

Slow is Beautiful



A continuous acceleration of karma and life is not a good omen. Anxiety does not lead to truth or peace.

Life is slow in its building processes. That which is made in no hurry, will endure - if correct. The sense of divine produces calm. A perception of eternity liberates from personal desire. These facts correspond to Law. Yet - how easy it is for our civilization to accept them, and to act accordingly?

Building the Life We Want

Thinking too much of negativities and mistakes is not the way to get rid of them. Making believe that failures do not exist or forbidding oneself and others to mention them is also not the way.

Something between 70 and 95 per cent of our energy must be concentrated around the clock on the positive pole of life's electricity, or constructive thinking. With the lesser part of our energy, we must rigorously look at errors, mainly our own. It is our duty to leave aside subconscious attachment to mistakes, and the *habit* of criticizing them.

The best way to defeat error is through right action, and by *building that which is correct*. A critical vision of things is also crucial to victory as long as it is associated with detachment, and compassion.

The Secret to True Cooperation



Our minds do not exist as separate entities. They are like boats in the limitless Ocean of thoughts and feelings.

As the individual mind tries to attain its goals, it has to adapt to the changing *weather conditions* in the mental realm. For the kingdom of thoughts has its own level of atmospheric pressure, winds, temperature - and “water currents” as well. For emotions, or water, powerfully influence thoughts.

We who are at the helm of our minds must be vigilant, not to be carried away by the changing conditions around us.

When self-responsible and self-regulating minds get together to cooperate, the process of mutual help makes the results of their efforts radically improve, as long as the *real* goal is worthwhile.

The Enlightening Fire: A Contemplative Video

There is in contemplative theosophy an interesting effect as one combines image, sound and aphorisms, under the light of universal wisdom.

The Aquarian Theosophist has produced a one-minute meditative video which can be seen through this direct link: http://bit.ly/TheFireAndLight_1

The Limits of Responsibility

John Garrigues



It has been said that the most difficult position in the world is that of one who has responsibility without power. The injustice of holding anyone responsible for conditions he is powerless to control is immediately apparent. As far as power extends, so far and so far only, reaches responsibility.

The man convinced of this will not wear himself out chafing against a state of affairs he cannot remedy. He who knows the limits of his range of action can act purposefully within that range and save the energy he else might waste in efforts aimed beyond his reach.

Within one sphere our power is absolute, save as our self-made Karma checks, and that sphere is our own deeds and words, our longings and our thoughts. Does another act in ways displeasing to us? His to answer for it if his course be wrong; ours to look to our reaction which alone is our legitimate concern.

Freedom of act, of speech, of thought, within the limits set by others' rights, is requisite to progress. The man who tries to force conformity in thought or custom, with either the current mode, or with what seems to him truth absolute and right unquestionable, seeks to restrict the free growth of another, which will be checked unless that other throws off the hampering bonds.

But if we would not concern ourselves with others' acts and words, the responsibility of each under the Law is absolute and not to be evaded, for those conditions it *is* within his power to determine. Nothing short of our best effort can fully discharge our responsibility. Half-hearted service, thinking less keen and candid than we are capable of, desires fixed below the highest goal to which we could aspire, albeit on aims accounted honorable, these things may bring us praise of men, but never absolution from the Law.

The landlord whom man's law permits to wring his gain from squalid tenements has yet to answer to the greater Law unless he does all that he can to make them decent dwellings for the poor.

His exact share of responsibility for existing conditions rests upon each, as citizen of City, State, and Nation, ignore his civic obligations though he may. Closer than these is family duty, which every man determines for himself but none evades without due recompense.

Those who in our day have contacted the ancient Wisdom-Religion have a peculiar responsibility, recognized or not. No man can store up Truth for his own use and keep it. As radium escapes through baser metals, so slips Truth from the clutch of selfishness. Each truth grasped becomes a sacred trust, not to be hoarded but to be judiciously dispensed. We may not degrade Truth by forcing it upon unwilling minds, but we should miss no opening to let the seeker know that Truth exists and is available.

