in endless trouble. What you should do in Madras, and do at once, is to begin the formation of a great organisation of leading, wealthy, influential people, who will give employment to your boys, if need be, when the pinch comes, and Government refuses to recognise your Colleges or Universities. I believe in Indian Universities for Indians, where Indian degrees shall be given in Arts, and Science, and in Industries that are useful for the national unfolding.

I see they are now going to teach French and German, Latin and Greek. Very useful, no doubt. So many of you will want to go to France, and talk French in Paris. So many of you will want to go to Germany, and enter into trade concerns there. Latin and Greek you may want to read, in order to understand medieval Christian Writers, I suppose, for your spiritual training. Unless this absurdity is the idea, it is difficult to see why they should be preferred to Sanskrit and Arabic, for Sanskrit is as good and as intellectual a training as either of these two languages. Greek being but a child of Sanskrit—and Arabic is the lan-

guage in which the mediaeval learning of Islam is embodied. Our Mussalman brothers are not at present wise enough to vindicate Islamic learning by translating the treasures of that knowledge, which from Bagdad spread into Europe. Arabic and Sanskrit, these are the two classical languages for India, not Latin and Greek. Instead of French and German, you should teach English and one vernacular, one common language which would serve everywhere as a means of communication between educated and uneducated alike. You ought to make Hindi a second language throughout the land. I have heard it said that Tamil has a literature which is magnificent, and this must certainly not be left to die. But in addition to the boy's own vernacular, he should always learn Hindi for that is the most widely spread vernacular of the country, and one can go from one end of the land to the other and talk in Hindi to all, save the most illiterate people in every part of it. If you had Sanskrit or Arabic, according to the religion of the boy, Hindi as a common tongue, a thorough knowledge of his own vernacular, and then the necessary English for all dealings with foreign countries, and in Government and Court matters, you would have an education, so far as languages are concerned, that would make a boy ready for the future, and enable him to take up his work in the world as soon as he goes into it.

The most important thing, which I have often urged, is technical education, and above all thorough education in agriculture. Unfortunately you have only one general business here, namely, agriculture. At least it might be made very much better than it is at present, so that famines, which are a recurring horror in the land, might be prevented. Famines are preventible things, and things that ought to be prevented. But they can only be prevented by a wiser system of agriculture on the one hand, and by the building up of manufacturing industries throughout the land on the other.

But, mind you, the manufactures that you want are the manufactures of this country. Here arts and crafts are fast dying. Your weaving craft is dying out of existence, because its products are not bought. That brings me to the next point, for education here slips into economics. Why is it that

the weavers of cloths, the potters, and metal workers, and the makers of beautiful objects of all lands, the weavers of shawls in Kashmir, and of muslins and silks in other parts of the land, why are they slowly disappearing? These people, who, by heredity, are fitted for the work, are swelling the ranks of the agricultural labourers, starving the land and overcrowding the fields. Why this? Because for many years you have been wearing foreign goods in preference to home-made ones. It should not have wanted the Partition of Bengal to teach you to produce at home what you need. When you think of it, the Swadeshi movement has nothing to do with that. Whether Bengal has one Lieutenant-Governor, or two, may be a point of serious importance to the population over whom they rule. But the Partition of Bengal was not wanted to make the Swadeshi movement. The Swadeshi movement was not born after the Partition. It has been going on for years and up and down the country, but the difficulty was that only a few people were in favour of it, and the great mass of the people were totally indifferent. One thing, of course, was that the foreign-made goods were cheaper, but also less durable. Assuming that they are cheaper how stupid that they should be so! You grow cotton, you send the cotton to Lancashire, Lancashire spins and weaves it into cloths and sends them out here, and sells them cheaper than you can spin and weave your own cotton! There is something very badly managed in this, to say the least of it. If a thing can be sold more cheaply after paying all the freight to Lancashire and back, after paying high wages in England instead of small wages to Indian handloom weavers, it is certainly by some queer kind of upside-down management. I am not forgetting, of course, the unfair duties levied on Indian mills for the benefit of Lancashire, and other difficulties that occur to your minds. But they do not practically touch your village weaving industry at all. You should have gone on supporting the Indian weaver, working in his own village, and giving you lasting and well-made cloths. If that had been done the village weavers would have remained prosperous, and that prosperity would have reacted on the agriculturists and so with everything else. Fashion has been more powerful than pat-

riotism. Now, thanks to the Partition of Bengal, poor patriotism has a chance. But the present enthusiasm for Swadeshi goods will only be a flare like the blaze of twigs, easily lighted and quickly dying out, unless a principle underlies the movement and not a passing political irritation. No durable things are built on violent passion. Nature grows her plants in silence and in darkness, and only when they have become strong do they put their heads above the ground.

Now I am glad of all this excitement, for, as I said before, it generates steam. It has made the Swadeshi movement a far more living movement than it was. So I am very glad of it. I am glad to see all the froth and the bubble and the fuss. Some of them are very foolish, I admit, but still it means life instead of stagnation. What all good men should set their faces against is any attempt to put forcible pressure on people to do what others think that they ought to do. Wear Swadeshi clothes, as I have been urging you to do for years, but if your neighbour chooses to wear an English coat, argue with him, tell him it is unpatriotic, but do not tear it off his back. That sort of violence has ruined some good movements in England, and it is always wrong. None has the right to force other people to tread his own path against their will. Every man has a right to use, to follow, his own judgment. Convince him by argument and reasoning. Tell him that his conduct is unpatriotic, wrong and irrational; tell him he is making other countries rich while he starves his own. But do not carry on a mad crusade against everything English, especially with the help of the boy's. Appeal to a man's brains. Surely there is argument enough: without home manufactures, there is no prosperity; without home manufactures, there are recurring famines; without home manufactures, there are overcrowded unproductive professions arid under-manned industrial pursuits.

Every one of you can quietly, in his own town, go against the craze for foreign goods, and help forward Indian manufactures. It is so easy to do. Sometimes there is a little more trouble, I admit; sometimes I have had to wait patiently for four or five days, or even weeks, before I could get an Indian-made thing, when I could have got a foreign-made one in a moment; but if you

cannot be patient for the sake of building up the industrial prosperity of your country, what a poor thing your patriotism must be. Help this movement in every way that you can, save by ways that are wrong; for remember that the Devas are behind all national policies, and therefore that the wrong way is always the long way, and useless.

Utilise the enthusiasm of the moment by turning it into wisely planned channels. Band yourselves together, for co-operation strengthens and helps enthusiasm. Use the crafts and products of this country in preference to others. But be a little patient. If you find that Government, which has been favourable to this movement, is now frowning on it in one part of the country, remember that, after all, that is quite natural under the conditions that have arisen. Governments are not perfect, any more than the governed; After all, Governments are only men, just as you are, with the same faults and the same short-sightedness. Therefore the Government should learn to be patient with the governed; and the governed with the Government. Now, in the past, Government has been favourable to the Swadeshi movement, and it will be so again. Naturally, Government does not want famines in the land; it does not want the people to be poor, for, apart from all questions of humanity, if they are poor, they cannot pay much in the way of taxes. It is to the advantage of Government that you should be rich; therefore it will help the movement again, when things are quieter; just now it has been made into a political battle-cry, but that will pass. Politics are constantly changing, one burning question to-day and another tomorrow. Go on quietly and steadily without any fuss, building up your Indian manufactures, educating your sons. You think brains are wanted for pleading; much more are brains wanted for carrying on large agricultural and industrial concerns. We want the brightest brains for the building up of Indian industries at the present time. If an Indian Prince wants to have an electrical plant installed in his capital, he has to go to Europe to find an engineer who will set up for him his electrical machinery. That must be so, until you educate your boys on the right lines. Educate them on all

the lines of learning, wanted to make a nation great. Get rid of the stupid idea that it is good, from the standpoint of class, to be a starving pleader, and bad to be a flourishing merchant. It is a mistake. A nation that goes that way goes down. It is a man's business to make his livelihood respectable, and respectability grows not out of the nature of the livelihood but out of the man. A man of high character, of noble ideal, of pure life, can make any calling respectable, and do not forget that a calling which helps national prosperity is more respectable than a calling, which does not. That is a lesson that has to be learned in Modern India.

Many resent the changes which are coming about but although many of them be not along the lines of the ancient civilisation, yet, it must be remembered, that the spirit of this time, as much as that of any other, is the Divine Spirit. In whatever form it clothes itself, it is in the work of humanity to-day, as it was in the work of humanity in the past, to help humanity onwards, or to make it step forward in the right way. But it is not the right way now to tread only in the foot-prints of the past, simply to re-introduce what has been. Your duty is to be inspired by the same spirit that made the past great, and in that spirit to shape the form suitable for the India of tomorrow.

Why should you be afraid to tread a new path? What is the creator of every form save the spirit? Why then be afraid to go on with the life, and to leave dead forms behind? And the strange thing is that often men cling most passionately to the forms which do not really belong to the life, but which are only excrescences which have happened to grow up round the living forms, as barnacles grow on a ship's bottom, and can be knocked off without harming the ship. There is one rule that helps us in distinguishing customs that are only barnacles from the vessel that carries the life. That is to be preserved which is ancient, according to the Shastras, and universal. But the things which are local, partial, modern, not according to the Shastras, these are the things which may indeed have been useful at the time of their formulation, but are now the useless and even mischievous barnacles on the ship. Trust to life, to the living spirit. We were

not there to guide the life, where it made the glorious past. Life can be trusted, for it is divinely guided, and all we have to do is to co-operate with it. That is the idea you must have above all things. Life is something greater than yourselves; You are only one tiny part of life, and the life makes its own forms. Study its tendencies and work with them, but it is life that builds, not men. Then you co-operate in the building of the forms, and if a form does not succeed it will be broken; and you should be glad in the breaking of the useless form as you should be glad in the form that means success. Failure often means winning, and it needs dozens, nay hundreds, of attempts before the perfect masterpiece shines out in full. Trust life; that is the great lesson for these days of change, for change is coming, change from every side. Those changes that are good will endure, and you must be very patient while they are in the making. Be full of hope and full of courage.

All men die. You may say: Is that encouraging? Surely yes, for when a man dies, his blunders, which are of the form, all die with him, but the things in him that are part of the life never die, although the form be broken. There is a new form to be built here, a form which has never yet been built and that is India herself as one nation. As one nation, she exists in the world of spirit; as one nation, she exists in the world of mind. As one nation, she has never yet existed on the physical plane, but the day of her birth is near. Many States and Kings have been, many Maharajas, Rajas, and sometimes one Raja, great beyond his fellows, has held a wide imperial sway. But never yet has there been one India from North to South, from East to West; but she is coming. That one India, when she comes, will have her head crowned with the Himalayas, and her feet will be bathed in the waters that wash the shores of Tuticorin; she will stretch out her right hand to Burma and Assam, and her left hand to Kathiawar and Baluchistan, That India has to be born. How? First, by believing in her with a strenuous faith, for faith is a mighty power; and then by, thinking of her and aspiring after her as an ideal. For what a man thinks becomes actual in practice. And never yet was a nation born that did not begin in the spirit, pass to the heart

and the mind, and then take an outer form in the world of men. That India, the sound of her feet is on the mountains, and soon the rising eastern sun shall glow upon her forehead. Already she is born in the mind of men.

But let your thought for unity be potent and resolute; learn to drop sectarian divisions; learn to drop provincial divisions and animosities; leave off saying: "I am a Madrasi; I am a Punjabi; I am a Bengali; I am an up-country man leave all that behind and teach your boys and girls to say ; "I am an Indian." Out of the mouths of the children thus speaking shall be born the India of tomorrow. Many religions will grow within her: not only her own parent religion, but others too will be woven into her being. Hindu and Mussulman must join hands, for both are Indians. Hindu, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, must join hands for all are Indians. In the India of the future, all men of every faith must join. If India is to be the spiritual light of the future, in her must be focused the light that comes from every faith, until in the prism of India they are all united into the one light which shall flood with sunlight the world, and all lights shall blend in the Divine Wisdom. That is our work. My Brothers, I am now talking to you, but this thing will not be made by talking. It is made by living. I would not dare to speak to you and offer you counsel if I did not strive to live that which I advise. Day by day, week by week, month by month, I strive to shape my life on the noble models which may serve the land, and in serving India will serve Humanity; for greater than any land is Humanity, and greater than any one people is the Race of whom all peoples are but branches; and if we have such hopes of future India, it is because we believe that her coming will be a new light to the world. There was an old people in the ancient days, and not very ancient either, that was conquered, and apparently cast away. One person of that race cried out: "If the fall of them be the riches of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but as life from the dead?" If India's humiliation has been, in a very real sense, the riches of the world—for this has been the means of spreading India's thoughts in the most widely-spoken tongue of the world, to the North and

South, East and West, all round the habitable globe—what shall it be for humanity when India herself in her new glory is born into the world? India, from whose lips, in this land of the Rishis, came the religion that uplifts and spiritualises, the philosophy that illumines, and the science that trains; India, from whose mind, throughout the world of mind, came those great systems of thought which are now recognised as the noblest products of the human intellect ; India, whose feet once passed through many States, and made every one of them fertile, prosperous, and wealthy; India, who was perfect in spirit and mind; when that India is born into the full vision of the eyes of men, perfect in body, is it too

much to say that her coining will be as life from the dead? That is the glorious goal, for which we work; that is the splendid hope that cheers our labour; that is the sublime aspiration that rises perpetually to the ears of the Devas. For India's coming means the spiritualising of humanity; India's thinking means the lifting of thought on to a higher level; India's prosperity shall be the justification of religion, the justification of philosophy, as part of the life of a nation; and the world shall be redeemed from materialism because India is awake.



SOCIALISM AND INDIVIDUALITY

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Published in Lucifer Magazine



As theosophy has to take life as a whole and consequently to study all great movements of our place and time, it cannot ignore Socialism. In the minds of many the world has become associated with nihilism, anarchy and violence, but a right understanding of it will show how false is all that. It is absurd to so think of a movement which includes men like John Stuart Mill. I am not attempting any exposition of Socialism, the movement is still very much in its infancy, and as yet receiving additions to its platform from different prophets of the cause. There is as yet no static ideal to which all can subscribe, but all the best of its disciples seem to be agreed that it is rather from it a movement that in its turn has claimed many things, has failed in many things, but it is a movement, a live movement, and has already reached to some things. Many are the hearts outside of its professed adherents which it has enlisted in its favour. Many of whom would even now be its professed adherents, but that they fear to begin, and fear still more where the thing itself will leave off. These fears they may spare themselves, the Rubicon has long ago been crossed and indeed municipal socialism may in some of our more progressive cities, be said to have arrived. Rightly understood, Socialism is a growth out of the peculiar conditions of the past few centuries as a whole, not the mere wages of sin of despotism. It is not a bulwark raised against an autocracy, a monarchy or a republic as in themselves evil things, but a

question of the establishment of such conditions as will be all a chance of bringing out the best that is in them, and I believe that any good socialist would regard the greatest accomplishment the movement could hold out to itself, as only a stage in a march to some future the outline of which were too dim to be seen.

