

Being a lamp depends on our attitude towards ourselves. The pilgrim must be a teacher to his lower and “animal” self, and - on the other hand - a humble student to the voice of his conscience.

Living the light means having that confidence in the future whose foundation is something called direct knowledge.

Outward Change Is Often Illusory **The Tools to Build a Sane Society**



The absence of a clear notion of the law of cause and effect provokes moral decay and widespread falsehood.

Whenever the citizens pay more attention to their *rights* than to their *duties*, a Karmic deficit establishes itself, due to the excess of narcissism.

Selfishness dominates the social process, as long as people try to obtain that which they do not deserve, or make efforts to harvest things they did not sow. As a result, greed and anger produce a whole new tide of destruction, starting from within the souls.

The right thing to do is to dedicate one's life to things which one sees as true, as morally good and ethically beautiful.

Inspired by the best of ancient wisdom, German thinker Samuel Pufendorf (1632-1694) wrote remarkable works on the duty of human beings and the natural law. [1] Yet since the end of 18th century the agenda of social movements adopted the sad illusion according to which, by merely destroying what we see as other people's errors, harmony and virtue will prevail; and by simply eliminating whom we consider unjust individuals, justice will reign.

Such a “politically progressive” doctrine ignores the law of Karma. It supposes all we need to solve human problems is to take possessions from the rich and give them to the poor. No inner transformation is needed in one's mind. The very existence of our souls is often denied.

As a result, we have had - side by side with materialistic progress - a number of failed revolutions, countless revolts, endless examples of cruelty promoted in the name of beautiful ideals, and an unfinished series of social disasters and calamities often promoted with good intentions. Yet collective selfishness, even if disguised or subconscious, can build nothing.

When a community obtains common sense and discernment, on the other hand, its life is organized on the basic principle that one needs to sow kindness in order to harvest it. People then realize that the first step to improve social life is to adopt a constructive attitude. And that no human rights can be respected, if people do not fulfil their duties in the first place.

One must act with justice to all beings, in every situation. Once the good Karma ripens, nice results will be seen.

Pure intelligence says we need to build right social and economic relations before there is real progress on the visible realm. Anger generates anger: mutual help produces mutual help. Sincerity allows us to correct mistakes, and altruism paves the way to improving life. [2]

Abandoning the Excuses Not to Improve Oneself

It is convenient therefore to improve our view of reality, instead of fiercely fighting systems of thought that are different from our own.

An intense denunciation of those who think different indicates we are leaving aside that task which nobody else can do for us: to reform ourselves.

Honest criticism and sincere dialogue are most useful. Their absence produces hypocrisy. However, destructive attacks are worse than useless. Criticizing others is often an excuse not to improve oneself.

Let us see an example. It is not a good idea for the Western heads of state to expand intercultural tensions with Russia or China. Respect among nations is a basic tenet of common sense. The Western society must leave hypocrisy aside and improve itself, so that its practical example in ethics (once it starts taking place) can reach other regions of the world. As part of the process of self-improvement, the lack of ethics of dogmatic religions which promote corruption, anti-Semitism, crime and violence against innocent civilians should be unmasked and shown as despicable, in Western countries and everywhere.

The “dominant” nations of the West have many a lesson to learn from the wisdom of India, from Russian and Chinese philosophies, and the cultural tradition of communities around the world. Rich nations have something to teach, too. Regardless of the country or community to which we belong, if we want to improve life in the planet, one of the steps to take is to identify and unmask the organized systems of falsehood and ill-will, starting with our own.

NOTES:

[1] See for instance “On the Duty of Man and Citizen According to Natural Law”, Samuel Pufendorf, Cambridge University Press, UK, 1991, 183 pages.

[2] See in our websites the article “Vinoba and the Power of Good Will”.

Samuel Pufendorf, on the First Duty of a Human Being



First among the absolute duties [of man] is the duty not to harm others. This is at once the most far-reaching of all duties, extending as it does to all men as men, and the easiest, since it consists of mere omission of action, except insofar as passions in conflict with reason must sometimes be restrained.

It is also the most essential duty, since without it human social life would be utterly impossible. For I can live at peace with a man who does me no positive service, and with a man who does not exchange even the commonest duties with me, provided he does me no harm.