Anxiety that this or that one should come to Theosophy and, having come, should stay, is an unerring sign that we are straying, at least in thought and wish, outside our limits of responsibility. Such eagerness that certain ones shall profit by their opportunity is not compatible with the impersonal attitude we must hold if we would truly help. To the extent that our feelings become involved, to that extent our power to serve is lessened.

Ours the task to do our utmost to keep the truths of Theosophy alive and intact, and to make them as widely available as possible. No fear that those who are ready will not come! To those who are not ready we may give only as much as they will take, no more, waiting in patience for their further growth.

Thus, recognizing ourselves circumscribed in range of action by the bounds set by our duty, passionless, serene, we may devote our best endeavor to the full discharge of our responsibility within those bounds, sure that as our power to serve increases with duties faithfully performed, those bounds will widen, since responsibility increases with all growth in power.

[The above article was first published with no indication as to its author at the August 1932 edition of "**Theosophy**" magazine, pp. 437-438. A November 2015 analysis of its contents and style indicates it was written by J.G. On the criteria used to identify texts by this author, see in our websites the article "**Life and Writings of John Garrigues**".]

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Happiness in Spirit

Contentment is generally understood to be a state of satisfaction that arises from the fulfillment of desires. As all objects of desire - even noble ones - have a beginning and an ending, and are subject to change, they are more or less illusionary. The contentment that is reached from their achievement is also temporary and in that sense illusionary.

Rather than pursuing the objects of contentment, consideration should be given to seeking out the spirit of contentment. All teachers of wisdom have said that lasting contentment lies within. Not in the desires held, but rather in the ideas and attitude of mind.

[Reproduced from the article “The Spirit of Contentment”, by Steven H. Levy, M.D.]

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The Grand Rule of Learning Perseverance, and a Long-Term Plan of Action



Before a pilgrim says much regarding philosophical matters, he must examine the consequences of such an action; and not only the immediate ones, but the long term consequences as well.

Is he ready for all of them?

To renounce personal expectations as to results of actions is not the same as being thoughtless regarding the consequences of his efforts. Far from that. While not acting for selfish ends, the student of true philosophy must be most careful of what he does.

The grand rule of occult learning is that as long as one learns, one faces ever-renewed, unexpected tests. The learning takes several lifetimes. One must have a long-term plan of action. Self-regulation is a decisive science in life; and so is full attention, in order to discern right from wrong as much as one can.

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Maeterlinck Quotes Carlyle: The Power of Silence



“**S**ilence and secrecy!”, cries Carlyle. “Altars might still be raised to them (were this an altar-building time) for universal worship. Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together; that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of Life, which they are thenceforth to rule. (...) Speech is too often not, as the Frenchman defined it, the art of concealing Thought, but of quite stifling and suspending Thought, so that there is none to conceal. Speech, too, is great, but not the greatest. As the Swiss inscription says: *Sprechen ist Silbern, Schweigen ist goldern* (Speech is silver, Silence is golden); or, as I might rather express it, Speech is of Time, Silence is of Eternity.”

[From the volume “**The Treasure of the Humble**”, by Maurice Maeterlinck, Dodd, Mead and Company, Publishers, New York, undated, probably 1940s, 241 pp. See pp. 19-20.]

HPB and the Cyclic Law

A nucleus of universal brotherhood can only begin its accumulations, when a body of literature potent with the magic of self-reform for those who assimilate it, is made available. Helena P. Blavatsky agreed to be the scapegoat or “seed” by which the new *Keynote of Consciousness* could be made present and available on a lower plane. The process corresponds to planting a seed. The seed has to be dead (i.e. dried out and having no life from the cycle in which it was harvested). Then it can be planted, *sprout* underground, and undergo a second death. All this is for Cyclic Law. In the East the word for it is: Padmapani (A *Protector of the Cycles*).

[From the article “The New Paradigm”, by Jerome Wheeler.]

Observing the Topography of Life



Purity of mind is the Zen sword which enables us to see and cut illusions.

Discernment regarding things in life and the esoteric movement must be attained gradually. Any “instantaneity” is mayavic. Little by little one can see what is true and what is false, who stands for walking towards truth, and who stands for posturing, insisting in make-believe and in smiling as whited sepulchres do. No one can tell a student about that: he has to come to realize the topography of life by himself. Proofs can be shown, but discernment must emerge from within.