What is the historical retrospect of the socialist of today when he seeks for the far away causes of this modern movement. We look back some centuries into the face of feudalism. To the modern voter surrounded by his free institutions, it looks very grim, but it has its place in history building, and we should feel tolerant of it, if only for its legacy to the imagination and to the history of picturesque Europe. We have many grim tales of the doings of the Baron whose castle frowned over the hills and dales, and round whose walls were gathered men whose calling depend upon the lord of the castle upon whom they lived, men with whom a blow came easier than any other line of argument. Yet in this Baron and his serfs we have the nucleus of the modern-day municipality. From feudalism it is an easy transition to the Burghs and Burghers of Shakespeare's time till we get down at last to the days of the steam, when machinery began that enormous change which has brought us today face to face with socialism. Simple conditions which in the old days allowed the serf under the castle walls to depend without. Fear for his wants, upon the castle which always supplied them, have

given place to those of hard, stern biting competition in which the Baron has turned factory owner, and fails sometimes to give that living wage which the lord of the castle in feudal times never was charged with withholding. Machinery and modern factory have drawn the people from the countryside into the modern manufacturing city. It has made the position of the lord of the land no less secure, and it has added in most cases enormously to live his wealth, it has widened and is every year widening the breach between the rich and poor, between Capital and Labor, and the result has been that revolutionary spirit which arranges itself before us as socialism. With the main features of the platform of Socialism I have no serious difference so long as it deals with those things set out to strive for in behalf of the community, or indeed, with the stress it lays upon seeking the good of this community in distinction from what it terms individualism, but I find it hard to go out as one of its standard bearers when I come to consider its position with regard to the essential individuality of each member of the social fabric. Whatever changes history may have in store for us, these would hence forth have to be studied by a believer in Theosophy, from the stand point of their effect upon the individual. It would be necessary outcome of an established attitude looking ever for the development of the individual human soul. I am therefore compelled to consider Socialism in its relation to the future development of the individuality rather than the community. And when I am compelled to carry my survey of the future of the individual, into the far distant future with which socialism does not concern itself, I find my self parting company with the aims and ideals of the socialist who with eyes bent on the surroundings of the moment deems it weariness to look so far ahead. Every true theosophist must wish to help the man who seeks to raise the condition of the poor around us, but after the mind is fixed in the attitude of regarding all things and all events as merely ministering the growth of the Soul, it is impossible to attach the same importance to present events which once may have been possible. There may

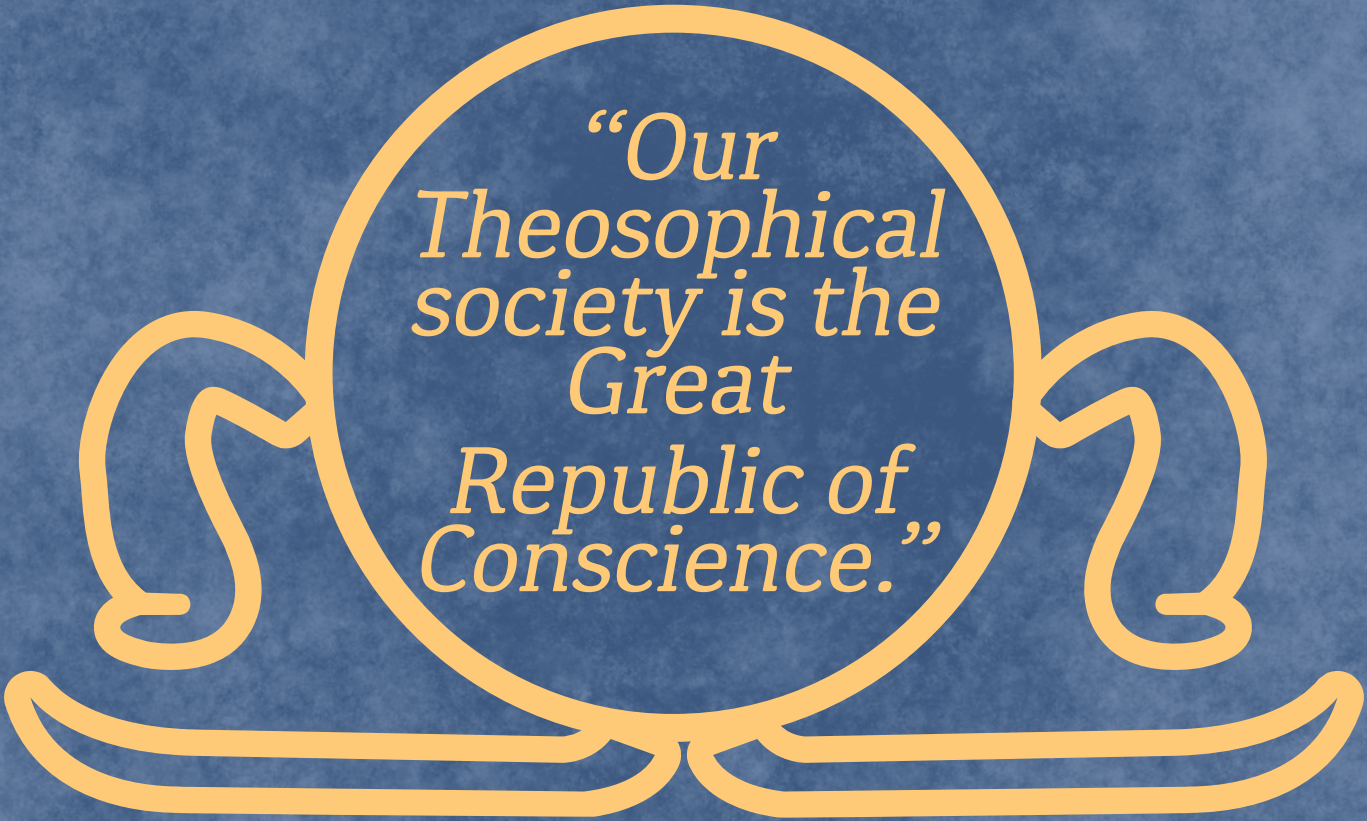
be socialists no doubt who look into the distance of futurity with a belief in some state beyond the grave, but it will be fair to regard this as mere incidental, not finding any place in main postulates of socialism. It will not be unfair to speak of the movement as one with the eyes fixed entirely upon the present, having in view the improvement of present conditions, and indeed one might say that it is precisely because it does not include any thought of another world than this within its view, that it lays such urgent stress upon the improvement in the condition of this one.

Now, shall it be said that Theosophy is indifferent to the conditions around us in this world? Indeed no, but surely we may be forgiven if in the discomforts of a day we fail to see the disabilities of a life time, if in our larger view of the present life which makes of it merely a chapter in a history spreading itself over the ages, we refuse to be distressed over what to us are after all, only the passing conditions incidental on a journey long enough to include every sort of experience in its turn. Presumably, the most material of socialists would have his eyes fixed upon some future condition into which events would bring him, upon some future ideal state possible for man to reach, but in the progress towards that goal, are the better present surroundings always the best pathway to reaching it? What is the future and is progress? These are points upon which so many of us will find we cannot link hands with socialists. It is in fact upon this great rock of the spiritual individuality of man and its needful growth by experience that we shall split in attempting to sail with Socialism. In its protest against individualism we can go with it so far as it is a monopoly of physical benefits that it protests against, but if it carries its opposition to the individual the whole history of the individual as we understand it we have to hold our hand.

The whole difference between a movement in the material world such as socialism and Theosophy, lies in the utterly different standpoints from which they regard the individuality of man. In spreading man's career over more worlds than this

and in taking turn in association with the scheme of slow growth through evolution, Theosophy regards the whole human family as of all ages, young souls and old souls. But we will return to the question what is progress? Broadly speaking the reply of socialism is , the continued improvement of the physical surroundings of the masses. Could we have any quarrel with

this? Indeed, if life consisted only of our physical experiences it would be contemptible to remain satisfied with things as they are, quiescence would be dishonourable to every one of us. The six main aims as laid down by Webb in the second of the Fabian Essays, offer no unreasonable claim to any of us.



*“Our
Theosophical
society is the
Great
Republic of
Conscience.”*

H.P. Blavatsky

THE FUTURE OF SOCIALISM

BY ANNIE BESANT

(Published in 1912)

Adyar Pamphlets, Theosophical Publishing House, Issue No. 18



THOSE who study carefully the tendencies of the times, must recognize the increasing power of the Socialist movement in this land, as well as in lands where it is a more militant force than it is here; and such thinkers will do well to consider along what lines it will work in days to come, and what will be the outlines of the Socialism which it is proposed to establish.

Now in dealing with that question, there is one idea that will dominate all that I say. Just as every Socialist declares that politics alone are utterly insufficient to make a happy and prosperous nation, just as he truly says that economics must be rightly understood and rightly applied, and that without that an understanding and application of political reform must fail and crumble, so I believe that economics alone are not enough to make a nation prosperous and free. Important as economics may be and are, behind economics lie men and women, and unless those men and women are trained into a noble humanity, economic schemes will fail as hopelessly as any political schemes can possibly do. For while it is true that the politician is building a house without a foundation, while it is true that Socialists are trying to make that foundation, still the foundation must be of good materials, or a rotten foundation will be as unfortunate to the house as no foundation at all. And there is a danger - a danger the more pressing the more successful the Socialist propaganda proves - that as the State takes over one thing after another, and tries to guide the great industries of the country for the common good, unless there

are at the head of those industries, and unless there are as workers in those industries, trustworthy, upright, unselfish men. Socialism will inevitably fail. And if there is one thing more clear than another in looking through the efforts of the proletariat through the country, it is that they do not trust each other, either their leaders or their comrades. They have not that trust which alone can make success in any enterprise; and they need, not only trust in upright leaders, but they need the discipline, the subordination based on self-control, without which no undertaking can, in the long run, be successful. For if it is true, as it unfortunately is, that individualistic enterprises of production have been far more successful than co-operative production has proved itself to be, experimental and local as the whole thing has been, it is also true that when there is one vast co-operative body called the State, it will want the virtues that make good citizens, otherwise the Socialist State will crumble into pieces, as other States have done. And it is this point which seems to me to be lacking in Socialistic propaganda. It is this point which, more than anything else, led me outside the paths of Socialist propaganda into trying to form the material which the Socialist needs for the building of his State. For without that material, all efforts must fail, and the material cannot be made by outer organization alone. There is the tendency of advancing thought though growing less and less, I think, with every year, to regard the environment as everything, and the man as nothing, to think that the good environment will make the good man. It is

forgotten that environment and living organism react the one upon the other; and though it is true that we need a better environment. though the environment of many men and women today is so unutterably vile that it is almost impossible that healthy plants can grow therein, still the fact that the man is a living creature, who more than any other adapts his environment to himself, is too much forgotten in the ordinary teaching of Socialism. And yet it is an essential part of a real Socialist propaganda. Now, I believe that the next great stage of civilisation will be Socialistic; that in the centuries that lie before us there will be realized many of the economic conditions, probably all, that the Socialists of the day demand; but I see, at the same time, that unless the leaders of the Socialist party are educated far beyond the masses that they lead, and unless those masses understand that wisdom should give authority, all schemes must be wrecked; unless it be possible to have a Socialism where the wisest shall guide, and plan, and direct, I do not see that the mere change of economic conditions will make things so enormously better than they are today. For although it is true that by better economics we may change the outer conditions, man wants something more than food to eat and raiment to put on; man demands more and more, as he unfolds his inner powers, not only what the body demands imperatively, but that which the mind, and conscience, and Spirit, no less imperatively demand; and I fear lest this movement should be wrecked on the lack of recognition of the real nature of man, that he will be treated as a body only and not as a spiritual intelligence, and that against that rock all schemes will break; for we cannot ignore the real nature of man.

Now, in order to put before my readers some ideas that may lead to thought, I want to tell them the story of an ancient Socialism. They may take it as they please. I tell it as history; they may treat it as a fairy tale if they like. While I do not believe that history, for I call it history, repeats itself, while I do not think that the great lesson of Democracy is without its meaning to humanity, and has not to be learned by the nations of the world, I do believe that ancient Socialism also has lessons for the fu-

ture, and that out of the Autocracy that is dead, and the Democracy that is trying to live, the nations will have to find some blend, which will give to the future civilization the advantages of both experiences; we shall not bring back the child state, for the man cannot go back into the child, but we may learn something of the benefits of the rule of that time, and see whether modern Democracy may not fashion in some way a method for calling the wisest to the helm of the State, instead of governing by numbers, which means governing by ignorance. Let me, then, tell my fairy tale. It was such a long time ago that I had better begin "once upon a time". Once upon a time, then, the masses of the people, undeveloped, unevolved, were literally in what we may call the child condition, ready to be governed, ready to admit the superiority of their elders; and these proletariats of the past were ruled by men of a far higher humanity, a more advanced humanity than their own. We see traces of that remaining in the civilization of ancient Egypt; we see traces of it in the civilization of Peru which was destroyed by Pizarro; we see traces of it still existing in India, that country which has not died where all its contemporaries have. We still may find in the village organization of India, in the village pañchayât - the village council of elders - the village ownership of land, the common responsibility of the village for every one of its members, and in many other ways, traces of that very ancient Socialism existing in our modern times. And it is because the rulers of the Empire do not understand the meaning of those ancient things, that they often make such serious blunders in their government of India at the present time. Trying to do right, they inevitably go wrong, and plunge the people into a far more hopeless condition than would be the case if they would look a little at the traditions which have come down from that ancient form of Socialism. To give one illustration: The old Socialism, that of which I am writing, vested all the land in the King, and that idea came down through all changes and conquests in India, until the Englishman began a new settlement in various great provinces; then, not realizing that this village ownership of the land was really part of the old system in which the land did not belong to any

private person, he changed the ancient type of landlord who had no power to drive out the tenant, into a landlord of a modern kind, who was no longer representative of the monarch; the King technically owned the land, and took part of the profits from the tiller, so that the amount varied up and down, according to greatness or dearth of the harvest, and the "rent" thus did not starve the cultivator, because his food was the first claim to be satisfied; he changed all that into the English system of landlord and tenant, with a fixed money rent, and power of alienation to the tenant, and thus has reduced to a miserable condition of non-cultivation and poverty vast tracts of land, and thousands of people that were before in a comfortable and happy state. I mention those traces of the past still existing, that readers may not think the fairy tale quite as fanciful as if those traces did not exist to bear witness that I do not wholly invent.