In fact, this is all we desire from mankind at large; it is only within a fairly small circle that we impart good things to each other. By contrast, there is no way that I can live at peace with one who does me harm. For nature has implanted in each man such a tender love of himself and of what is his, that he cannot but repel by every means one who offers to do harm to either.

This duty affords protection not only to what we have from nature, as life, body, limbs, chastity, liberty, but also to what we have acquired on the basis of some institution and human convention. Hence this precept forbids that anything which is ours by legitimate title be taken, spoiled, damaged or removed from our use in whole or in part.

By this precept all crimes are understood to be forbidden by which harm is inflicted on another, as, killing, wounding, beating, robbery, theft, fraud and other forms of violence, whether inflicted directly or indirectly, in person or through an agent.

[Reproduced from the book “**On the Duty of Man and Citizen According to Natural Law**”, by Samuel Pufendorf, Cambridge University Press, UK, 1991, 183 pages, see pp. 56-57.]

N. Sri Ram Examines An Extraordinary Word



Mr. N. Sri Ram (1889-1973)

The word “Truth” has such an extraordinary meaning that we might not even guess its nature. In order to discover that meaning one has to apply the most rigorous standards to one’s life and thinking. Without doing so it is impossible to come to such truth as has to be realized in oneself, as distinguished from facts external to oneself that any one can observe.

There are the concrete things around us which with the faculties we normally use we can observe. We can understand their nature and properties at least superficially, but truth means very much more than such understanding but it is not to be confused with any vision that one might project out of preconceived ideas or his personal predilections. It is easy to fall under some pleasing illusion and imagine it is truth.

What causes illusion, fundamentally, is the seeking of the pleasurable, the gratifying, at whatever level. We like to accept something mentally or physically because it gives pleasure, it is convenient to do so, or it is a comforting thought; it suits the curve of our mental spine, so to say. Realizing the truth is not the same as getting hold of an idea and clinging to it with fervor. The mind is easily bribed with pleasure.

(N. Sri Ram)

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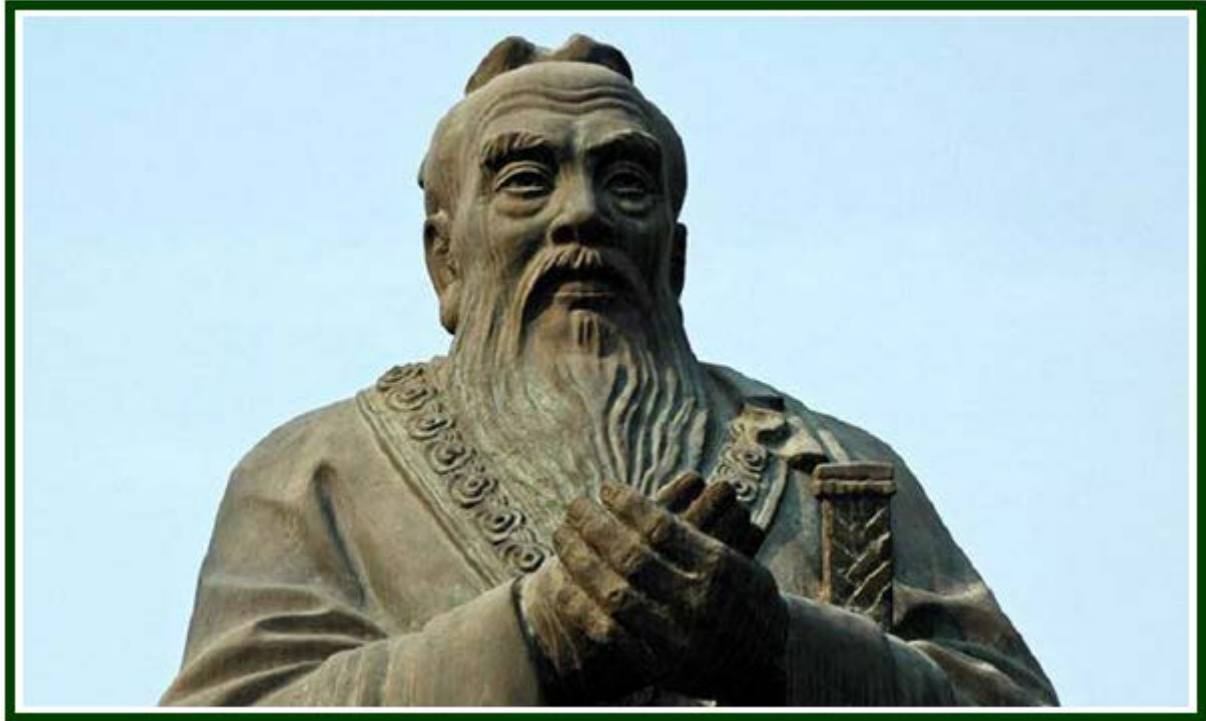
Reproduced from the article “Truth, or the Semblance of Truth?”, by N. Sri Ram (1889-1973). The text was published at “The Theosophist”, Adyar, Madras-Chennai, India, September 1968 edition. See pp. 380-381.