As to the persons of pretenders, compassion is due, while an impersonal severity is necessary regarding falsehoods as such. Pretenders exemplify the failure of a certain Pedagogy. They have forgotten that sincerity is a blessing. They might be able to learn better, sooner or later, from the example given by the ones who refuse falsehoods.

William Penn: Of the Government of Thoughts

Man being made a Reasonable, and so a Thinking Creature, there is nothing more Worthy of his Being, than the Right Direction and Employment of his Thoughts; since upon This, depends both his Usefulness to the Publick, and his own present and future Benefit in all Respects.

The Consideration of this, has often obliged me to Lament the Unhappiness of Mankind, that through too great a Mixture and Confusion of Thoughts, have been hardly able to make a Right or Mature Judgment of Things.

[From the article “The Wisdom of William Penn”.]

The First Year of the ULT A Historical Assessment Written by The Main Founder of the United Lodge

Robert Crosbie



Robert Crosbie, Helena Blavatsky and William Q. Judge

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An Editorial Note:

The United Lodge of Theosophists was founded by seven people [1] on 18 February 1909. Among them were Grace Clough, Robert Crosbie and John Garrigues. The following text was written one year later, in February 1910, and is published on pp. 393-397 of the volume “The Friendly Philosopher”.[2]

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The right way of looking at things is shown in Theosophy. Each has to learn, to know, and to control his own nature, if he is to acquire discrimination - the ability to help others. Each has to take the philosophy and apply it, in the face of all mistakes and acts which, while they make the task more difficult, have been the means of arousing the very discrimination needed. Our vicarious atonement having shown us the way, our mistakes can be turned to good account. We will take time to think what we shall say and how we shall say it. One gets over changeableness and indecision as he takes time to think things out fully before acting or making promises. He will then study to do whatever he says he will do.

This carefulness will increase true self-reliance and the reliance that others will place in him. Only as full confidence is gained can men be helped in themselves and with each other. Masters must work with those who will work, and as They can, and this applies to all. Some blame H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge for the mistakes made by those who played leading parts in the Movement, as pupils lay on the shoulders of the Teacher their own fiascos. All this comes from lack of discrimination, the failure on the part of leaders and followers to apply what HPB and WQJ taught. The letters written to you are the results of observation, experience, study and application of the philosophy of Theosophy, and as such

must be of use to others in like case with your own. So must also be the results of your own efforts, and those of all other sincere students.

The Western mind is apt to look upon mere literary form and fine phrases as the standard of judgment. People in general do not get the *meaning* of what is written, in the same way that they do not extract the *value* from their experiences. They make surface deductions and applications only. So they have little ability to apply the philosophy to daily life, nor can they see its practical value. They have to be helped to assimilate the fundamental principles if they are to realize right valuations and applications. Each has to eradicate his own faults in these as in other directions - not the faults of others. Until students set to work seriously on these lines they cannot find surety nor happiness. Theosophy and its application go together, if there is to be real progress. It is not for us to say, "Do this", or "Don't do that". It is for us to put the case, Theosophy and its individual application, and leave each student, each inquirer, to make his own decisions. People get into tight places right along by following "advices", instead of exercising their own discrimination, and then invariably blame the "advisor" when matters do not go according to their expectations.

Is it not strange that plain statements are not grasped? That superficial meanings are taken to be true applications? Most men think, when they have heard a statement made, they know it. All of this is chargeable to our modern educational methods, wherein soul and mind are considered as mere recorders. "Amongst thousands of mortals a single one perhaps strives for perfection." So, among the many who may be interested in Theosophy - the philosophy of the perfectibility of Man - here and there will be one who may wake up. Therein lies the hope. And even those who are interested enough merely to listen or to read with attention, will get something in the way of a trend that may someday develop. If we keep trying in all proper ways and means open to us, something will come from such mutual endeavors.