Now, with regard to this ancient Socialism, the King stood as an autocrat at the head; around him a number of nobles, of priests - names that are well beloved among Socialists, but I must tell my story truly. That King, those nobles, those priests, were of a more developed humanity than the great labouring populations of the time, and the whole arrangement of the State was the arrangement of the family. Now, I believe that the arrangement of the family is the model for all healthy human organization, and that that great phrase: "From every one according to his capacities, to every one according to his needs" is the last, as it was the earliest word, of social organization. That was the rule which guided my Fairy State. Of that position of the King, again, there are many traces in Indian and Chinese books. He was the hardest-working man in the land, not simply in opening one institution or another, or in laying foundation-stones, but really the hardest worked man. The old law was: "Let the King wake that other men may sleep; let the King labour in order that other men may enjoy; let the King rule in order that the people may be happy." And behind the King in those old statutes - and here again the old legal institutes will help us - behind the King there was one power, given different names among different people,

amongst the Indians they call it Justice - and that power was beyond the King, above the King, ruled the King, and he was only the administrator of the great Divine Law, in which King, nobles, priests and people all equally believed. So that we find it written that an evil King will be destroyed by Justice, with his house; and so in many another saying of the ancient books; and that principle ran through the whole of the theory of government. The governor was the responsible person, the criminal - there were few in those days, because crime mostly springs out of want and misery and want and misery were not common in those times - was the result of the errors of the ruler; the King was held ruler responsible for good government, and it was held, as Confucius once said to a King who complained about robbers: "If you, O King, did not rob, there would be fewer robberies in your land." And this was a practical, not only a theoretical idea in that old day; for in those days if a man lost anything by thieves, the King was bound to restore it fourfold - an admirable rule. In those days it was held that if the King did his duty in the training and teaching of his people, nobody would be inclined to thieve, so that the King's treasury was the place whence all restitutions were made to those who had suffered by theft. And that treasury, filled with the overflowings of the prosperity of the nation, was the place to which all men turned who were wronged, and the wrong had to be made right. And it was another admirable rule of the ancient time that when the religious teachers, who in these days would be called bishops, went round the land, and came to the King's Court, the first questions they asked were all practical questions. Have you looked after the widows and orphans in your country? Have you seen that the tiller of the soil has seed to sow his land? Have you seen that the artisan has the materials with which to work? And so on through every question on which the prosperity of the State depended.

Now, in the earliest days the Kings were what we call Divine Kings. By that we mean that they were men in whom the spiritual nature was developed, that duty was their guiding law; duty was really then the backbone of the monarch's authority,

and the principles they laid down as to ownership, rule, and labour were very clear. In ownership, the whole of the land of the country technically belonged to the King and was administered for the common good; there were no taxes, for the revenue of the land met all public purposes. Out of one part of the land the whole of the nobles, and the whole of the law-making people, and the whole of the governors of the nation lived - one third of the land went for the support of the administrative class. The second third of the land went to the priesthood. What were they to do with it? They were bound to educate every child without charge of any sort. That was the first call of the priestly revenues. They were bound to support every sick person, every old person, every orphan, every one who was in need, who was suffering - hospitals, almshouses, asylums, everything wanted for the helpless was kept up out of this part. And the result was that there was no idea of "Charity". Hence, "Charity" has always remained a religious duty. It was understood that that part of the national property was put aside for the helpless and the ignorant. Not for priestly pomp or priestly power, but for the service of humanity, was that third of the nation's land set aside. On them lay the whole burden of the support of the helpless; they administered, they did not own. The remaining third of the land was the property assigned for the support of the people, divided up into villages, townships, and so on. All those areas were held by the people who lived on them, and they could not be turned away from them. The land could not be alienated, because, theoretically, it was not theirs to sell; it could not be lost by debt or mortgage, for they had no right in it beyond the right of use - not the technical right of property. And that reminds me again, how, in India, that old principle has been lost sight of in modern land-legislation. Thousands of labourers have been turned into tramps of the road, because the land has become property as land, instead of only the use of the land being the property of the people

Thus was the land divided in my Fairy-State. The people tilled the whole of the land and pursued all manual occupations. That was their contribution to the State.

They tilled their own land first. That was the most necessary tillage of all; after that the land of the priests, which was administered for the children, the sick, and the helpless; lastly; the land of the rulers. For the burden was always to come most heavily on the ruling class; and if seed ran short, or water ran short, first the land of the people was sown and watered, then the land of the priests, and lastly only the land of the rulers. And that was the principle that ran through the whole. For the man must give what he had to give, and the ignorant - not ignorant as people are ignorant now, for all were educated, but comparatively ignorant, because undeveloped in intelligence - gave the strength of their bodies, that was their capacity; and the priestly class gave the strength of their minds, for they were teachers, nurses, physicians; and the ruling class gave all their time and thought and energy to guiding the State, and planning its welfare, and defending it from attack.

One other purpose was served by the land of the priests. All great agricultural and other scientific experiments were made thereon; farms were kept up where experiments might be carried on, and all improvements might at once be scattered over the whole of the agricultural population; laboratories were maintained for scientific experiments, and anything that was discovered by intelligence became freely available for all, for the intellectual gave the strength of their minds; that was their capacity. There were no patent laws in those days, and no right claimed by any to live idly on the support of labour. It was a fair exchange of power all round - a division of duties; but all had duty, and all had some kind of work.

Now, another point on which things were very different then from now, was one which may seem to many wild and foolish; the higher the people in intelligence, the less need they have of wealth and amusement. Yet it was a rational idea; for the argument ran in this way: a man who is very undeveloped as to intelligence has few resources within himself; therefore, you must give him everything from outside which it is possible to give, to refine, to elevate, to train, and to make his life happy; the highly developed have endless re-

sources within themselves. Therefore, all the amusements were freely open to the masses of the people. Every form of art was used in order to brighten and make happy their lives. If any one ran short of material good things, it must not be the people. They had nothing else except these outer things, which gradually drew out their sleeping powers, and raised them in the scale of intelligence. So, whoever else went short of amusement, they must be sure to have it placed within their reach. And the result was that they grew up far more refined than the masses of the people in any so-called civilized country today. We may measure very often the class of people that go to any place of amusement, by the vulgarity of the entertainment that is given. Now I have been through all the typical London amusements many years ago; therefore, I know whereof I write. If you go, say, to a theatre in the East End, you will generally find fair ethics - the hero who is good always coming to the top, and the villain coming to grief. But the inanity of it! The lack of a real higher thought in it! That is a thing which makes one's heart weep on seeing the stones with which the ignorant are put off for bread, in the place which is the only place where they are able to learn, the places to which they go for so-called amusement. Now it is the people who want the best of everything that art can give. It is they who, because their homes are least artistic, need to have the beauty of art in order to refine them, and make them more human than too many of them are now. It is a remarkable thing that the Anglo-Saxon poor are more brutalized than the poor of any other nation, and I believe it is chiefly because of the utter absence of refinement in the amusements with which they try to fill the hours that are left over from labour. Moreover, where labour is too hard, amusement cannot really be healthy. Only by limited labour can you leave intelligence enough to profit by all that art is able to give the mind. And in my Fairy State no man or woman was overworked; and no child worked at all; and no man did compulsory work after forty-five years of age, whatever class he belonged to.

As either side of these age limits he worked, but before the lower, at education, and after the later, at any employ-

ment - literary, artistic, scientific - to which his abilities and tastes led him. So there was time for education, and time for art, and time for people to grow up into intelligent and useful life. But there is no time for such life now, where the child begins to labour as a half-timer and the old man is only grieved because at sixty or sixty-five he is too old to get something with which to fill his mouth. Far better for the labouring classes were those days, for they were not starved, nor overworked, nor under-amused. The State was shaped so that all might be happy, it being considered that happiness was the natural atmosphere for man. And so things went on for a long time.

Why did they change? Because humanity had to grow; and that was really the nursery stage, where the children were taken care of and cosseted up, and made much of, and humanity had to learn to be grown up, and had to go through the rough time of finding its own feet, and learning to walk. And gradually, as these greater men passed away, men of lower moral type took their places, men who began gradually to rule for themselves, and not for the people, to use their power for self-aggrandisement, and not for service. And under the deterioration of the ruling and the teaching classes, the whole of the nations began to go downhill, and the great Slave States arose - States based on chattel slavery, serf slavery, and wage slavery - on the ruins of these ancient Socialist States. Always with the ruling classes deterioration begins. They have power, and they begin to misuse it. And so came about, not autocracy for the sake of the people, but tyranny for the plundering of the people. And we come now within "historical" times, when to rule did not mean to serve, as it ought to mean. "Let the greatest among you be he that doth serve"; that is the word of one great Teacher, and it is the word which marks the condition for the higher degrees of humanity.

The moment strength is used for the little self, and not for the larger Self, that moment it becomes tyranny and oppression, becomes a means of destruction, and not a pillar of support. And so with the coming of lesser men into the powers that the great men had used, there came the gradual de-

cline of the State, and ignorance began to be a reason for being cheated and oppressed, and betrayed, instead of being, as in the old family idea, a reason for being protected, cherished and guided. The whole spirit of the time changed, and we have all the different phases of individualism that are seen in the more modern States. Individualism began with the rulers and the priests, they who should have been the servants of all, and it passed on, doing a good work along its own line, for it was necessary that the individual should be developed, in order that a permanently nobler State might ultimately grow out of the strife.

It is a short-sighted eye which sees in any great phase of human growth and evolution only evil and not good. Something comes out of every great human experience, however much at first sight it may seem to be revolting; and it was necessary that the individual should develop despite all the war, social and national, that the developing of the individual necessarily meant. And so the changes went forward, and "duty" ceased to be the law of the State, and the claim to "rights" took its place. Inevitably, where the law of duty has perished as a binding force, men are bound to claim their rights and appeal to legal justice. And so the nations came into the phase of imaginary Social Contracts and State arrangements, and all the other fictions on which modern Democracy has gradually been built up - that we were all born free, and that we gave up some of our rights in order to preserve the others, and so on - we all know the whole of it - a fiction, and a fiction is not a good thing on which to base the growth of a civilization. We must found on facts, not on fictions, if we want Society to grow and to be healthy. The great watchword of the Eighteenth Century, that man was born free and is in chains everywhere, is a pure fiction. He was never born free, but is ever born helpless, and dependent for his life in his younger days on the guiding and the nurture of his elders. That is as true of humanity, as it is true of every baby that is born into the world. And because man is thus born helpless, duty needs to be the law of human life and human growth. Only by the

recognition of the law of duty can humanity progress towards perfection.

In this growth to Democracy much that we see now seems to be full of menace for the future. For the Democracy into whose hands the power has slipped, is the Democracy brought up under conditions that make it impossible that it should wisely guide a State. How should a number of men, knowing practically very little outside the mine or the forge, or the mill, be able to deal with all the subtler questions on which the prosperity of a nation depends? They can know only what their class wants - relief from the pressure that is crushing them down. And surely they are not to blame if they try to use political power to lift something of the burden under which they, their forefathers, and their children live. They would be less than human, if they did not use it so. But class rule is not better, when it is the class rule of Democracy, than when it is the class rule of the aristocracy. In some senses it is worse because more ignorant, in some senses worse because less refined.

Civilization cannot risk the loss of all that it has won during thousands of years of labour and study, and there is the danger that numbers may swamp brains, that ignorance may swamp knowledge - even if the knowledge is limited - a danger lest a triumphant Democracy should pull down instead of constructing, and sacrifice all that humanity has won, under the mere pressure of suffering, and the bitter need for food and leisure. Now, as long as a man is under that pressure he cannot judge fairly; as long as he is bitterly suffering, he cannot weigh what is necessary, what is possible.

How should Society be re-organized? That it must be re-organized is clear. But how? I suggest - I do not know how far my readers will agree with me - that there is much in these old principles that might form the chart of modern Socialism, that the moral training which should make men and women understand that growing knowledge and power is duty, is one of the most vital lessons for these modern days.

In our upper or middle classes, all who are not engaged in the bitter strife for bread,

should carry on a propaganda of duty far more than a propaganda of rights, and should set the example of doing duty; we must try to teach the men and women whose lives are comparatively easy, that the only way in which Society can be re-organized without a catastrophe in which the results of civilization will perish, is that they should take up the rule of self-denial, voluntarily and willingly, which has so long been imposed involuntarily on the poor and the miserable. That seems to me the first lesson that all have to learn who are not fighting for bread; that no one has the right to live and enjoy save as he gives, whether he gives time, thought, money, training - and that the more he possesses, the more he is bound to give.

Only in that way can we gain time to make economic changes. And these changes will not be made successfully in the storm of revolution, because in revolution the men who come to the top are not the wisest men, but the most exaggerated men; and the man who can promise most is the one who comes to the top, and each one tries to outbid the other, in order to secure his own power, and avoid suspicion from the great masses of the people. The lesson of the French Revolution is a lesson which it is well to learn. Notice the waves of the Revolution as they came on, and notice how every moderate party in turn was swallowed up, and how each extreme party was guillotined by a still more extreme, until the military power put an end to all.

And it is of no use to ignore the lessons of history. Hardest of all for the younger amongst us in this to understand, for they naturally think that everything can be done so quickly, and do not see the difficulties, and do not realize the obstacles that have to be overcome, and the riddles that have to be solved. And we need a preaching of the doctrine of self-sacrifice, not in order to win an individual heaven, for that is not self-sacrifice at all, but only self-seeking; but the self-sacrifice of duty, which says: "Because I have more to give, I must give more." "From every one according to his capacities"; it is the word of Socialism, but it is the word that is forgotten now.

Because idleness has been the prize of success, the masses of the people look on idle-

ness as that for which they ought to strive. None should blame them. They are only following where those who are called "upper classes" have led the way. But till the upper classes learn duty, first of all - noblesse oblige - we cannot expect that the lesson of duty should be learned by those who have naught to give, who have everything to gain by uproar and by tumult. And so I suggest that we should hold up an ideal of a Socialist State in which the wisest should be the rulers; and the claim of the child, of the ignorant, should be the right to be educated, to be trained, to be disciplined, in order that they may be free. The ignorant are never free.

I have sometimes thought of a scheme outside the question of the great ideal, which I believe to be the most inspiring force of all; and without an ideal, clearly planned and definitely approached, we shall never do anything really worth the doing - or rather of certain lines of re-organization which are well worthy of consideration and discussion. Let me put it quite briefly. That a small area should be the unit of administration - a village, a township, any small area that may be named, so long as it is small. Then, that the people in that area should have the right to elect those who are to guide; but only people over a certain age, or with a certain definite experience of life - the "elders" in the old sense of the term. That it should be their right to choose those who immediately should guide their little polity, so that the administration of the small area may be always under the control of the people who have to live in it.

The head of the council of the area should be chosen out of those elected by the people living therein, but chosen by the authority immediately above it. That has not been tried for many thousands of years, but it is a sound system; out of those elected by the people, one should be chosen as the President - or Chairman of the Board, as we may say - by the authority next above the people themselves. But the choice of the higher authority should be limited to those elected by the people.

The whole life of the people as regards agriculture, crafts, amusements, libraries and sanatoriums, should be in the hands of these local councils; so that the life of the

unit in each state should be self-contained to a very great extent. The next area would be the area in which many of these were gathered together into a single organization, say a province.