On N. Sri Ram’s own human difficulties in putting truth above politics, see in our associated websites the article “There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth”, by E. L. Gardner.

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The Power of Chinese Wisdom

Oriental Lessons in Voluntary Simplicity



A few words can say much.

In the Mahatma Letters, for example, a Master of the Wisdom reveals the importance of China in the living process of universal wisdom. He says: “We, of Tibet and China ...” [1].

The Mahatma identifies himself in another sentence as someone whose place is “China and Tibet”.

Chinese wisdom - Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism - has great importance for the future of mankind. Taoism did not get entangled in words, concepts and rites. It teaches largely by example and by “the osmosis of the auras”. Zen Buddhism originated in China.

Some of the folk tales and ancient stories of Chinese tradition teach Taoism and theosophy in admirable ways. They speak directly to one’s heart, for humbleness is part of Taoist way of teaching. The quiet influence of the Tao has been helping Western culture to overcome its lack of balance and maturity.

NOTE:

[1] “The Mahatma Letters”, TUP edition, Letter 65, p. 364. It is the same page at the online edition of the Mahatma Letters published in our associated websites.

The Mahatma Letters: A Human Child as a Cosmos



Take the human foetus. From the moment of its first planting until it completes its seventh month of gestation it repeats in miniature the mineral, vegetable, and animal cycles it passed through in its previous encasements, and only during the last two, develops its future human entity.

It is completed but towards the child's seventh year. Yet it existed without *any increase or decrease* aeons on aeons before it worked its way onward, *through* and *in* the womb of mother nature as it works now in its earthly mother's bosom. Truly said a learned philosopher who trusts more to his intuitions than the dicta of modern science. "The stages of man's intra-uterine existence embody a condensed record of some of the missing pages in Earth's history." Thus you must look back at the animal, vegetable and mineral entities.

(A Master of the Wisdom)

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Reproduced from "The Mahatma Letters", Letter XV, item I. The book is available in our associated websites. For an expanded study of the same teaching, see in our websites the article "The Cosmic Creation in Every Foetus".

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Exaggeration Is the Beginning of the End



Moderation is seen as old-fashioned nowadays. Many think we are in the age of “special effects”, of propaganda, cosmetics and make-believe.

Honesty and sincerity are described by some as “Victorian”, and falsehood, as a characteristic of clever people. In fact, moderation makes life sustainable. Exaggeration is the beginning of the end for all forms of life.

A love of appearance in itself results from the fear of truth. Falsehood dominates when a society is getting near to its self-destruction, and each falsity defeats itself, thus paving the way to the rebirth of ethics.

Therefore the relative dominance of fake news in present-day social media must in due time open the door to a new and better relation of Journalism with truthfulness. In all time, the work of good journalists is sober, reliable, and deserves to endure.

The Decision to Think by Oneself

Inaccurate information is a problem: no doubt about that. There is an ocean of false data and pseudo-information around every citizen nowadays.

Yet perhaps the most dangerous form of disinformation is not inaccurate data. False narratives can always be checked, tested and verified. The worst way of getting misinformed is probably having an interest on irrelevant issues, and adopting them as “relevant”.

Seeing unimportant things as important, and important things as unimportant, constitutes Maya.

What are the aspects of reality which we should in fact try to know right now, on an individual basis? In our family? In our cities and nations? That’s for each one to decide. In

any case, the alternatives should be well examined and the decisions made in a conscious, self-responsible way.

The truth-seeker avoids collective hypnotism. It is a privilege to be able to think by oneself, to learn from our mistakes, and place the active search for truth above mere opinion.