The fundamental statements of the Teachers are axioms to be applied. At the same time they are woven in with such reasoning as may affect the ordinary way of thinking. Science, Psychology, and all efforts that are based on them, fail - and for no other reason than that they do not assume or admit that full and true knowledge exists. If Western Science and Psychology would go on with their painstaking efforts in the light of Theosophy, the spiritual and intellectual darkness of the world would soon be overcome and a civilization brought into being that would best express a true physical life. What hinders? Intellectual pride, together with the cramping effects of false religious conceptions. If the idea is held that there is but one life on earth, then all the learning of the man and of the age is limited to a small and narrow range. But if one grasps the idea of successive lives on earth - all under Karma - then, the learning takes on a wider sweep, leading the man to the conception that all powers of every kind proceed from the Supreme, the Self of all creatures; that he himself is in reality a spiritual being, and must think and act as such.

We may not be able to apply, as fully as we and others might desire, all the axioms and reasoning of the philosophy; but what of that? We can apply what is possible and all that is possible to us, and in that application greater understanding and facility arise. Each one has to find *his* way. Words cannot give it, yet there *is* a way for each. Most of the trouble lies in trying to see, trying to hear, trying to "think" it all out, instead of applying what we *do* see. All ability comes very gradually, imperceptibly - felt, grasped, realized, rather than perceived in the ordinary sense. Here, there is not enough acquaintance as yet with the philosophy itself for many of the students to have confidence enough to take hold and carry on the work. When I have hinted at approaching departure, it brings dismay because they imagine that Theosophy will be dead if I go: yet they ought to have learned that no one is Theosophy and the best are

but transmitters; that they too, having received, should get busy doing as much by others, becoming transmitters in their turn.

41 Associates of “U. L. T.”! If 25 of them turn out to be “good stuff”, will the effort not prove to be worth all that it has cost? “Good stuff” means just that many Warriors for the restoration of the Theosophical Movement to its original lines. Many thousands are needed, but as the body grows, it takes care of itself. The struggle will be fierce - as we face it, not knowing the outcome - but the struggle is for us, or we would not have it. We will take what comes, and will give all that we are and have to the common cause, knowing that we are not fighting for self but for all. More we cannot do, and less we may not do under the Law of Brotherhood. A year ago today we began this struggle, and so it naturally brings retrospections to us. Things past are always easier than things present, or the unknown yet to come.

The past can be judged as to relative importance, for it is now the hollow of the wave of progress, whereas the present and the future represent the crest and the resistance felt or feared. Yet - if we remember - the past, when *it* was both present and future, held just such disturbances which we now see were a waste of energy. In the writings of the Teachers there is naught but encouragement. It is the deep sense of the gulf between our ideals and their attainment that dismays the personal conception. If *we* involve “ourselves” in these personal conceptions, we shall feel despondent - like *Arjuna*. In reality we should feel more of encouragement than ever, for the past year has brought a success greater than we could then have dared to hope in the circumstances.

We are all links in the great chain of the Theosophical Movement. What affects one affects all, and in degree. Everyone who endeavors to help others in any real way, puts himself in the position where he must take the reactions.

The Karma of the Parent theosophical society is that of H. P. B. and Judge, known by them beforehand in a general way. It is also our Karma and that of all other Theosophists. Theirs was the first effort to spread Theosophy; much has been done since in this respect, and by many students. But its application has not been as general as might have been. The reactions from the spread of Theosophy and of its misapplication and non-application by students will be taken care of when They come again.

We and all other true students are linked with the Great Lodge by aspiration, by service, by following the Masters’ program as nearly as we know. All sincere students are surrounded by an “invisible escort” as long as their faces are set toward the Goal and they remain staunch to Masters’ program. Masters neither push, pull, nor hinder voluntary action. To do so would be to prevent true Self-reliance. For this reason some may think that Masters have deserted them, or do not see nor hear them; but this is the worst conception that could be. It belittles Them and implies ignorance and ingratitude on Their part. They have spoken clearly of Their nearness to all those who “try and ever keep trying”.

NOTES:

[1] Read the compilation “The ULT Day Letters, 1931-1960”, in www.TheosophyOnline.com and its associated websites. The fact that the Founders of the ULT in 1909 were seven is revealed in the first paragraph of the ULT Day Letter for 1944. See p. 30 of the compilation.