All the primary councils would advise the Provincial council, and only those would have the right to rule in that larger organization, who had proved themselves good rulers in the small organization below - not fresh from ignorance, but partly trained, would be the rulers of this next greater area, and their chief, again, selected by the authority next above.

A parliament of the nation, which should guide national affairs, would be chosen again only by and from those who had shown themselves efficient in provincial politics. And international affairs I would not give to the ordinary parliament at all, but to the ruler of the State, the Monarch, and to the men old in knowledge and experience, the best of the nation, who should be round him as his council; to the hands of that body only should international politics be trusted. That is a rough sketch, but it may serve as a basis for discussion, to be worked out very much more fully, of course, than I am putting it now.

But the general idea is that each man should have power according to his know-

ledge and capacity. None should be without some share, but the power that he has should be limited to his knowledge, experience and capacity; and only those should rule the nation who have won their spurs in good administration of national affairs. In this way, we should restore to the State something of the knowledge that it wants, and we should take away from the State the danger of allowing a mass of ignorant electors - who are really fighting to elect a man who will look after their mines, their drains, their local interests, matters they understand - to upset international arrangements, and possibly plunge us into war - or worse, into dishonour. Those are the general principles which might be worked out, and might be applied to modern days. And the key-note is that of my fairy tale: "From every man according to his capacity; to every man according to his needs."

A democratic Socialism, controlled by majority votes, guided by numbers, can never succeed; a truly aristocratic Socialism, controlled by duty, guided by wisdom, is the next step upwards in civilization.

HOME RULE MOVEMENT

Leaders

- Annie Besant
 - Bal Gangadhar Tilak
-
-



Year: 1916-18

Significance:

- The Home Rule Movement was India's demand for self-government (dominion status) within the British Empire during **World War I**, inspired by countries like **Canada, Australia**, and the **Irish Home Rule League**.

THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

UNKNOWN AUTHOR

[*Lucifer*, Vol. IV, No. 20, April, 1889, pp. 104-111]



[It is not definitely known whether this article is from the pen of H. P. Blavatsky. It has been ascertained, however, that she used several pseudonyms in the early volumes of Lucifer. It is possible that the one appended at the conclusion of the present essay is one of them. —Compiler.]

The mother of life is death. Nowhere is this truth more conspicuous than in the animal kingdom; the life of the stronger is prolonged by the lives of the weaker, and the survival of the fittest is proclaimed by the shrieks of the mangled and hapless unfit. Long has the western world sought the solution of this grim riddle propounded to her lord and master, man, by Dame Nature, the sphinx of the ages.

It has, therefore, been found necessary for the continuance of average intellectual contentment to venture some guess which shall decently dispose of this obnoxious problem, and the leading representatives of the mind of the race, proceeding by the methods of the times, have carefully labelled the riddle "The Struggle for Existence," and having done so, are wisely refraining from further unnecessary explanations, knowing full well that their constituents, the public, who require their thinking done for them, will gladly accept the label as a legitimate answer to the riddle, and, by frequently repeating it with knowing looks, be charmed, and in their turn charm others, with the magic of its sound, and using it as a mantric formula, banish objectors to the limbo of unpopularity. And yet though the why of this great struggle re-

mains as great a mystery as ever, the attempted answer is of great value from the conciseness with which it formulates the law of the Ever Becoming. Throughout all the kingdoms it obtains, and especially in Man, the crown and synthesis of all. At this point, however, a new development takes place, and when humanity reaches the balance of its cycle of evolution, and each race and individual arrives at the turning point of Ezekiel's wheel, a new Struggle for Existence arises, and we have God and Animal fighting for existence in Man. Now, at the close of the nineteenth century, in our enormously over-populated cities and in the accentuated individualism of modern competition, we see this deadly struggle in the white heat of its fury.

Grand, indeed, and magnificent has been the childhood of the white race in which material and intellectual progress have raced on madly side by side; witness the conquest of nearly the whole world's surface by its spirit of enterprise and adventure, rejoicing as a giant in its physical prowess, the subjugation of the henchman steam, and ever fresh triumphs over the master electricity. But the child cannot be ever a child, and the race draws nigh to its manhood; the God awakes and the Struggle for Existence begins in grim earnest.

First the units of the race, some here, some there, wake dimly to the feeling that they are not apart from the whole, they sympathize with their kind, they rejoice with them. Even in the animal the faint outlines

of self-sacrifice have been shadowed forth by nature, as may be seen in the mother love of the females and the formation of gregarious communities. In inferior races, man repeats this lesson of nature, and the animal being dominant, improves on her, but slowly; in races of higher type, however, fresh areas of generous impulse, containing the germ of self-sacrifice, are gradually developed. It must be remembered, however, that the races are here mentioned in this order merely for the convenience of tracing the development of self-sacrifice in a monad, and not according to their natural genesis. Thus far the white race, as a race, or in other words, the average individual of the race, has developed the subtleties of his animal nature to their limit, and now comes in contact with the divine; and it is only by extending this area of interest and sympathy that the individual can expand into the divine to be at last one with universal love, the spirit of which is self-sacrifice.

From daily life we may take examples which clearly show forth the evolution of this god-like quality. We see the purely selfish man, who cares not if all rot so he have pleasure; the same man married, and an area of generosity developed, but bounded by wife and children; in other cases, the area increased by the extension of sympathy to friends and relations; and still further increased in the case of the fanatic or bigot, religious or patriotic, who fights for sect or country, as the she-animal for her cubs, whether the cause be good or bad. And here we may mention the instruments of national passions and cunning, necessary evils; for the race being in its youth, and very animal-like, not yet recognizing the right of self-sacrifice in the interrelations of its constituent sub-races, requires the individual who serves his country in her wars and political schemes to reduce his moral standard to the race-level. These are types of the evolution of the animal man's affections, either in his individual development or modified by the development of the race. In most cases such types represent the mere expansion of selfishness or, at any rate, may be traced to selfish causes, or the hope of reward. Ascending, however, in the scale of manhood, we come to those who shadow forth

the latent God in man in thoughts, words, and deeds of divine self-sacrifice; the prerogative of their God-head first manifesting in acts of real charity, in pity of their suffering fellow-kind, or from an intuitional feeling of duty, the first heralding of accession to divine responsibility, and the realization of the unity of all souls. "I am my brother's keeper," is the cry of repentant Cain, and the divine summons of return to the lost Paradise. With this cry the struggle for animal existence begins to yield to the struggle for divine existence. By extending our love to all men, aye, to animals as well, we joy and sorrow with them, and expand our souls towards the One that ever both sorrows and joys with all, in an eternal bliss in which the pleasure of joy and the pain of sorrow are not.

Thus, in every man the mighty battle rages, but the fortune of the fight is not alike in all—in some the animal hosts rage madly in their triumph, in a few the glorious army of the god has gained a silent victory, but in the vast majority, and especially now, at the balance of the race cycle, the battle rages fiercely, the issue still in doubt. Now, therefore, is the time to strike, and show that the battle is not fought in man alone, but in Man, and that the issue of each individual fight is inextricably bound up in that of the great battle in which the issue cannot be doubtful, for the divine is in its nature union and love, the animal discord and hate. Strike, therefore, and strike boldly! These are no idle words, nor the utopian imaginings of a dreamer, but practical truths. For in what does man differ from the natural animal? Is it not in his power of association and combination? Therefore does he live in communities and develop responsibility. From whence spring the roots of society, if not from mutual assistance and interchange of service? And if the race offers the individual the advantages of such combination, perfected by ages of bitter experience, do not those at least who are elder sons of the race, and find themselves in the enjoyment of such organizations, owe a debt of gratitude to their parent, and in return for the fortune amassed with tears and groaning by their forbears, repay the boon, by putting the experience of the past out to interest, and distributing the income acquired among

their poorer brethren, who are equally the sons of their parent. And in this race family there are many poor, paupers physical, paupers mental, and moral paupers. How, then, shall the richer brethren help? Shower gold among the masses? Compel all to study the arts and sciences? Display the naked truth to the world? Nay, then should these poor children of the race be bound, not free! Let us, therefore, enquire into the problem.

In the evolution of all human societies we find the factor of caste; in the childhood of the race, caste is regulated by birth, an heirloom from the past civilizations of older stocks. Gradually, however, the birth caste wanes before the rising money caste, and hence material possessions become the standard of worth in the individual, in that the race is then plunged most deeply in material interests and has reached its highest point of development on the material plane. But the zenith of the material is the nadir of the spiritual; the law of progress moves calmly onward with the wheel of time, and nature, who never leaps, develops a new standard of worth, the intellectual, which we see even now asserting itself in proportion to its adaptability to average comprehension and the material standard of the times, and pointing to the development of a new caste standard, to be in its turn superseded by the caste of true worth in which the spiritual development of the race will be completely established. This, however, will be the work of ages and for humanity as a whole cannot easily be quickened, for it is impossible to change the natural law of evolution which proceeds spirally in curves that never re-enter into themselves, but ever ascend to so-called higher planes. At certain periods, however, of these cycles, a forecast or antetype is offered of the consummation, whereby an example of humanity in its perfect state is dimly shadowed forth. Such a period the white race is now entering upon, and the earnest of perfect type humanity will be given by those, whether of the money or mind caste, who, realizing the goal of evolution and capable of destroying the illusion of time, by translating the future into the present, freely extend the benefits of their caste to the pariahs of the race, and approaching them in friend-

ship, gain a practical knowledge of their wretchedness and endeavour to awaken the latent divinity that slumbers within.

With the sword of self-sacrifice, the rightful possession of the God-man, and with the good of humanity as their watchword, they should march against the forces of individualism and self, and, with this watchword, prove all institutions of the race, especially those fresh from the womb of time, and comparing them with this one ideal, ever asking: "Does this, or this, tend to the realization of universal brotherhood?" If it is not so, the effort should be to turn such forces as act against the stream of right progress, gently and silently into their proper course; but if the thing makes for the common good, they should by all means and at all hazards foster the weakling and watch round its cradle with loving care. Now the path of right progress should include the amelioration of the individual, the nation, the race, and humanity; and ever keeping in view the last and grandest object, the perfecting of man, should reject all apparent bettering of the individual at the expense of his neighbour. In actual life the evolution of these factors, individual, race and nation, are so intimately interblended, that it would be wrong to assume any progression from one to the other; but since it is only possible to see one face of an object at a time, so it is necessary to trace the course of progress along some particular line, both for its simplification and general comprehension. With regard, then, to the individual, the great sanitary improvements which the money caste enjoys, should be extended to all; public baths and recreation grounds, free concerts and lecturers provided; the museums and picture galleries thrown open at times when the worker can visit them; the formation of athletic and mutual improvement clubs among the poor encouraged. All of which reforms were easy of accomplishment if only a small portion of the enormous wealth of the country, now lying idle, were generously and self-sacrificingly expended. Unfortunately there are few of the money caste who yet realize the latent unity of man, and the promotion of such schemes is left to those who, lacking the most potent power of the times, are unsupported, because there is no "money" in the

enterprise. But could such men be found and the superfluous wealth of the country turned in such directions, how great would be the progress of the individual ! Health would improve and taste develop; healthy surroundings would favour healthy thought, the sight of monuments of art and science would bring refinement and both engender self-respect.

But it may be said, if wealth is withdrawn for such purposes, work would be taken from other labour, and so the misery of the workers increased, while the advantages offered to the masses would only increase their demand for greater pleasures, and render them still more dissatisfied. It will, however, be seen that not only the same amount of labour would be required in works and institutions for the public good, but even that such undertakings, being of a plain and sober nature, would give employment to larger numbers, than money spent in finer or more luxurious labour. Nor would dissatisfaction arise among the masses as anticipated; for men large-hearted and -minded enough to inaugurate such reforms would display the same spirit in all things and offer an example in private life of sober and abstemious conduct; extravagance and display would cease, so that the brilliant toilettes and luxurious habits of the money caste would no longer provoke the miserable emulation of tawdry finery and debasing vices among the pariahs; for the poor copy the rich, and if the fashionable bars of the West End lacked patrons, the gin palaces of the slums would not drive so roaring a trade. It is the debased taste of the rich which has rendered a surfeit of meat necessary for the maintenance of his powers in the eyes of the artisan, and so, at a price far beyond his slender resources, he adopts a diet which wastes the tissues and disquiets the system. And if the advisability of a sudden change of diet is contested, at least moderation in flesh eating should be recommended, and a proof of the possibility of maintaining one's full powers given by those who desire the physical and moral sanity of the race. Setting aside all argument drawn from not generally accredited sources, such as the codes of the great teachers of the past, and the synthesis of all experience, physical, psychic, and spiritual, we

may bring into court the medical faculty who are unanimously of the opinion that a reduced quantity of meat would improve the general health, and that many of the common ailments are due solely to excess in the use of animal food in particular, and to overfeeding in general; while chemical analysis proves conclusively that vegetable food, especially cereals, contain nutritive qualities vastly in excess of animal.

Moreover, if the false feeling of degradation in the performance of so-called menial offices, were removed by the example of the money and mind castes performing such offices themselves, or at least encouraging every invention and supporting every effort for minimizing such labour, many of the troubles which are daily taxing the resources of our housekeepers to the utmost, would be removed, and a solution to the difficult problem of the servant question arrived at; the present absurdity of domestic service would find no place, and instead of one thousand little backs bent over one thousand little kitchen ranges preparing one thousand little dinners, we should have a sane cooperative system whereby the small worries of domesticity which destroy the harmony of so many homes, would be banished. If such sanitary measures, therefore, were adopted, we should have physical and mental powers continuing into old age, instead of a general belief that fifty or sixty years terminates the average man's usefulness and there then remains nothing for him but a life of inactivity and general feebleness. Of course this applies to the average individual; for we have sufficient instances of mental giants who continue their labours till the closing hours of life; these, however, intuitively or naturally practice moderation and plainness in eating, and often give striking proofs of extraordinary abstemiousness.

If, then, such moderation of private life was practised by the accredited leaders of society, no inducement to excess would offer itself to their followers; or even if the animal still rioted in the masses, it would not be shamefully encouraged in its madness by the excesses of respectability.

Thus the necessary physical requirements of all classes would be reduced to a level, and a basis obtained on which to build a

firm fabric of national progress towards the realization of human unity. Meantime the mental evolution of all classes would also make vast strides, and the impulses given to study and the development of artistic tastes, would bring the real genius of the nation to the front and not confine the recruiting of professions to the money caste, irrespective of individual capacity. The present false standard of taste would fall out of date as completely as the wonderful cottage ornaments of the near past, and neatness in private decoration would, by harmonious surroundings, induce a harmony of thought and feeling. Who, for instance, could indite a poem or work of inspiration in an over-ornamented drawing-room of the modern style, with its heterogeneous and multicolored collection of bric-a-brac and trifles? But with harmonious surroundings and following such a mode of life, the individual would develop within him the larger instincts of his nature, and the flower of self-sacrifice, then finding a congenial soil, would blossom in the hearts of the many and thus, destroying all narrowness of judgment and begetting an ever widening interest in the general welfare, would develop new social organizations and institutions; the tone of the nation would be elevated and true worth become the standard of judgment among its citizens.