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See also the text “**A Strategic View of Information**”, which is available at our websites.

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The Process of Time



The associations of the theosophical movement which obey to their “political” and corporate interests carefully avoid examining their own past, or taking lessons from History.

Their leaders use to say that one should “live in the present”. They quote from Krishnamurti or talk about “living in the Now”.

In the Mahatma Letters, however, we see:

“Madmen are they, who, speculating but upon the present, willfully shut their eyes to the past when made already to remain naturally blind to the future!” [1]

Politicians often depend on appearance and fear truth, for real facts transcend the externally visible aspect of things. The study of History shows the cycles and patterns which preside over present events, and influence the future ones.

NOTE:

[1] “The Mahatma Letters”, various editions, Letter I, second paragraph.

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Thoughts Along the Road

The Wisdom of the Soul Makes People Awaken to Mutual Help



* **O**nce priority is given to a noble intention, the dynamic symmetry of life gets intensified. He who attains the right kind of inner balance can remain away from many forms of ignorance. Yin and yang, defensive and aggressive ways of being naïve are then avoided. Such a pilgrim has the means to elevate himself up to the realm of pure justice and equilibrium. In that realm, immortal Sages live.

* Every human being is born to expand his discernment of right and wrong. I see uninspiring events around me, for instance; and I decide not to pay too much attention to them. There are significant amounts of ignorance in today's society, from which fact I take the practical lesson of detachment. I see inspiring facts in life, and pay due attention to them. I am a dweller of the spiritual world; sometimes I visit the world of matter.

* External events form what the Sages call the "world of effects". Esoteric philosophy teaches us how to operate in conscious and responsible ways in the "world of causes". The realm of causes is within our soul.

* In order to produce the right kind of effects, it is enough to make correct decisions in that which actually depends on us. However, this is rarely as easy as it sounds, for it requires a clear goal, and detachment, and discernment.

* The central part of summer brings us the apex of light, a relative abundance of life, and a lesson or two in simplicity. In the highest point of a cycle, one must remember the law of detachment and prepare for an outward decline. There is nothing like one year after other. When the external Sun gets stronger and more visible, this is the occasion to remember the

inner, invisible Sun. Each time things get easier, the pilgrim must be sure he is ready to face the coming obstacles.

* More important than demanding something is to set an example. Greed, anger, ambition and immoderate desire in any form provoke blind actions leading to social disharmony. Order, on the other hand, can only be established if there is moderation.

* Voluntary simplicity results from detachment, and from an inner feeling of independence regarding the circumstances. Then we experience a lasting contentment which, instead of obeying to the logic of external world, guides the world, and enlightens it, and preserves our liberty of mind and soul.

* In a community where people are used to waste energies talking about each other's mistakes and making mutual accusations, few have the time necessary to correct their own failures. It makes no sense to point out problems, except for the purpose of defining and implementing solutions to them, or preventing their growth, or extracting lessons.

* The lower-self habit of negative feelings and thoughts must be observed, understood and uprooted. Although a critical view of things constitutes an essential tool to avoid defeat, the ability to discern the true and the false must be combined with three other factors: personal detachment, unconditional good-will, and positive thinking.

* Truth belongs to no one, for that which is eternal cannot belong to a temporary being. Yet all beings belong to truth. Temporary entities exist - once and again - in the limitless space of eternity and truth.

* All is not uniform when one's existence reorganizes itself through a deep and quick change in the tides of Karma.

* In some special occasions, one has to act forcefully in building new foundations for thought and action, in more than one aspect of life.

* As soon as a new structure of Karma is defined in its premises and limits, the moment comes for a relative pause in the outward aspects of one's effort. Thus the subsidiary lines of action and reaction can adopt different rhythms and cycles, adapted to the new conditions.

* While acting in the world of causes, one must give the world of effects some time to adapt, before the renewing action receives another impulse.

* When you act in perfect peace and with the necessary calm on the essential aspects of life, everything gets in movement in the proper rhythm, in the right direction. It is worthless to work too fast, because artificial accelerations lead the pilgrim away from the essential facts, towards the territory of mere appearance. Those whose goal is valuable have no reason to be in great hurry.