[2] “The Friendly Philosopher”, by Robert Crosbie, Theosophy Company, Los Angeles. First edition, 1934, second edition, 1945, third edition, 2008; 415 pp. The book was edited by John Garrigues.

Thoughts Along the Road

Notes on the Sacredness of Daily Life



- * **T**here is something one should never forget. That which we sow is more important than whatever we may harvest.
- * The joy of living needs no external reasons to be strong and stable: it results from a spontaneous contact with the spiritual soul and the law of the universe.
- * Life has its tides. The foundations of an enduring happiness are prepared by the inner strength with which we face hard moments. And, on the other hand, victories last longer when seen with gratitude and humbleness.
- * Inner plenitude transcends sound. The light of universal unity and friendship shines from one's heart with no need of words. Miguel de Molinos wrote that words can then be abandoned in the same way as a ship is left aside, when we arrive at the destination port.
- * Renunciation, or the art of accepting one's losses, is not something one must learn once or twice in a lifetime, in a nice and abstract way. The lesson must be learned hundreds of times, often in painful and unexpected ways.
- * There are various ways of being where we want to be. Through the pages of good books one can travel to the most interesting places in space and time, and listen to some of the wisest souls of mankind.

- * It is relatively easy to win. Everyone does that once in a while, whether one deserves it or not. The important thing is to consolidate the victory. It is valuable to see the victory taking place at every moment, at each task well done, each sincere word spoken.
- * The correct vision of one part allows us to understand the whole. A right perception of the whole makes it possible to see every part. For the circle is present in the dot, just as the dot is present in the circle. And each time we look, we see reality a little better.
- * Personal favors do not occur on the higher planes of the spiritual path. The path is ruled by the Law. Every blessing coming from divine realms must be therefore the natural result of one's merit, or it will have no validity.
- * It is not enough to make an effort to walk in the right direction. One's actions must be effective. There is a mutual correlation between the tree and the fruit. The steps of a pilgrim who knows enough are guided by a clear vision of facts.
- * The silent center of peace in our conscience informs the quality and rhythm of thoughts, emotions, actions and insights. The wider and deeper our contact with such center, the more meaningful is our presence in the world around us.
- * The corridors of karma have lateral limits whose substance is made of habits. The student must create correct patterns of repetitive actions and attitudes in his life, so that the corridors of karma will lead him to Wisdom and to bliss.
- * One's conscious and subconscious relation to the past is a powerful factor in defining exactly how one relates to the present circumstances. It also influences the way one is preparing right now his own future, while helping shape the future of others.
- * In theosophy, sometimes a spiritual lightning takes place. During a meditative pause in the middle of the noble effort, an unworded, abyssal happiness may come to you and transform your whole life in the fraction of a second. And this is an experience to which you must develop no attachment whatsoever.
- * Managing situations in a responsible and creative way can be more important than the nature of situations in themselves. In many cases the facts of our lives make less difference than our decisions about what to do once we know of them. To build the future is a central task. The present moment contains the past and is the raw-material from which to make something better.
- * Attachment to personal opinions is a stumbling block in the search for truth. Another one, perhaps even more serious, is the absence of attachment to ethical principles. The key to progress is in listening to the silence and the soul. Our main chief and ultimate authority has to be the voice of conscience: then truth can be discovered, and it will occur by degrees and layer after layer.
- * Let us not be naive or ill-informed. There is no reason to deceive ourselves into the materialistic illusion. Just as each atom is a miniature of the solar system, a small step contains the essence of the long walk. One who saves a single animal from death or danger helps the evolution of our planet. As one plants a tree or cares for her, a trend is established of friendship for Life which can resound around the globe.

* Exaggeration threatens the durability of the efforts made. Actions of moderate intensity allow us to work in the present without forgetting the future. Calmness is a characteristic of enduring and effective action. No work, however noble and altruistic, should suppress the rest necessary for it to renew itself and to unfold in a long term perspective. The right amount of silence, and of humbleness, help moderation take place.