Moreover, seeing that we have already proof of such an ideal being dimly sensed in all nations of the white race in the increasing discontent of nearly all classes with the existing state of affairs, no nation would stand alone in this, but the wave of progress would sweep simultaneously through all the sub-races of the race and beget a general desire to establish healthy relationships between nations and to foster every effort to unite the larger units of the race into one harmonious whole. Further, a belief in the essential unity of all souls would create stronger dissatisfaction with the existing state of social relations between the sexes, the potentialities of woman would be studied and opportunity given for that development which has previously been denied to womankind. Plain justice would demand the same ostracism of male harlots which is now meted out with so much severity to the female sex alone, and either

the same leniency extended to women as is now given to men, or the higher moral standard and wisdom of awakened humanity, would compel the supply in harlotry to cease by the extinction of the demand. To prepare, therefore, a ground in which this consummation could be achieved, it would be necessary to extend the full benefits of intellectual training to women; to encourage and advocate the necessity of athletic exercises for girls and to provide for the same in the schools of the state; to jealously guard the health of the women working classes by sanitary improvements in all manufactories and labour establishments, and to kill out the evil of over-long hours of sedentary occupation in vitiated atmospheres. Moreover, it should be made possible for women in the position of the present daughters of the lower middle classes and of parents with limited incomes to follow a calling in life, instead of being forced, against their wills and finer instincts, into the matrimonial market, to gain their bread and cheese at the price of discontented motherhood.

No doubt the establishment of international leagues for mutual help and on a basis other than that of self-interest

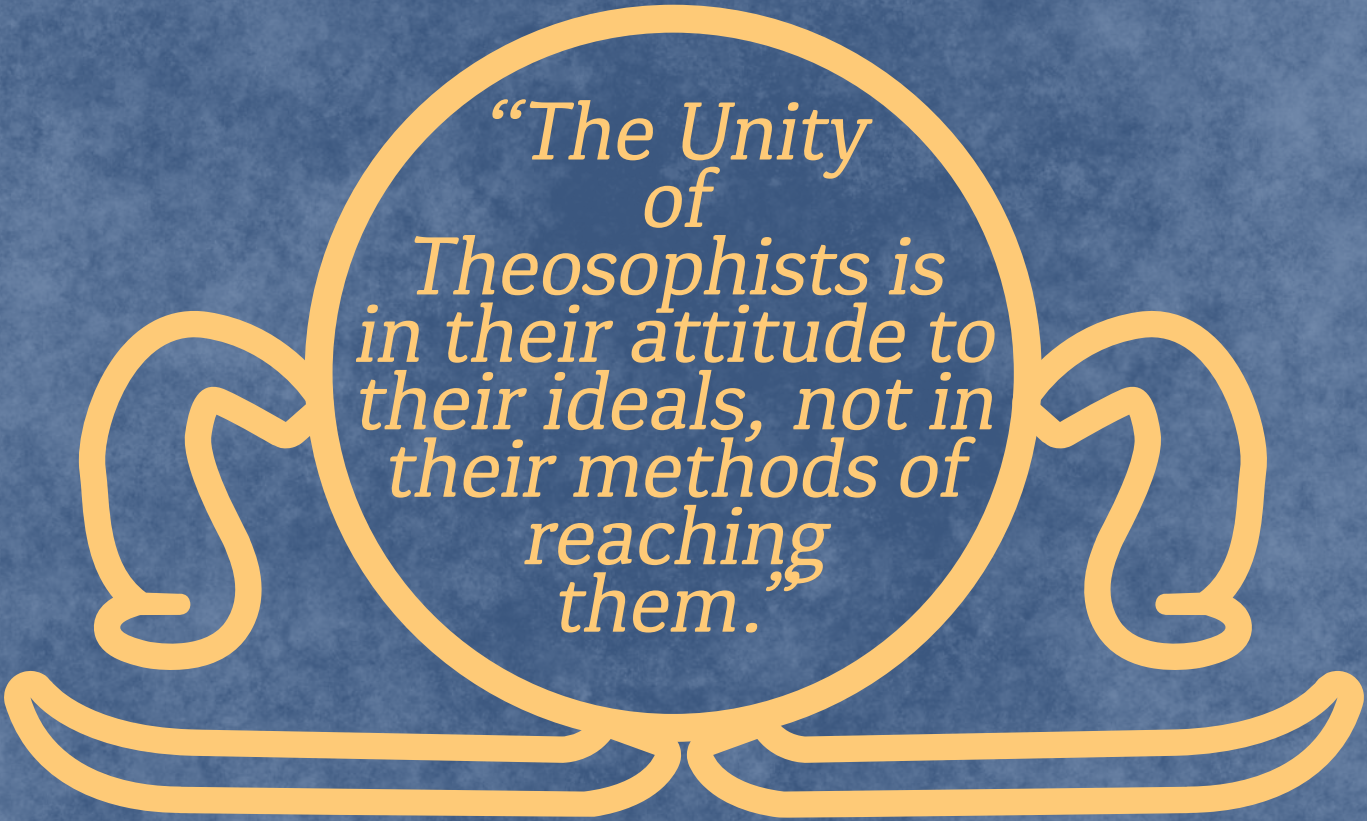
will, at the present time, appear to the majority the acme of folly; but when the race has, in its social institutions, given valid proof of the efficacy of the method, the change of base becomes a possibility. The spread of education and the ability to study original authorities and to get at facts at first hand would rapidly clear away the clouds of national and sectarian prejudice, and the birth of the God within would render it impossible to poison the young minds of the race by inoculating them with the virus of dogmatism and of past national pride and passion as treasured in the orthodox theological and historical textbooks of the times; the past triumphs of the animal in individual nations would be regarded merely as the obscuration of the spiritual and yet so ordered in the economy of nature that the sun of humanity should finally shine forth more gloriously in contrast to the darkness of the past. Thus the necessity for keeping up large armies and fleets would cease, and the enormous wealth so saved could be turned into channels of national improvement, thus point-

ing the way for the desertion of national forces from the ranks of the animal to the standard of the divine.

It would be long to trace, even roughly, the possibilities of international cooperation which, in its turn, would be extended to racial cooperation of which the potentialities almost surpass description and reach that consummation of which the Theosophical Society has planted the first openly conscious germ, in endeavouring to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour; what the potentialities of this glorious humanity may be, none but the student of the Science of Life can

dream, as he alone can sense the labours of the Eldest Brothers of the Race for their poorer brethren.

Let us then, aspiring to the divine, now and within, fight down the animal, that so we may be enabled to tell friend from foe in the greater battle, and, awakened by the cry, "Thou art thy brother's keeper," gird on shield and buckler for the cause of the divine Unity of Humanity in the struggle for existence. PHILANTHROPOS.



*“The Unity
of
Theosophists is
in their attitude to
their ideals, not in
their methods of
reaching
them.”*

Annie Besant

THEOSOPHY AND MODERN SOCIALISM

BY J. BRAILSFORD-BRIGHT

Lucifer I Vol 4 December 1887

by a Socialist Student of Theosophy



THE writer of an article on “Brotherhood” in the December number of “Lucifer” has given an erroneous impression of Socialism, which, as a student of Theosophy (I do not know if I can yet call myself a “disciple”) who has been in a large measure drawn to this great study through Socialism, I may, perhaps, be allowed to correct. Indeed, I should feel that I was shirking a task clearly indicated to me at the present moment were I to leave such errors, so far as all the readers of “Lucifer” are concerned, uncorrected.

“T. B. H.,” the writer of the article in question — an interesting and, I believe, useful article in many respects — has, I venture to conjecture, confused the general system or class of systems known as Socialism, with certain methods of propagating its principles. Let me commence by quoting the paragraph in his article to which I take exception. He says (“Lucifer”, No.3, p. 213): —

(1) “Socialism, as preached during this nineteenth century, it [the Universal Brotherhood, which is the mainspring of Theosophy] J. B. B.] certainly is not. (2) Indeed, there would be little difficulty in showing that modern materialistic Socialism is directly at variance with all the teachings of Theosophy. (3) Socialism advocates a direct interference with the results of the law of Karma, and would attempt to alter the dénouement of the parable of the talents by giving to the man who hid his talent in a napkin, a portion of the

ten talents acquired by the labour of his more industrious fellow

I will first take the three statements contained in this paragraph separately, and, for convenience’s sake, in inverted order. The allegation against Socialism contained in the third is the most specific, and that which, in the eyes of Theosophists, must appear the most serious. This statement — namely, that “Socialism requires a direct interference with the results of the law of Karma, and would attempt, etc..” — constitutes, in fact, the only definite premise in his argument. Of course, if Socialists do advocate, consciously or unconsciously, anything of the sort, they advocate a physical and psychical impossibility, and their movement is doomed to failure. More than this, if they do soconsciously, they are sinning against the light, and are impious as well as childish in their efforts. Of such, clearly, the Universal Brotherhood is not.

But neither Socialists nor Socialism, “as preached in this nineteenth century”, does anything of the kind. By “materialistic” Socialism, I presume “T. B. H.” implies (if he has really studied Socialism at all, which I venture to doubt) so much of it as can be urged upon purely worldly grounds, such as the better feeding, housing, etc., of those who do the active work of society, technical instruction, such general education as fits a man for the domestic and secular duties of life, and the reorganization of society with these objects upon a [Page 283] “co-operative basis”, [Co-operative, that is to say, in the sense that the various

sections and individual members of society shall willingly co-operate, being fully conscious of their interdependence — St. George Lane Fox] in which public salaried officials, elected by their fellows, will take the place of capitalists and landlords, and in which the production and distribution of wealth will be more systematically regulated. This system, of course, takes no account of the law of Karma.

In a rough sort of way, however, all Socialists recognise the law, so far as its effects are visible in this world in the physical, intellectual, and moral planes. The fact that “the evil that men do” (and that classes and nations do also “lives after them”, none are more ready to own and act upon. The action and re-action of individual will and individual and social circumstance both upon each other and upon individual and social conditions forms part of the foundations of Socialism. Quâ Socialists, we do not, of course, take any more account of the law of Karma than do non-Socialistic Christians and Agnostics, but I maintain that there is nothing whatever in Socialism repugnant a belief in this law. If anything, it is the other way. All Socialists, whether they call themselves Collectionists or Anarchists, Christian Socialists, [Socialists who consider their Christianity to supply them with sufficient motives for their Socialism. They do not strictly form a sect either of Socialists or of Christians] Communists, or purely economic Socialists, are anxious to give freer play to human abilities and social impulses, by creating leisure and educational opportunities for all. We may thus, if it is permitted to me to speculate while criticising, become the instruments of a greater equalization and acceleration of Karmic growth, “good” or “evil”, upon and among individual souls during their incarnation upon this planet. This would come to pass by the transfer of a great deal of the responsibility for Karmic results which now lies with each individual in his personal capacity upon the collective entities composed of individuals acting in public capacities, e.g., as nations, provinces, communes, or trade corporations.

It is surely true even now to speak of a collective e.g., a national or municipal Karma, as we do of a national conscience. We speak of reward or retribution to na-

tions and cities as if they had distinct personalities — are these mere figures of speech ? But what is more important is that Socialists may prepare the way for a revelation of the noble truths of Theosophy to the multitude; they may help to raise the intellectual and instinctive moral standard of the whole community to such an extent that all will, in the next generation following after the Social Revolution, [This word, of course, is employed in the general sense, without any reference to the physical character which the revolution may assume. It may be attended with violence or it may be as peaceful as, for instance, the religious revolution accomplished by Constantine in the fourth century. All I am postulating is a more or less sudden transformation of the existing social order, effected by one of those impulses with which evolution seems to complete its periods, and of which Theosophy may some day afford the explanation] be amenable to these truths. In this way, Socialism would not, indeed, interfere with the results of the law of Karma, but would, as the precursor of Theosophy, be the indirect means of enabling multitudes to rise and free themselves from its bonds.

As to the parable of the talents, well, Socialists would be only too glad to see its moral better enforced in this and other “civilized” countries. To them it seems impossible that it could be less enforced or taken to heart than it is now. They see that under the present system of society — that vast engine of usury, by which whole classes are held in economic servitude to other classes — many are encouraged to live in sloth and hide their talents, even if they put them to no worse use. This could hardly happen under a régime of economic Socialism (such a régime, for instance, as Lawrence Grönlund contemplates in his “Co-operative Commonwealth”), for these able-bodied or talented citizens who declined to work would simply be left to starve or sponge upon their relatives. Under a purely Communist régime, [The only kind to which T.B.H’s remark are in any way applicable] no doubt there would be a few who would shirk their proper share of social work, but at least none would be brought up from infancy, as now, to “eat the bread of idleness”.

Finally, on this point, if to advocate such changes as Socialists advocate, the substitution of social co-operation for competition; of production with a view to use for production with a view to profit; of peace between nations, classes, and individuals, for war; of harmonious organization, to the advantage of all, for *laissez faire* and chaos for the advantage or supposed advantage of a few. If, I say, to advocate such changes be to advocate an interference with the results of the law of Karma, so must be every proposal for the amelioration of the physical or intellectual welfare of our fellows. And if participation in this and other movements, which may with equal justice be called materialistic, be prohibited to Theosophists, they may as well, for all the good their Universal Brotherhood will do to the masses of those at present outside it, stay at home and content themselves with communing with the select few who alone will ever be in a position to appreciate them. If, for one reason or another, they do not care to co-operate with Socialists, let them at least recognise that the latter are preparing their way for them, doing the dirty (?) and laborious work, without which Theosophy can never descend, from the serene heights on which it now dwells, to replenish spiritually, this sadly benighted world. For, apart from a healthier physical and psychical atmosphere than "civilized" life engenders in either rich or poor (collective Karmic effects), a fair amount of leisure and freedom from sordid care is indispensable to most human beings for the higher development of the perceptive or gnostic faculties. At present this minimum of leisure and economic independence is probably unattainable by nineteen-twentieths of the population, yet this self-same society, with its scientific learning and experience, its machinery, and its business organization, contains within it all the germs of such a reconstruction of the physical environment as shall very [Page 285] shortly place the means of spiritual and psychical regeneration within the reach of all.