* When action is based on a short-term view of facts, anxiety and the search for superficial goals tend to prevail. In a long-term action, on the other hand, one sees the results of the effort and has time enough to correct it. One does not merely create a certain set of results. One produces an intelligent process of karmic production. In such an unfoldment we can learn. By identifying mistakes and ceasing to make them, we constantly improve the effort.

* It is a blessing to contemplate the wisdom expressed in popular tales of different nations. Divine knowledge can be found in the literature of India, of Israel, of Russia, of ancient Greece, of China and nearly every nation. These show both the cultural diversity and the inner unity of mankind.

* There is a natural balance to life, and in every aspect of it. In individual and collective existence, each form of power or energy is compensated and complemented by other forms of creative dominance. Dreams about attaining unilateral, unaccountable power are neurotic. Such naïve wishes lead to great suffering.

* Different forms of power are fundamentally friendly as long as they are healthy. When ethical decay becomes central in a society, citizens of goodwill must use their best discernment to stay away from or leave the dysfunctional trends, getting in tune with the sane trends which will dominate again in due time according to Karmic Law.

* The accumulated experience of nations and individuals confirms that which is said in the scriptures of various religions: constructive action should be the priority; destructive action should not be the priority. Positive emotions and the ability to act in creative ways deserve to be central goals. It is easier to cut down a tree than to plant it and care for the seedling to grow.

* Despising existing things because they do not correspond to our expectations is an attitude based on a feeling of frustration and does not produce good fruits. Hatred is a bad counsellor. On the other hand, gratitude produces happiness. Improving existing things is wise. It is correct to build from the start that which will be of great value. There is merit in planting a forest.

* Solidarity guides human beings towards peace. The wisdom of the soul makes people awoken to cooperation. The practical example of right actions constitutes the best way to prevent the repetition of mistakes.

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Religion as a Psychoanalytic Mirror

The critical examination of religions is unavoidable in the Middle East and elsewhere. And the reason is simple: after several millennia of profoundly religious civilizations, one can still see such a degree of spiritual ignorance, despair and suffering around the world that there must be something tremendously wrong in conventional religions.

Admittedly, one thing is the divine world and another one - quite different - is the imperfect idea we have of it. Everything one may think of God was created by men. Divinity is a mirror on which we project not only our hopes and noble feelings, but also our ignorance, both individually and collectively.

[The above paragraphs open the article "[**A Psychoanalysis of Religions**](#)", which is available at our associated websites.]

So utterly has he misunderstood the spirit in which both the Memo and P.S. were written, that had he not placed me during the three last days under a debt of profound gratitude for what he is doing for my poor old chela ¹, I would have never gone to the trouble of doing what might seem as an excuse, or an explanation, or both. However that may be, that debt of gratitude is so sacred, that I now do for her sake, what I might have refused doing even for the Society: I crave the Sahibs' permission to acquaint them with some facts. With our Indo-Tibetan ways the most sagacious English official is not yet acquainted. The information now offered may be found useful in our future transactions. I will have to be sincere and out-spoken and Mr. Hume will have to excuse me. If I once am forced to speak I must say ALL, or say - nothing.

I am not a fine scholar, Sahibs, like my blessed Brother; but nevertheless, I believe, I understand the value of words. And if I do, then am I at a loss to understand, what in my P.S. could have so provoked the ironical displeasure against me of Mr. Hume? We of the Indo-Tibetan hovels never quarrel (this in answer to some expressed thoughts in relation to the subject). Quarrels and even discussions we leave to those, who unable to take in a situation at a glance are thereby forced before making up their final decision to anything to analyse and weigh one by one, and over and over again every detail. Whenever we - at least those of us who are *dikshita* ² - seem, therefore to an European not "quite sure of our facts" it may be often due to the following peculiarity.³ That which is regarded by most men as a "fact" to us may seem but a simple RESULT, an after thought unworthy of our attention, generally attracted but to *primary facts*. Life, esteemed Sahibs, when even indefinitely prolonged, is too short to burden our brains with flitting details - mere shadows. When watching the progress of a storm we fix our gaze upon the producing Cause and leave the clouds to the whims of the breeze which shapes them. Having always the means on hand - whenever absolutely needed - of bringing to our knowledge minor details we concern ourselves but with the main facts. Hence we can hardly be *absolutely wrong* - as we are often accused by you, for our conclusions are never drawn from secondary data but from the situation as a whole.