* There is a reason for the work “The Secret Doctrine”, by H.P. Blavatsky, to be centered on two sets of Eastern verses whose inner beauty is unique. Most classic works on eternal wisdom - including “The Voice of the Silence” - exist in a universe which expresses the transcendent, all-inclusive and rhythmic harmony of life. That includes the scriptures of different religions, and the myths of most nations. The substance of life, both cosmic and individual, has much in common with poetry. Whoever cannot see this deserve the solidarity of those who have already attained a better view of things.

* As long as detachment is experienced as a painful renunciation to something, one’s efforts to develop it are limited in their horizon and progress is relatively shallow. True detachment comes to us as relief. It results from a boundless understanding and still makes it expand.

* Necessity is our Teacher. Renunciation is Bliss. If for instance life gets quicker every day, there is a practical lesson to learn. By revising his agenda and giving up items of secondary importance, one keeps his inner peace. And peace in the soul is the true center of Life. Improving the agenda and keeping it around essential points is good for altruistic groups, as well as individuals.

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The Power of Sincerity

No obstacle can resist the Universal Power of Brotherhood. The ability to keep loyal to the simple idea of sincerity in one’s heart contains in itself an unlimited amount of energy which is capable of changing the whole world in due time.

The power of mutual reliability and selfless friendship in the work for a noble cause cannot be easily calculated.

By ceasing to live in the world of selfishness, one starts to live. The truth of altruism leads to mutual help, and mutual help produces higher levels of happiness. Thus one comes to understand that no real evil exists, either in oneself, in others, or in the universe.

Life and nature unfold in cycles, and no part of a cycle can be seen as bad in theosophy. The entirety of a timeline brings lessons of courage and detachment. From its observation one can obtain a wisdom that refers to beginnings and endings. It is not enough to learn how to start new actions. One must know to consolidate them, to preserve them as long as they are correct, to handle the final phase of their operations, and finally to give them up entirely when the time comes to close the whole cycle.

[From the article “**All Life is Good**”, by C.C. Aveline.]

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Spinoza and Western Philosophers

An Unfinished Manuscript on the Theosophy of Western Philosophers

Helena P. Blavatsky



Epicurus of Samos, Baruch Spinoza and G.W.F. Hegel

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The following text is reproduced from volume XIII of the *Collected Writings of HPB*, pp. 307-312. Editor Boris de Zirkoff writes in an opening note: “The Manuscript of this unfinished essay in H.P.B.’s handwriting exists in the Adyar Archives. It has been originally published in *The Theosophist*, April, 1962, pp. 8-13.”

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One of the greatest materialists that ever lived, and than whom no one adduced stronger arguments in defence of his theory - was Epicurus. The great, the virtuous, the noble and chaste Epicurus, who called the higher ends and *divine* laws mere inventions of the human mind, and rejected the idea of the human Soul as being immortal. Who of our modern positivists has ever said of the origin of our being, anything stronger than this:

“The soul..... must be material, because we trace it issuing from a material source; because it exists, and exists alone, in a material system; is nourished by material food; grows with the

growth of the body; becomes matured with its maturity; declines with its decay; and hence, whether belonging to man or brute must die with its death.”¹

And yet, he was a Deist and a Theosophist; for apart from a system entirely his own, the profound philosophy of which is evinced in the cohesive power of his school never equalled by any other ancient school of philosophy - he devoted his whole life to the study of natural sciences and the analysis of divine action in its relations to nature. His conclusion was that the Universe which is infinite could not be the product of divine action, since the existence of evil cannot be accounted for. Notwithstanding this, and though disbelieving in a God as an intelligent Principle, he admitted the existence of both a Supreme Being and gods or Spirits, living and immortal beings, of human shape but colossal proportions.