"T. B. H.'s" second statement is that "Indeed, there would be very little difficulty in showing that modern materialistic Socialism is directly at variance with all the teachings of Theosophy". Such an expres-

sion as "materialistic Socialism" is, as I have already hinted, erroneous. All Socialism is materialistic in the sense that it concerns itself primarily with the material or physical conditions of mankind. So do chemistry and mechanics, pure or applied; so, in ordinary politics, do Liberalism and Conservatism. No Socialism is materialistic in the sense that it is based upon any materialistic as distinct from spiritualistic or pantheistic conceptions of the universe. It has hardly any more to do with such questions than have cotton-spinning or boot-making. I do not, however, pretend to mistake "T. B. H.'s" meaning. Taking Socialism in its purely economic aspect (which I admit is the foremost for the present, and must remain so until disposed of), he asserts that "there would be very little difficulty in proving, etc". This is a mere general charge against it, although, I think, a less plausible and, therefore — from the point of view of harmony between Socialists and Theosophists — a less serious one than the particular charge which follows it, and with which I have already endeavoured to deal. For my own enlightenment I would like to have some samples, taken at random, of his skill in showing this variance; but I doubt if such a demonstration could effect any good. Moreover, it is impossible to answer the charge on account of its vague, albeit sweeping and all-comprehensive, character. "All the teachings of Theosophy" are quite too much for a student like myself to attempt to compare them with economic Socialism as a system. Nor do I think one with ten times the learning and discernment that I can claim would readily attempt it. I merely record, therefore, my sincere conviction that on this general point "T. B. H." is also mistaken, and that it is not Socialism, economic or otherwise, which he has really been scrutinizing, but the sayings and doings of some particular "Socialist" whom he has seen or read of.

Individual Socialists have, of course, many faults which cannot fairly be charged to the social and economic tenets they profess. Thus one besetting fault of militant advocates of the cause is the use of violent language against individual capitalists, police officials, and landlords. It is so easy, even for men of a calibre superior to the aver-

age, to be drawn on from righteous indignation at a corrupt system, to abuse of the creatures and instruments thereof — or even, on occasion, to personal violence against them. Every good cause has its Peters no less than its Judases. Socialism, unfortunately, has a rich crop of the former. Another still worse fault on the part of certain agitators, but one which might easily be predicted from the character of the struggle and the condition of the classes who must form the backbone of the Socialistic party, is the frequent appeal to lower motives, such as revenge and love of luxury.

But such faults, although by all human prevision necessary incidents in the movement, are by no means inherent in Socialism. Even the purely “materialistic” Socialism of Karl Marx, to which “T. B. H.” seems (although, I think, not with any clear picture of it in his mind) to refer, aims simply at securing the decencies and ordinary comforts of life to all as a recompense for more evenly distributed social labour. The very conditions of life under a co-operative commonwealth such as Hyndman, Grönlund, and other followers of the late Karl Marx’s economic ideal, have in view — above all the obligation (virtual, at any rate) under which every able-bodied member of the community would find himself or herself to do a few hours of useful work of one kind or another every day, and the elimination of the commercial and speculative element, with the wretched insecurity and dangerous temptations which it involves — would preclude inordinate luxury. A healthy simplicity of life would become first “fashionable”, then usual. [I do not, of course, mean to predict that “sin” (or its Theosophical equivalent) would die out. It is, after all, a relative matter to the capacities and potentialities of the individual and his surroundings. Under Socialism, sensuality, social or plutocratic pride, and other sins fostered by the present order, would simply give way to ambition (to obtain popular distinction, e.g. as an artist or inventor) and perhaps to magic and other at present unfashionable vices] Communism, of course, goes further than economic Socialism, as it implies not only the claim of the individual upon the community for the means of labour and the en-

joyment of its fruits or their equivalent, but his claim for subsistence, irrespective of the amount and social value of the labour which he is able to perform. It would abolish, therefore, not only individual property in the means or production, but in the products themselves. The practicability of Communism, the motto of which is “From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs”, obviously depends upon the prevalence of more generous motives, of a higher sense of duty both to work and to give — a more perfect development, in fact, of the sense of human solidarity. It is for this very reason more commendable than mere economic Socialism, as an ideal, to the attention of Theosophists, although its appreciation, on the national or universal scale, cannot yet be said to have entered “the sphere of practical politics”.

Communism, which may be either Collectivist or Anarchist, leads me to add a few words about Anarchism. I refer, of course, to the social ideal philosophically denoted by this name, and not to the means advocated by some of its supporters for putting an end to the present society. Anarchism involves Communism as well as extreme decentralization; more than this, it involves the abolition of all permanent machinery of law and order such as the “State” is supposed to provide, and the abolition of physical force as a method of suasion even for criminals and lunatics. As a protest against political domination of all kinds, and an antidote to the excessive centralization advocated by some State Socialists, Anarchism may be of some use; but it is obviously further even than Communism (of the Collectivist variety) from becoming a school of “practical” politics. It could only become so after society at large, all the world over, had grown sufficiently homogeneous and solidaire for its members to co-operate spontaneously and automatically for all necessary purposes, grouping themselves into large or small organizations (limbs and organs) as required, and forming a complete body social, or Mesocosm, if I may be allowed to coin a word for the purpose.

The erroneous conceptions of Socialism which I believe “T. B. H.” to have formed, do not necessarily invalidate the first state-

ment in the paragraph of his article upon which I have been commenting, to wit, that the Universal Brotherhood which he has in view (and which, I understand from him, forms a part of the programme of the Theosophical Society) is not "Socialism as preached in the nineteenth century, or at any other time, past or future, for that matter". Still I am inclined to hope that a more intimate study of Socialism will lead him to see that, whether identical or not, they are at any rate not antagonistic. My own belief is that Theosophy and "materialistic" Socialism will be found to be working along different planes in the same direction.

Any Universal Brotherhood of Theosophists must be based upon Socialist principles, inter alia, its foundations may extend further and deeper than those of Socialism, but cannot be less extensive. Greed and war (political or industrial), social caste and privilege, political domination of man over man, are as out of place in a true brotherhood as wolves in a flock of sheep. Yet the exclusion of these anti-social demons and the enthronement in their place of Universal Love and Peace, if effected by such a Brotherhood, would simply leave Socialists nothing to do but to organize the material framework of their co-operative commonwealths. To preach economic or "materialistic" Socialism to a world already converted to the highest and completest form of Socialism, would be to

advocate the plating of gold with tin or copper.

Modern Socialism, if the noble aspirations of some of its apostles may be taken as an earnest of its future, is already developing (incidentally, of course, to its main economic and ethical doctrines) strong aesthetic and spiritual tendencies. No reader of William Morris or Edward Carpenter, to speak of English Socialists only, will fail to notice this. At present the mass of Socialists content themselves with basing their social and economic faith upon the ethical principles of Justice, Freedom, and Brotherhood. But the highest, because most mystical, of these principles, that of Brotherhood, or better, Human Solidarity — the ancient conception of "charity" — forms the unconscious link between modern Socialism on the one hand and Esoteric Buddhism, Esoteric Christianity, and Theosophy generally, on the other. I say unconscious link, but I mean to imply that it may soon be rendered conscious and visible. As the various "orthodox" varieties, first of Christianity, then of Mahomedanism, perish with the collapse or destruction of the social systems that have grown up along with them, this simple religion of Human Solidarity will take possession of the deserted shrines of Christ and Allah, and will begin to seek out its own fount of inspiration. Then will be the time for the Universal Brotherhood of Theosophists to step into the breach.



1837-1933

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THEOSOPHY AND MODERN SOCIALISM (PART 2)

BY J. BRAILSFORD-BRIGHT

by a Socialist Student of Theosophy



(Conclusion.)

BUT if it is true that the Socialist movement, in its practical effects, is confined for the present to the material domain, that its first victories would be in that domain, and that its present supporters for the most part do not look beyond it, I cannot concede that there is nothing in Socialism to command the attention of Theosophists from higher points of view. The movement to my mind is simply part of the great evolutionary current which is bringing back the true Golden Age, the age in which Humanity and Divinity, Love and Wisdom, will once more be united as they have never been within historical times. Economic Socialism I look upon simply as the necessary form which precedes, and foreshadows, the substance. The man cannot become a complete man until he has first become a complete human animal ; the divine spark has no temple yet to occupy. Neither can society at large in any nation or world become a true spiritualised organism until it has first evolved the form necessary for the development of something like what Mr. Bax has termed a corporate consciousness. If the present capitalistic regime, with its seething warrens of human misery, will come to be regarded by posterity as Laurence Gronlund describes it, as the teething period of society, the next, or collectivist regime, will doubtless correspond with the school. Its individual members having been run for a generation or two into the same educational mould, and class distinctions and antipathies having died a natural death (their social and economic

roots being destroyed), society will acquire the cohesion of a well-ordered family, and the next step, under communism, to complete fraternity and solidarity, will be a comparatively easy one. It will be for society the zenith of sensual, aesthetic, and other purely human pleasures, as youth is for the individual. But the potentialities of the higher life will already have been realised by many, and all will be growing ripe for self-revelation of the higher truths.* I look forward to a time when it will be just as exceptional to find an individual destitute of that auto-gnosis which may become the instrument of psychic regeneration and development, as it is now to find one born both deaf and blind, and thus incapable of intellectual development by educational processes. The social commonwealths of the future will act first as physical and intellectual, then as psychical and spiritual, forcing-houses for humanity. I do not mean to say that any evolution or revolution of the social structure will change the sum total of experiences, painful and pleasurable, for each individual, but that in the existence or existences which he passes under the coming regime, the liberties and opportunities for experience of all kinds being enormously multiplied, he will be ripened at a much faster rate ; also that the difference between the average and the extremes of individual conditions will be very much reduced. If I am right in this forecast I may truly maintain that Socialism, although itself but part of the evolutionary current now prevailing, does and will act as the precursor of j¶\>m-evolutionary progress, and is calculated to “ raise the intel-

lectual and instinctive moral standard of the whole community to such an extent that all will, in the next generation after the Social Revolution, be amenable to the truths of Theosophy.”

Roughly my idea as to materialistic and utilitarian tendencies, is that these will, under the social commonwealth, bum themselves out. The grosser forms of luxury, which have flourished so easily under modern capitalistic and ancient slave-owning communities, will be almost impossible in a state of society in which idle and parasitical classes are abolished. Industry and social equality will not be fruitful soil for such vices. On the other hand free scope will be given to the development of the more social luxuries, and especially to the arts. Great reforms will, no doubt, be introduced at an early period in the physical education of children, and in the ordinary personal habits of all the citizens. These reforms, partly individual, partly collective, in their initiation, will of themselves tend to extinguish many of the vicious (that is to say anti-natural) impulses of the present generation. But vice and sin are, in many respects, merely relative terms to knowledge. To whom much is given, from him much will be expected ; and there may be quite as much evil in one age, in relation to its opportunities, as in another.

I do not assert that the above represents the general view taken by Socialist thinkers of the future evolution of Society and its individual components. Few care to look so far ahead ; nor, indeed, would it be profitable or advisable for those who do to utter their ideas broadcast among mixed audiences, or to publish them in the militant Socialist organs. As Socialists, they address themselves to the mass of their average-thinking fellow-citizens, and find it a sufficiently hard task to impress the latter with these fundamental economic truths upon the acceptance of which the most necessary, immediate, work of the movement depends. But I do assert that the chief writers and expounders of the different schools of Modern Socialism agree in looking forward to future results far transcending the economic domain. No student of the question who has attended lectures of the educational class delivered by the leaders of the English Socialist groups,

or who has acquainted himself with the higher views and aspirations published in the text books, and in English, French, or German papers and magazines,* will deny this. The economic revolution is, to the more serious thinkers in the movement, merely a stepping-stone to the physical, intellectual and moral regeneration of man and society.

An ideal of “ Brotherhood ” which “ begins and ends in physical existence,” is certainly not a fair description of the Socialists’ ideal. Indeed, the very words employed carry the refutation of their intended application. When we are speaking of persons allied for some purely material and either bad or indifferently-moral object, such as the construction of a road, the consumption of a dinner, stock exchange “ operations,” house-breaking, robbery, and swindling, political party victories, and the spoils of office, we may call them “ bands,” “ gangs,” “ syndicates,” “ groups,” or “ parties,” &c, but we should not think of calling them “ brotherhoods,” unless in the jocular and ironical sense. Socialism, on the contrary, like Theosophy and the higher religions, creates such bonds of spiritual intimacy between its disciples as demand warmer and closer terms, like “ brotherhood,” “ comradeship,” and “ solidarity.” Socialism, when completely grasped, rises in the hearts of its disciples to the rank of a religion, and thus justifies the halfmystic naturalism of some of its poetry and oratory. Socialists may already be said to constitute a great Universal Church, minus dogmas and priestcraft—undesirable appendages which, let us hope, we may never be cursed with !

I cannot refrain from quoting here a few sentences from the end of the twelfth chapter of Gronlund’s “ Co-operative Commonwealth,” which shows how near to the Theosophic knowledge even an agnostic Socialist can be carried in his speculations. Discussing the religion of the New Order, he says, “ The thought of being alive somewhere a thousand years hence is so pleasant, and life— bounded by the cradle and the grave— so futile, that mankind will probably cling to their belief in immortality, possibly reconciling it with their intelligence by setting up some distinction between personal identity and the memory

of the transitory circumstances of our physical life, and holding that the former persists with alternate consciousness and oblivion, as in this life, whilst the latter vanishes. The religion of the future is likely, in our opinion, to be a form of belief in a Will of the Universe. Our own nature suggests this ; evolution illustrates it ; and all existing forms of thought have in common the conception of a Supreme Will as Providence for humanity, though not for the individual, entering into vital relations with the individual only through humanity as the mediator, and commanding the interdependence of mankind. Religion may thus be elevated from a narrow personal relation between the individual and his maker into a social relation between humanity and its destiny.”

The attitude of Socialism towards the various religions existing in different countries, whether orthodox “ State ” religions, or unorthodox or “ Dissenting,” is one of supreme tolerance. State subvention and protection to any form of religion would of course be withdrawn by the Social Commonwealth, but religious persecution of any kind would be equally conspicuous by its absence. Ecclesiastical corporations would probably not be allowed to occupy land or to pursue industries under any different conditions than those which were permitted to other corporations; but this would be the only form of restriction to which religious sects would be subjected. Thus Mormonism and unpopular

and even charlatanesque creeds might be allowed greater liberty than in America or any other “ civilized ” State under the Old Order. The influence of the State under the New Order would be positive rather than negative or restrictive. “ The Eternal No,” would not be heard so incessantly as it is now. The sphere of the State would be confined, so far as possible, to the administration (or rather regulation *) of the business of the country, and the education of the young. The latter would, no doubt, include a great deal more than it does at present; the physical, aesthetic and moral (in the sense of social) education of the children, would be provided for quite as carefully as the purely intellectual. At the same time, as the object of such education would be to produce, or rather assist Nature in produ-

cing, healthy, helpful and self-respecting men and women— good citizens of this world— and not to instil any doctrines as to past or future existences, or duties having special reference thereto, it would be purely secular in its character. The basis of morality would not be defined either as religious or as utilitarian. Morality itself, or, as some would prefer to term it, sociality, would be instilled into the minds and hearts of the children very much as in the “ well-bred ” families of to-day notions of honour and “ gentlemanly ” or “ lady-like ” conduct are instilled ; notions and sentiments which probably exercise quite as important influences for good or evil on the morals of the present generation, among the “ upper ” or privileged classes, as any religious principles. Social honour, social solidarity, and finally human solidarity, would replace family honour, “ clannishness,” and patriotism. Social life would replace in importance, without necessarily destroying, family life.