On the other hand, the average man - even among the most intellectual - giving all their attention to the testimony of appearance and outward form, and disabled as they are from penetrating *a priori* to the core of things are but too apt to misjudge of the whole situation left to find out their mistake but when too late. Owing to complicated politics, to debates and what you term, if I mistake not, - social talk and drawing-room controversies and discussions, sophistry has now become in Europe (hence among the Anglo-Indians) "the logical exercise of the intellectual faculties", while with us it has never outgrown its pristine stage of "fallacious reasoning", the shaky, insecure premises from which most of the conclusions and opinions are drawn, formed and forthwith jumped at. Again, we ignorant Asiatics of Tibet, accustomed to rather follow the thought of our interlocutor or correspondent than the words he clothes it in - concern ourselves generally but little with the accuracy of his expressions.

¹ Allan O. Hume had written a letter to "The Saturday Review" defending H. P. Blavatsky from unjust attacks. His letter was later published in the issues of December 1881 and January 1882 of "The Theosophist". See "The Mahatma Letters", chronological edition, TPH, Philippines, 1993, p. 85. (CCA)

² *Dikshita* - Initiates. (CCA)

³ At this point the Master starts to describe the way of thinking of Initiates. They think on the level of causes, not so much on the level of effects. (CCA)

Now this preface will seem as unintelligible as useless to you, and you may well ask: what is he driving at. Patience, pray, for I have something more to say before our final explanation.

A few days before leaving us, Koot'hoomi speaking of you said to me as follows: "I feel tired and weary of these never ending disputations. The more I try to explain to both of them the circumstances that control us and that interpose between us so many obstacles to free intercourse, the less they understand me! Under the most favourable aspects this correspondence must always be unsatisfactory, even exasperatingly so, at times; for nothing short of personal interviews, at which there could be discussion and the instant solution of intellectual difficulties as they arise, would satisfy them fully. It is as though we were hallooing to each other across an impassable ravine and only one of us seeing his interlocutor. In point of fact, there is nowhere in physical nature a mountain abyss so hopelessly impassable and obstructive to the traveller as that spiritual one, which keeps them back from me."

Two days later when his "retreat" was decided upon in parting he asked me: "Will you watch over my work, will you see it falls not into ruins?" I promised. What is there I would not have promised him at that hour! At a certain spot not to be mentioned to outsiders, there is a chasm spanned by a frail bridge of woven grasses and with a raging torrent beneath. The bravest member of your Alpine clubs would scarcely dare to venture the passage, for it hangs like a spider's web and *seems* to be rotten and impassable. Yet it is not; and he who dares the trial and succeeds - as he will if it is right that he should be permitted - comes into a gorge of surpassing beauty of scenery - to one of *our* places and to some of *our* people, of which and whom there is no note or minute among European geographers. At a stone's throw from the old Lamasery stands the old tower, within whose bosom have gestated generations of Bodhisatwas. It is there, where now rests your lifeless friend - my brother, the light of my soul, to whom I made a faithful promise to watch during his absence over *his* work. And is it likely, I ask you, that but two days after his retirement I, his faithful friend and brother would have gratuitously shown disrespect to his European friends? What reason was there, and what could have caused such an idea in Mr. Hume's and even in your mind? Why a word or two entirely misunderstood and misapplied by him. I'll prove it.

Don't you think that had the expression used "coming to hate the sut-phana" been changed into and made to read "coming to feel again flashes of dislike" or of temporary irritation this sentence alone would have wonderfully changed the *results*? Had it been *so* phrased Mr. Hume would hardly have found an opportunity for *denying the fact* as vigorously as he did. For there he is right and the WORD is wrong. It is a perfectly correct statement when saying that such a feeling as *hatred* has never existed in him. Whether he will be as able to protest against the statement in general remains to be seen. He confessed to the fact that he was "irritated", and to a "feeling of distrust" created by H.P.B. That "irritation", as he will no longer deny, lasted for several days? Where does he then find the *misstatement*? Let us moreover admit, that the word to use *was* an incorrect one. Then, since he is so particular in the choice of words, so desirous that they should always convey the correct meaning, why not apply the same rule of action to himself? What might be well excused in an Asiatic ignorant of English and one, moreover, who never was in the habit of choosing his expressions, for reasons given above, and because among *his* people he *cannot* be misunderstood ought to - become *inexcusable* in an educated, highly literary Englishman. In his letter to Olcott he writes: "He (I) or she (H.P.B.), or both between them, so muddled and misunderstood a letter written by Sinnett and myself as to lead to our receiving a message wholly inapplicable to the circumstances and such as necessarily *to create distrust*." Humbly soliciting permission to put