On the other hand, Spinoza was a recognized “systematic Atheist” as Bayle brands him²; against whom was pronounced the terrific *Anathema Maranatha*, and whose system of negation Malebranche terms a chimera both ridiculous and terrible. And yet, no more refined, spiritual nature than Spinoza’s ever breathed upon earth. If by Epicurus abstract ideas were continually transformed into the gross concrete forms of a material Universe; by Spinoza the material conceptions of Science, from the Solar system down to the molecular structure of a leaflet, were mellowed down to the most Raphaelic hues, and the grossest substances assumed the shadowy, ethereal outlines of an ideal world. So much did this martyr of transcendent Theosophy impress himself upon the subsequent generations of thinkers that Schleiermacher speaking of “the holy but proscribed Spinoza” reaches the most touching pathos. “The Divine Spirit transfuses him”, he says. “The infinite was his beginning and end, the universe was his only and everlasting love. In holy innocence and deep humility he mirrored himself in the eternal world, and saw also how he was its noblest mirror. *Full of religion was he, and full of a holy spirit*, and therefore he stands alone and unrivalled, master of his art, but exalted above profane Society, without disciples and without even citizenship!”³

The conceptions of this “atheistical” Theosophist, about God are among the most original. Iron-bound as they are by the law of necessity reigning everywhere in physical nature, we find him solving the most abstract ideas by rigidly geometrical definitions. His is a system of metaphysical ideas from which evolve a series of theorems - a demonstration from the eight definitions and seven axioms of the first book of the *Ethica*.⁴

¹ Note by B. Zirkoff: “This is probably H.P.B.’s own translation from the Greek. A summary of the thought of Epicurus on the Soul is translated in the *Loeb Classical Library* edition of Diogenes Laertius’, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Vol. II, Book X, § 63-68.”

² Note by B. Zirkoff: “See *Bayle en Spinoza*..... Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1961; also Latin ed. of Pierre Poiret: *Cogitationum Rationalium*.... pp. 80, 87, 304-305. Joannem Pauli, Amsterdam, 1715.”

³ Note by B. Zirkoff: “Schleiermacher, Friedrich, Speech 2 (‘Nature of Religion’) in his work *On Religion*, N.Y., Harper Bros., 1958, p. 40 of Eng. repr.”

⁴ Note by B. Zirkoff: “Many editions. H.P.B. may have consulted *The Chief Works of Spinoza*, by R. H. M. Elwes (2 v.) Bohn’s Lib. ed., London, George Bell & Sons, 1883, or W. H. White’s Trans. of *Ethics* in the same year.”

One acquainted with the Hindu philosophy would be singularly reminded of both the Vedanta and that extreme Buddhist system known as the school of the Svâbhâvikas. According to his ideas God is “a Substance consisting of infinite attributes each of which expresses an *absolutely* infinite and eternal essence.” It follows that this Substance - necessary and infinite, one and indivisible, is God, the only Self-existence, All-Perfection and absolute Infinitude. Take away the name of the Deity, and you have here the abstract ideas about the only creative Power of the World, of the Svâbhâvikas. “Nothing exists in the Universe but Substance - or Nature”, say the latter. “This Substance exists by, and through itself (Svabhavat) having never been either created or had a Creator.” “No” - echoes unconsciously Spinoza, “nothing exists in this world but Substance, and the modes of its attributes; and, as Substance cannot produce Substance there is no such thing as Creation.” This is the claim of most of the Hindu philosophies. And again It (creation) - says Spinoza, has no beginning and no end, but all things have to proceed or emanate from the Infinite One and will so proceed eternally. According to his philosophy, only two out of the innumerable infinite attributes of the Deity are known to us - extension and thought, the objective and the subjective of which He (the Infinite) is the identity. God is the only free Cause (*causa libera*), all other beings having neither free will nor contingency are moved by fixed laws of causation. The Deity is “*The causa immanens omnium*, not existing apart from the Universe, but manifested and expressed in it, as in a living garment.” In the *Zohar* the creation or universe is also called “the garment of God” woven from its own Substance.

*'Tis thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply
And weave for God the garment thou seest Him by,*