This social life of the co-operative commonwealth of the future will by no means entail the dull uniformity of habits and character which some, who have been frightened by the bugbear of equality, imagine. Artificial equality is, of course, neither possible nor desirable. The constituent elements of the new society, ethnological, religious, intellectual, and otherwise, will necessarily remain as varied and unequal— for a generation or so, at any rate— as they are now ; but they will be better assorted, better synthesized and harmonized. Imperfect types, intellectual or psychical, and crude beliefs, will not be crushed out under the New Order ; but they will simply die a natural death like bed-sores on a convalescent patient. The object of Socialists, as distinguished from Absolutists and pseudo-Socialists, like Bismarck and some of our legislators at home, is to give Nature a free hand, or rather, having studied her tendencies, to assist and co-operate with her ; that of the Absolutists and Authoritarians is either to imprison and “ suppress ” her, or, by way of variety, to put her in harness and lash her forward along a road which she had no intention of taking. Some of these Absolutists call themselves Revolutionists, but the revolution which they would, prepare is

one which Nature would resent and revenge herself upon by kicking over the traces in a bloody reaction. Such revolutionists are far from numerous in the ranks of modern Socialism ; when found, they generally turn out to be agents provocateurs.

The genuine Social Revolutionist leaves the dangerous and immoral weapons of compulsion, provocation and suppression to the enemy— the weapons he advocates are political and economic liberty and education. Compulsion and suppression he would only apply to the idlers, the thieves, the violent, and the dissolute— those ill-favoured products of a chaotic and corrupt civilization. These he would coerce only so far as necessary for the safety and welfare of the rest. If the Social Revolution cannot be effected without violence, that will be, not because Socialists try to force the changes they wish to realize upon Society before it is ripe for them, but because the class or party in power, in its own selfish determination to suppress them, takes the initiative in violence.

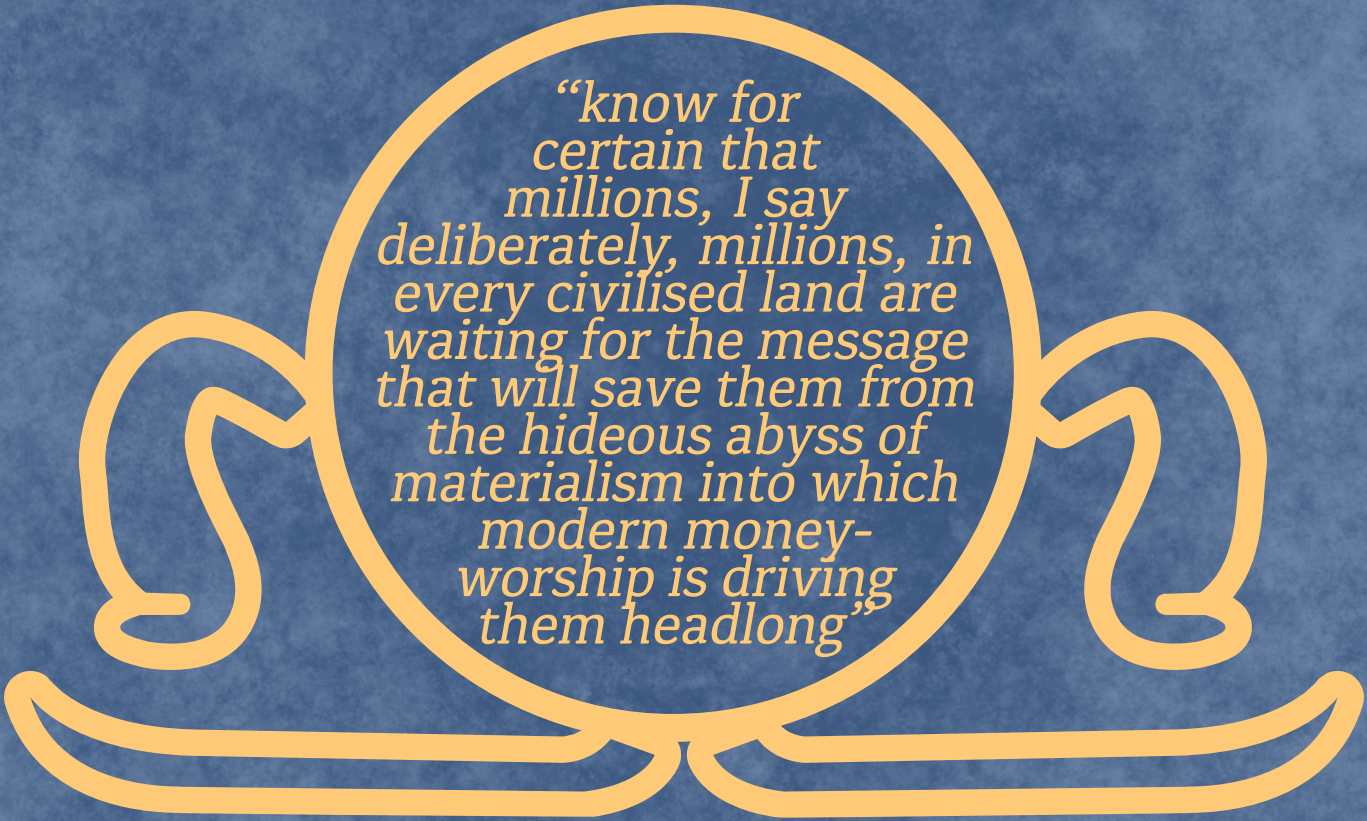
This leads me to say a few words about Mr. Harbottle's objection that we Socialists have such " an innate hatred of domination," coupled with the astounding assertion that " we are prepared to substitute for the existing domination of intelligence (the italics are mine), that of mere numbers." The latter assertion I hardly care to reply seriously to. Anyone who knows how, even in the most democratic countries of the present regime, like France and America, the poor candidate is handicapped, however intelligent, will agree with me that the field of popular selection is virtually limited to such intelligence as is coupled with wealth. Now such intelligence is not necessarily of the highest order— often quite the contrary. Socialists, at any rate, mistrust it very much as a " dominating" force in politics. Moreover, Mr. Harbottle is perfectly correct in the first part of his statement— Socialists have " an innate hatred " of " domination " of any kind. The only authority which they agree to recognise is that of the freely-elected official or administrator during his term of office, or until dismissed. The present direct electoral methods, by which one man may be chosen by ten or twenty thousand to " rep-

resent " them in an assembly several hundred miles off, would not be followed. Bourgeois Parliamentarism will die with the transitional civilisation which has produced it. The Social Commonwealth will be both an aristocracy and a democracy in the best sense of those words— the people will select the best men and women for the time being, and according to their own collective judgment, to administer their business, and will pay them fairly for their work ; but will take good care that they do not become their masters. Domination, indeed strictly speaking, will be impossible under any ideal Socialist regime, whether Collectivist or Anarchist. But when from this premise, viz., our hatred of domination, Mr. Harbottle argues that no Socialist could accept a " spiritual hierarchy," he is quite beside the mark. A spiritual hierarchy, so long as it remains that, and becomes nothingless, cannot possibly become a domination, for it is only submitted to voluntarily, by persons who have made up their minds to the divine character of its authority ; nor is this submission enforced by physical or spiritual threats. A papacy is, of course, quite a different thing, but I presume Mr. Harbottle does not suggest that Theosophists must subject themselves to such an institution. If so, I fear I am still far from becoming a perfect Theosophist. For the rest, as I have said already, citizens of the Social Commonwealth will be every bit as free to submit themselves to whatever spiritual control their consciences dictate, as in the freest of the "free countries" of capitalism.

Of all the movements of the present day to which thinking minds are being attracted in large numbers, Socialism is probably that which exercises the most educative and expansive effect on the character, both moral and intellectual. Of course I am placing Theosophy outside the reckoning; it is a study for which very few minds are at present matured. But Socialism, in breaking down the barriers of prejudice and of class or intellectual conventionalisms will, in this way, if in no other, prepare many for that further revolution in thought, and in the aspirations of the soul, which is implied by the term Theosophy. I maintain as I have suggested— without attempting to argue it out— that Socialism will be found

by those who study it impartially to be part, if not the most important part for the present, of the general pantheistic movement, which will culminate in the regeneration (in the highest sense of the word) of humanity at large on this planet. I do not read "Light on the Path" in the exclusive and dogmatic sense in which Mr. Harbottle construes (as it seems to me) a certain passage in it, although there is no book that I have ever read which brings conviction of so much truth to me in so small a material compass. After all no faith can be higher

than the truth, and if I have succeeded in this very imperfect and I fear ill-connected and correlated series of articles, in putting others in the way of getting at more of it than they would have done otherwise, regarding the relation of Modern Socialism to Theosophy, and in dispelling some errors regarding the former, I shall not have written them in vain.



“know for certain that millions, I say deliberately, millions, in every civilised land are waiting for the message that will save them from the hideous abyss of materialism into which modern money-worship is driving them headlong”

Annie Besant

(The Case for India)

KARMIC PROCESS IN WORLD AFFAIRS

BY ANNA F. LEMKOW

First published in The theosophist V. 113, March 1992 pg: 212.



THE human population on this planet is knitting together to an unprecedented degree even as it continues to be richly diverse in every way—in cultural and religious traditions, racial or ethnic history, socio-economic-political forms. There exist many different worlds, many different societies and the emergent global society—the latter arising as a consequence of the international economic system which, through its patterns of production, distribution and exchange affects, beneficially or adversely or both, every corner of the world. Nations and peoples have become interdependent to an unprecedented degree. At the same time, they are hardly united. As yet the interdependencies tend to exacerbate dissension and conflict between and among nations and ethnic, and other groups more often than not.

The peoples of the planet now face a momentous challenge, one that is bound to deepen human consciousness: they face the imperative of sharing one small planet, a reality that has already become a strong force in our lives. It is the fact of interdependence that, for instance, brought the United Nations into existence some forty-five years ago. The same fact explains the existence today of some 20,000 international organizations. Of these, the international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) are especially numerous, having grown from 176 in 1909 to some 18,000 in 1988. INGOs link people across the world irrespective of cultures and political systems. They include professional, business and cooperative organizations; founda-

tions; trade unions; religions, peace and disarmament groups; youth and women's organizations; development, environmental, and human rights groups; research institutes and associations of parliamentarians. Related phenomena are grassroots movements. These have sprung up in different parts of the world to struggle against specific problems facing people in their immediate locality (though these movements often network across national and other boundaries) such as militarization, ecological degradation, war, poverty, hunger, repressive regimes. In the more affluent countries, grassroots movements revolve about such aims or causes as consumer and environmental protection, corporate responsibility, simple living, personal growth.

It has become abundantly apparent that commissions and omissions in any sector of the political economy—for example, agriculture, industry, trade, banking—and in any locality sooner or later have an impact, to some degree, on all sectors and localities. Put in another way, all actors—at all levels, including international, communal, national and international planet-wide—affect one another planet-wide.

By virtue of this unprecedented situation and also as a result of parallel or synchronous developments in the realm of scientific knowledge—in different fields, including physics, biology, and the social sciences—the idea of things' dynamic interconnectedness has surfaced in a significant way in a 'holistic' way (related terms such as 'hol-

istic' and 'global' have attained much currency).

The radical reorientation of physics early in this century was an early manifestation of this new departure in thought. Quantum physics suggests that all matter in the universe is dynamically interconnected. It is found that subatomic particles can turn into one another, so there is also interpenetration. Subatomic particles can also jump from one orbit in an atom to another without touching the intervening space. This and the extraordinary non-locality phenomenon (non-locality is a fundamentally different kind of relationship which may be described as a non-causal connection of elements that are distant from one another) show that subatomic particles can transcend time and space. Quantum physics also suggests the inseparability of the scientist's mind and what the scientist observes—since what is observed depends on how the scientist looks, how the scientist sets up his measuring apparatus. For example, a subatomic phenomenon will appear as a wave if measured in one way and as a particle if measured in another way. By the same token, physics no longer claims to know the ultimate nature of physical matter—it may not be physical at all.

The life sciences, for their part, increasingly focus on the concept of a system. This concept is emerging also in the social sciences. Within a system, whether it be an atom, an organism, a business organization, an ecology, or a politico-socio-economic system, the myriad elements or components are all mutually interactive. They may best be studied not in isolation but in the context of the system as a whole. Whereas Newtonian science employs an analytical and linear approach, systems science emphasizes wholes over parts and process over structure. Newtonian physics looks upon nature as mechanical, whereas dynamic systems sciences see 'inanimate' and animate matter as dynamical in nature—see living systems, in particular (systems that engage in an exchange of elements with their environment), as exhibiting an organic complexity of numerous elements—elements which are not external to one another as in a dead machine but grow and change within the system as a

whole (example: I and the cells in my body).

Living systems are impartible wholes. Wholes are in fact everywhere. And every whole has its own degree of autonomy, even the tiniest living cell. At the same time, no whole is absolute—every whole is also a part of a larger whole.

In describing the organization of 'inanimate' and animate matter on earth, science has established a hierarchical continuum of levels (wholes, systems) ranging as follows: elementary particles, atoms, compounds, organelles, cells, tissues, organs, organ systems, organism, populations, communities and biosphere. Each of these contain all lower levels as components and is itself a component of higher levels. For example, atoms contain subatomic particles as components and are themselves components of chemical compounds. This continuum thus displays a pattern of wholeness within larger, more inclusive, wholeness; a pattern where in no level is reducible to or adequately explainable in terms of levels below it (the more cannot logically be explained in terms of less, though this is what reductionists misguidedly attempt to do). Moreover, each of these levels is both essential and reflective of wholeness in its own way. Again successive levels display broader new powers and functions.

Notice that this hierarchy is very different from that of a bureaucratic business or government or church organization. Its ranks are intrinsic, not extrinsic; it is a hierarchy of containment.

The continuum of levels presents a rough outline of the past history of terrestrial evolution. It demonstrates, if unintentionally, the meaningful overall direction of evolution: toward the formation of wholeness of higher-order functioning. By the same token, it shows evolution to be a holistic transcendent process. More precisely it depicts a co-evolutionary process in which all life participates (cf. Jantsch, 1980).

Theorists of evolution now see it as proceeding by means of an alternation of differentiation and integration (Blavatsky termed it a process of involution \ evolu-

tion) For example, cells specialize (enormously) and then become integrated into a tissue. Each entity is intent on its own self organization and self-consummation but is at the same time capable of self-transcendence in favour of the greater whole.

Are there not lessons here for our era of extreme egoism)? Can human society not form a new whole? Could it not evolve to a higher order of functioning?