a question - when did either *I*, or *she* or both of us, see, read and hence “muddled and misunderstood” the letter in question? How could she, or I, have muddled *that*, which *she had never seen*, and I, having neither inclination nor right to look into and mix myself in an affair concerning but the Chohan and K.H. - never paid the slightest attention to? Did she inform you on the day in question, that it was in consequence of that letter of yours that I had sent her into Mr. Sinnett’s room with the message? I was there respected Sahibs, and can repeat to you every word she said: “What is it? . . . What have you been doing, or saying to K.H.” - she shouted in her usual excited nervous way to Mr. Sinnett who was alone in the room - “that M., (naming me) that he should be so angry - should tell me to prepare to go and settle our headquarters at Ceylon?” were the first words she said, thus showing that *she knew nothing certain, was told still less*, and simply surmised from what I had told her. And what I had told her, was simply that she had better prepare for the worse and depart to settle in Ceylon than make a fool of herself, trembling so over every letter given to her to forward to K.H.; that unless she learned to control herself better than she did, I would put a stop to that *dark* business. These words were said by me to her not because I had anything to do with *your* or *any* letter, nor in consequence of any letter sent, but because I happened to see the aura all around the new *Eclectic* and herself, black and pregnant with future mischief, and I sent her to say so to Mr. Sinnett *not* to Mr. Hume. My remark and message upsetting her (owing to that unfortunate disposition and shattered nerves) in the most ridiculous way, the well known scene ensued. Is it because of the phantoms of theosophical ruin evoked by her unbalanced brain that she is now accused - in my company - to have muddled and misunderstood a letter she had never seen? Whether there is in Mr. Hume’s statement one single word that might be called correct - the term “correct” being now applied by me to the actual meaning of the whole sentence, not merely to isolated words - I leave to the judgment of minds superior to those of Asiatics. And if I am permitted to question the correctness of opinion in one, so vastly superior to myself in education, intelligence and acuteness in the perception of the eternal fitness of things - in view of the above explanation, why should I be held as “absolutely wrong” for the following statement: “I have also seen the growing up of a sudden dislike (say irritation) *begotten of distrust* (Mr. Hume confessing to, and using the identical expression in his answer to Olcott - please compare quotation from his letter as given above) on the day I sent her with a message to Mr. Sinnett’s room.” Is this incorrect? And further: “they know how excitable and ill balanced she is, and this hostile feeling on his part was almost cruel. *For days he barely looked at her* let alone speaking to her - and inflicted upon her supersensitive nature severe and unnecessary pain! *And when told of it by Mr. Sinnett he denied the fact! . . .*” This last sentence, continued on page 7 with *many other like truths*, I tore out with the rest (as upon enquiry you can ascertain from Olcott, who will tell you that originally there were 12 pages, not 10, and that he had sent the letter with far more details than you now find in it, for he is unaware of what I have done, and *why* it was done. Unwilling to remind Mr. Hume of details long forgotten by him and irrelevant to the case in hand, I tore out the page and obliterated much of the rest. His feelings had already changed and I was satisfied.)

Now the question is not whether Mr. Hume “cares a twopence” if his feelings *are pleasing to me or not*, but rather whether he was warranted by *facts* to write to Olcott as he did, i.e., that I had *entirely misunderstood* his real feelings. I say *he was not*. He can no more prevent me from being “displeased”, than I can go to the trouble of making him feel otherwise than what he now feels, namely, that he does “not care a twopence whether his feelings are pleasing to me or not”. All this is childishness; and he who is desirous to learn how to benefit humanity, and believes himself able to read the characters of other people, must begin first of all, *to learn to know himself*, to appreciate his own character at its true value. And this, I venture to