says Goethe, another German Theosophist in his *Faust*. And, in Vedanta, we find Brahma the *Absolute* God, unconscious of the Universe, and remaining ever independent of all direct relation to it. Says Pandit Pramadâ Dâsa Mitra of Benares - in his *Vedântic Conception of Brahma*: “While the Vedântin denies this mundane transitory consciousness to the Deity he declares emphatically that He is Consciousness Absolute He and His Consciousness are not distinct It is this permanent Self partially manifested [in man,] but prevailing all conscious beings that is the Omnipresent Spirit The Vedântin believes that it (the world) *was* nothing and *is* nothing apart from the One absolute Being - God.”⁵ It is only when the Jewish philosopher speaks of the “attributes” of God - however infinite, that he differs from the Vedanta; for the latter allows man alone to call *his* consciousness an attribute of his soul “because it varies, whilst the consciousness (*chaitanya*) of God is one and unchangeable, hence no such distinction of substance and attribute holds with Him.” As to Spinoza’s Deity - *natura naturans* - conceived in his attributes simply and alone; and the same Deity - as *natura naturata* or as conceived in the endless series of modifications or correlations, the direct outflowing results from the properties of these attributes, it is the Vedantic Deity pure and simple. The same subtle metaphysical distinction is found in the mystery by which the impersonal Brahma - One and Indivisible, the *Absolute* “consciousness” - *unconscious* of the Universe, becomes through sheer metaphysical necessity Ishvara, the personal God, and brings himself into direct relation to the Universe - of which it is the Creator - respectively under the definitions of Maya (illusion), Shakti (power) and Prakriti (nature).

⁵ Note by B. de Zirkoff: “*A Dialogue on the Vedantic Conception of Brahma, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 2nd series, Vol. X, Pt. 1, 1877; see pp. 35 & 36.”

So pre-eminent is the Vedantic Brahmâ-Ishvara in Spinoza's philosophy that we find this idea strongly colouring the subsequent views of Hegel, one of the philosophers who was the most influenced by the Jewish idealist. In the Hegelian scheme the *Absolute* asserts its rights to the fullest extent. Hegel declares that he would rather deny the existence of the material universe than to identify God with it. Fichte whose transcendental idealism was originally intended to amplify that of Kant, and served as a basis for Schelling's Nature-philosophy had gone still further than Hegel in that direction. Unable to free human will from subjection to the iron laws ruling despotically all over physical nature, he denied the reality of both nature and law and denounced them as the product of his own mind - (maya?). Hence he denied God, for in his philosophy the Deity is not an individual being but merely a manifestation of Supreme laws, the necessary and logical order of things, the *ordo ordinans* of the Universe. If we take in consideration that by a peculiar modification of language, that which the ancients called "Substance", modern philosophy terms as the *Absolute*, or the *Ego*, we will find still more striking similarities between the pantheistical mysticism of the ancients and the extreme transcendentalism of today, whether in physical or spiritual sciences.

To sum up, then, whether with Robert Boyle one considers the Universe in the light of a gigantic clock-work and strives to fathom the mystery of that Self-existing Key, which winds it up so periodically and mechanically. Or, belonging to the class of those thinkers, whom the Duke of Argyll accused in his *Reign of Law* ⁶ of constantly speaking of "mere ticketing and orderly assortment of external facts", and is a Positivist. Or again maintains with Dr. Tyndall that "the order and energy of the Universe is inherent and not imposed from without, - the expression of fixed law and not of arbitrary will", and is regarded as a materialist. Or yet, without being necessarily a Sectarian bigot, he reflects the early teachings of his childhood and regards God as a tangible, gigantic operative and intelligent Being, with personal attributes, who descends periodically into various Avatars, becomes a "divine male" like Viraj and others, and rejects a deity incomprehensible and incomprehensive - an invisible mist. Or following in the footsteps of the ancient Yogis, starts out in search of the Boundless and the Unconditioned One, and hopes of meeting face to face the Absolute and Subjective, or believes in Alchemy and expects to rival Raymond Lully in the art of making gold and finding the philosopher's stone; or finally, like Iamblichus, or a modern Spiritualist, experiments in Theurgy and Spiritualism, and calls out forth superior and inferior spirits from the supermundane spheres

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The fundamental truths of a spiritual religion are that our real self is the supreme being, which is our business to discover and consciously become, and this being is one in all. The soul that has found itself is no longer conscious of itself in its isolation. It is conscious rather of the universal life of which all individuals, races and nations are specific articulations.

[The above lines open the article "**Humanity Is In The Making**", by S. Radhakrishnan. Available in our associated websites.]

⁶ Note by B. de Zirkoff: "The 8th Duke of Argyll is actually George Douglas Campbell. See New York edition of 1888."