Notice that the levels of the above continuum are all interconnected in a multilinear fashion with information flowing within and between them, from the bottom up and from the top down. Moreover, there is not only interconnection but also interpenetration.

This continuum established by science is in fact a graphic depiction (if unintentionally) of the radical unity of terrestrial life. And inasmuch as biological life is inseparable from matter/energy which is no less a radical unity, the continuum also implies the cosmological basis of terrestrial life.

The idea of global interconnectedness or dynamic wholeness is in fact arising on all sides: in psychology, medicine, nutrition, physics, biology, political science, economics, ecology, anthropology. And most significantly our existential condition itself—the interdependency of nations and peoples planet-wide, to which I have already alluded, is a new kind of wholeness.

But while science and world affairs are propelling the problems of wholes and wholeness to the foreground, it is to holistic or spiritual philosophy that we must turn for an understanding of what wholeness means.

This is where perennial philosophy or Theosophy comes in. Parenthetically, one sees in retrospect how prophetic and timely (the last quarter of the nineteenth century) was the introduction of Theosophy to the world, especially to the West. With its revolutionary understanding of matter/energy; its exposition of life as a meaningful process—the process of karma; its related re-interpretation of evolution as a dynamic, self-organizing, co-evolutionary process embracing all life; its

explanation of the impartibility of dualities—such as spirit and matter, universal and particular, and freedom and necessity; with the promulgation by the Theosophical Society of the need for a synthesis of thought—of the consensual insights of religion, philosophy and science—all this anticipated the most significant twentieth-century developments.

On a personal note, I perceive and happily acknowledge that without my studies in Theosophy and integrative thought I should never have been able or impelled to attempt, as I did in my book (Lemkow, 1990), to explore the meaning of wholeness (or dynamic unity, or unity-in-diversity) in scientific, philosophical and spiritual terms. My exploration suggests and demonstrates, among other things, that wholeness is an all-pervasive principle of existence—that it is indeed the key principle for self and world understanding and is therefore more cogent than ever at this time when we face the world dilemma of simultaneous interdependence and disunity.

Not a few respected thinkers about our planetary affairs have remarked that our crisis is also our opportunity. One sees in this a recurrence of a paradoxical and venerable idea, one found both in the I Ching and in the Chinese system of I Ching and in the Hindu/Buddhist/Jaina theosophical karma doctrine. What is paradoxical about it is that it implies that our problems and the disorders we face are only seeming disorders—that in actuality they are meaningful—actually a form of deeply meaningful order!

It is interesting indeed, that the paradoxical proposition of ‘chaotic order’ is in fact surfacing today in a different way in some new departures in science. For example, Ilya Prigogine, a 1977 Nobel laureate in chemistry, has shown that fluctuations within certain chemical systems and in living systems can result in a leap to a higher level of order. It is a theory that bridges the gap among the physical, biological and social sciences. It finds application now in many fields, ranging from prediction of traffic flow patterns to the study of cellular fluctuations as they relate to the cause of cancer. It is of interest also to evolutionary

theorists. A more recent development of this idea arises in chaos science. Chaos science employs non-linear mathematics and rapid computers to discover and model order and pattern in turbulent and aperiodic natural phenomena. This is an exciting science that arose through the work of people that in a variety of disciplines, including in mathematicians, biologists, physicists, and medical doctors. It reverses science's crisis of over-specialization. It is a new way of looking—a way of looking for the whole. And it in effect corroborates in its own way the above-mentioned ancient paradox—the impartibility of order and change—the paradox of 'chaotic order' (cf. Gleick, 1988; Bohm and Peat, 1987; Briggs and Peat, 1989).

It is important to understand (Blavatsky was one who stressed it) that the ineluctable inner order does not mean predetermined order. Order is indispensable for accomplishing anything. Science, notably, would not be possible if scientists could not rely on nature's order. By obeying it, science can achieve its creative feats; space travel is achieved by obeying the relevant laws of physics and astronomy, for example. Similarly, there are, as we know, laws of the inner life. That is the proposition of the world religions. The teaching of karma is a case in point.

We may regard karma as the ultimate law-process-principle of wholeness. It is both a cosmic and, for humans, an ethical law. It somehow re-establishes harmony and balance wherever these are disrupted, even as it facilitates and furthers the evolution of consciousness. As we know, the doctrine states that we ourselves create our own circumstances and that the way we meet our self-created problems determines our further circumstances.

The concept of karma can be applied to humanity's present overall situation. Our present circumstances of planet-wide interdependence have indeed been brought about by humans themselves—by the thought and action, for example, of scientists, inventors, industrialists, and technicians, as well as by people at large—the inevitable participants in the world system.

Our present situation shows, as karma would predict, that all the dimensions of our life are interconnected: that our physical, ecological, politic-socio-economic and human rights or morals standards are inseparably intertwined. By the same token, we see that our material and societal circumstances and our thought, motives and values are interconnected. Also evident is our mutual responsibility – all nations and all people are evidently responsible for one another. This is not any longer a spiritual insight on the part of a few sages but a self-evident truth whose practical implications are recognized by nations and the international community (cf. for instance the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987; see also Barnaby, 1988). We have a common future; we must sink or swim together. We shall have to develop better capacities for cooperation, sharing, mutual tolerance, mutual understanding. We shall have to unlearn blind and fanatical prejudices of all kinds and instead learn to celebrate our ethnic and cultural and other diversity-to perceive how diversity (which is evident throughout flora, fauna, culture, religion) can enrich our lives.

As mentioned, karma would predict that our problems and the disorders we face are only seeming disorder—that they are in fact a form of order. Let us, then, look at these problems from such a vantage point.

We are confronted by very specific, therefore, different, problems, such as poverty, a wide and widening gulf between the poor and the rich of the world, degradation of the environment, terrorism, foreign debts, the population explosion, and so forth. But while these problems are specific and outwardly different from one another, yet they are all interconnected and also exhibit another common denominator: they are all global in impact. The threat of nuclear war is reinforced by the turmoil that goes hand in hand with gross inequality and abject poverty. Mass poverty is connected with the short-sighted way more affluent segments of humanity have pursued prosperity. There is a fateful relationship between massive industry's careless and intensive use of raw materials and energy and the degradation of the environment. There is the tragic cycle of poverty, population ex-

plosion, and environmental decline. All parts of the world are involved in the world financial system. Insecurity anywhere on the planet is insecurity everywhere—whether we speak of the threat of nuclear weapons, or of global warming, or international debt, or of the fragility of the financial system. To countenance racism in one place is to expose ourselves to racism everywhere. These are some of the examples of global linkage.

The globality and the interrelatedness of the outwardly different and specific problems show that there is an ineluctable order and meaningful order at work—an order that is both cosmic and, for us, ethical in its implications; an order that implies an ultimate wholeness that just is and cannot be broken. Karma states that we can infringe wholeness, but never without consequence. Somehow this cosmic process or law or principle registers what we do on all levels, including the physical, emotional, mental, moral and spiritual. More particularly, it registers our motivations and values. As earlier noted, it is a forward-looking process that permits and facilitates our self-evolution. Sooner or later individuals and societies encounter the pleasant and unpleasant results of their own past thought and action. Our future karma is affected by how we meet these challenges. We ourselves are the choosers; everyone is involved in the societal scene and makes a difference; we ourselves create our own common destiny.

In such a context, the present combined index of major problems of our prevailing state of consciousness and values. Or, to use another metaphor, it is like a thermometer indicating a general malaise. Again, it is like an orienting compass pointing to the need for a fundamental change in consciousness such as to transform our relations with one another and with our planet. In the measure that we take appropriate action, the inner rebalancing law will have served as a timely warning and a spur to a new era. Otherwise, we will experience further regression by virtue of the same cosmic and ethical law (cf. also my essay, 'Karmic Process in Science and Society', in Hanson, Stewart & Nicholson, eds., 1990).

Fortunately, many individuals and groups are not standing idly by. The responses to the failures of both capitalism and communism by individuals, groups, nations and the international community are numerous. Space does not permit describing them. I would suggest that the evolutionary process of human beings may have reached a new juncture: after a long process of individuation, some of us are capable of becoming integrated. We are becoming less parochial and more inclusive in outlook—we are developing a more universal vision, one which transcends sex, race, culture and religion. Allow me for convenience simply to quote what I have said about this emergent outlook in my book (p. 298):

“This vision is as yet to be found among a small minority, but these individuals are spread widely over the terrestrial landscape. Theirs is an outlook which is at once inner directed and imbued with a sense of relatedness to the here-and-now—a sense of concern, compassion, responsibility and creative intentionality. The activism it fosters cannot be characterized as altruism or pragmatism: it is the way of self-fulfilment; a caring which is its own reward.”

We may well perceive that we have before us in this phenomenon a vital and illuminating illustration of karmic evolutionary process—of the process that is integral to the dynamic wholeness that just is and cannot be broken.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND THE UNITED NATIONS

A History of Support

Theosophists wishing to see spiritual principles permeate and uplift society will be interested to know that presidents of the Theosophical Society have actively supported the United Nations (and its predecessor, the League of Nations) since its inception. They have always believed in its potential as a vehicle for spiritual forces and global transformation.

In this leaflet published by the Theosophical Order of Service, the history of the Theosophical Society's support for the UN is outlined and some suggestions made for practical action in continuing this support. Since the TS is strictly neutral in political matters, activities focus on support for the UN's aspirations in the realm of world peace, unity and relief of suffering.

The United Nations, which officially came into existence on October 24, 1945, was built on universal values of peace, human rights, human dignity and worth, along with justice, good neighbourliness, freedom, respect for nature and shared responsibility. These reflect the fundamental principles of the Theosophical Society since its inception in 1875.

The third purpose of the United Nations, - *To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion is*

aligned with the Theosophical Society's first object: To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

Several international presidents of the Theosophical Society were staunch supporters of the United Nations and its precursor, the League of Nations.



Annie Besant, who served as president from 1907 to 1933, became one of the first members of the League of Nations Union in England. In a series of lectures on *The Great Plan*,¹ Annie Besant wrote of how the next stage of the Plan would be the building up of a free Commonwealth of Nations. She believed the Theosophical Society had a significant role to play in helping create "the true Spiritual League of All the Nations". Without spiritual inspiration, she felt that the merely political League could never achieve its purpose.

Magazine issues of the *Theosophist* from the early 1900s, show that the Theosophical Society was indeed a leader in sowing seeds of internationalism and world brotherhood on a multitude of fronts.

Mrs. Besant's successor, George Arundale, was also a staunch supporter of the League of Nations. In Australia, where he served in the late 1920s as General Secretary of the TS, Mr. Arundale joined the League of Nations Union and edited an Australia-India League Bulletin. During the 1930s he took up the theme of a plan, launching a campaign entitled "There is a Plan". He wrote, "Every nation is a word in the world-song of Life, a class in the world-school. Every citizen must learn to speak the word and to master the lesson of his class."²

¹ The T.S. and the League of Nations by Bhagavan-Das - Excerpts from Adyar Pamphlets, 1934 - Nos 190-91

² There is a Plan for the Nations - a booklet printed by the Vasanta Press, Adyar, Madras in the 1930s



George Arundale served as president during the difficult time of the pre-war and war years. Actively devoted to the cause of peace, he set up a Peace and Reconstruction Department of the TS in 1940 to contribute to a Charter for World Peace to be ready

when the Second World War came to an end.

C. Jinarajadasa took over as international president in 1948 and showed great dynamism regarding the TS and the UN. In his first year as president, the following resolution was passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society (Adyar).

Advisory rather than mandatory, it points to real support and commitment on the part of the Theosophical Society:

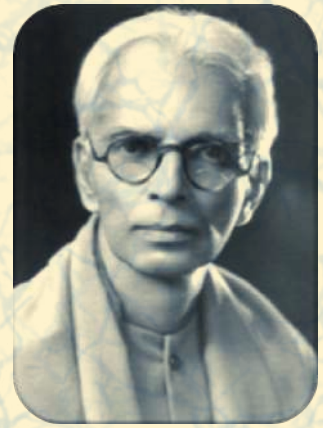
As all members of the Theosophical Society desire earnestly to establish World Peace as a realization of Universal Brotherhood, the General Council of the Theosophical Society recommends all Lodges throughout the world to be informed of the work of the United Nations. And the Council further suggests that one meeting each year be devoted to describing the work of the United Nations towards ushering in the era of World Peace and Brotherhood.

During the late 1940s, Mr. Jinarajadasa worked tirelessly to obtain TS consultative status with the UN³. When observer status was finally granted, an invitation was received to send representatives to conferences held by the UN Department of Public Information.



³ A Summary of C. Jinarajadasa's Correspondence and TS Activity with the United Nations from 1948 to 1949 compiled by Ananya Rajan, April 2011

When N. Sri Ram took over as international president in 1953, he carried the torch forward, writing about the United Nations in several *On The Watch-Tower* articles. In the June 1953 issue of *The Theosophist*⁴ he wrote:



Those who condemn the United Nations and would fain throw it on the scrap-heap, have not so far offered a practical alternative. I feel, therefore, that in spite of every defect, every weakness and shortcoming that we may find in the existing organism, the way of practical action is to infuse into it or into the minds of people in regard to it more of the life and spirit that is needed. If the United Nations were to cease to exist this moment, there would be a vacuum ready to be occupied by those forces which would much rather operate in isolation or through private compacts than in a medium where their motives and actions can at least be criticized, where they have to justify themselves in some manner at the bar of world opinion.

In May 1957, N. Sri Ram made these comments in his column *On the Watch-Tower*:

The United Nations is an organisation which is obviously meant to develop into a bone-frame for a new body of humanity. The whole of humanity has to be organized in such a way that it can function as one body, though divided into different States, and this new body has to be upheld by a structure which will express its common will and purpose.

The history of TS support spills over to the work of the Theosophical Order of Service in its worldwide efforts to alleviate suffering and to promote peace, development and quality of life for all.

In keeping with the spirit and intent of the 1948 Resolution, TOS members and groups may continue to support the work of the

⁴ On the Watch Tower – Selections from the Theosophist by N. Sri Ram – Theosophical Publishing House, 1966

United Nations. Throughout the year, special UN days can be recognized in TOS programmes or projects through presentations, articles, exhibits and debates. United Nations Day – October 24 – can be set aside and celebrated with a special programme of meditation and readings interspersed with discussion. Practical ideas like these will be described in future brochures published by the International TOS UN Committee.

“Theosophists believe that the nations of the world constitute a single humanity – a single human community. The United Nations is but the physical demonstration of our concept of Universal Brotherhood”.

Diana Gracey Winslow⁵

The Theosophical Society and the United Nations, printed in October 2011, is the first in a series of brochures published by the International TOS UN Committee.

⁵ A Theosophist Looks at the United Nations Organization by Diana Gracey Winslow, Chief Brother, the Theosophical Order of Service, USA – from an article featured in the November 1953 issue of *The Theosophist*.



The Light of Luxor Magazine
Independent Theosophical Magazine Volume IX
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