say, he has never learned yet. And he has also to learn in what particular cases *results* may in their turn become important and primary *causes*, when the result becomes a *Kyen*. Had he *hated* her with the most bitter hatred, he could not have tortured her foolishly sensitive nerves more effectually than he has, while “still loving the dear old woman”. He has done so with those he loved best, and, unconsciously to himself, he will do so more than once in the hereafter; and yet his first impulse will be always to deny it, for he is indeed fully *unconscious* of the fact, the extreme kindness of his heart, being in such cases entirely blinded and paralyzed by another feeling, which, if told of, he will also deny. Undismayed by his epithets of “goose” and “Don Quichote”, true to my promise to my Blessed Brother, I will tell him of it whether he likes it or not; for now that he has openly given expression to his feelings, we have either to understand each other or break off. This is “no half veiled threat” as he expresses it for “a threat in a man is like the bark in a dog” - it means nothing. I say, that unless he understands how utterly inapplicable to us is the standard according to which he is accustomed to judge Western people of his own society, it would simply be a loss of time for me or K.H. to teach and for him to learn. We never regard a friendly warning as a “threat”, nor do we feel irritated when it is offered to us. He says that personally he does not care in the least, “were the Brothers to break with him to-morrow”, the more reason then that we should come to an understanding. Mr. Hume prides himself in the thought that he never had “a spirit of veneration” for anything but his own abstract ideals. We are perfectly aware of it. Nor could he possibly have any veneration for anyone or anything, as all the veneration his nature is capable of is - *concentrated upon himself*. This is a fact and the cause of all his life-troubles. When his numerous official “friends” and his own family say that it is *conceit* - they misstate and say a very foolish thing. He is too highly intellectual to be conceited: he is simply and unconsciously to himself *the embodiment of pride*. He would have no veneration for even his *God*, were not that God - *of his own creation and making*; and that is why he could neither be made amenable to any established doctrine, nor would he ever submit to a philosophy that did not come all armed, like the Grecian *Saraswati* or *Minerva*, out of his own - her father’s - brain. This may throw light upon the fact why I refused giving him during the short period of my instruction - anything but half problems, hints and puzzles to solve for himself. For only then would he believe, when his own extraordinary capacity for grasping at the nature of things, would clearly show him that it must be so, since it dovetails with what HE conceives to be mathematically correct. If he accused - and so unjustly! - K.H. whom he really affections - of feeling “huffish” at his lack of reverence for him - it is because he built his ideal of my brother in his own image - Mr. Hume accuses us of treating him *de haut en bas*!⁴ If he but knew that in our sight an honest boot-black was as good as an honest king, and an *immoral* sweeper far higher and more excusable than an *immoral* Emperor - he would have never uttered such a fallacy. Mr. Hume complains (thousand pardons - “laughs” is the correct term) that we show a desire of *sitting upon him*. I venture to suggest most respectfully that it is absolutely *vice versa*. It is Mr. Hume who (again unconsciously and yielding but to a life-long habit) tried that most uncomfortable posture with my brother in every letter he wrote to Koothoomi. And when certain expressions denoting a fierce spirit of self-approbation and confidence which reached the apex of human pride, were noticed and mildly contradicted by my brother, Mr. Hume forthwith gave them another meaning and accusing K.H. of having misunderstood them, called him to himself puffed up and “huffish”. Do I accuse *him* then, of unfairness, injustice or worse? Most decidedly *not*. A more honest, sincere or a kinder man never breathed on the Himalayas. I know actions of his of which his own family and lady are utterly ignorant of - so noble, so kind and grand, that even his own pride remains blind to their

⁴ “*De haut en bas!*” - The chronological edition explains that it means “from top to bottom”, or as an inferior. (CCA)

full worth. So that anything he might do or say, is unable to diminish my respect for him; but with all this, I am *forced* to tell him the truth; and while that side of his character has all my admiration, his pride will never win my approbation, - for which once more, Mr. Hume will not care one twopence, but that matters very little, indeed. The most sincere and outspoken man in India, Mr. Hume is unable to tolerate a contradiction; and, be that person *Dev* or mortal, he *cannot* appreciate or even permit without protest the same qualities of sincerity in any other than himself. Nor can he be brought to confess that anyone in this world can know better than himself anything that HE has studied and formed *his* opinion thereupon. "They will not set about the joint work in what seems to ME the best way", he complains of us in his letter to Olcott, and that sentence alone gives to us the key to his whole character; it gives us the clearest insight into the working of his inner feelings. Having a right - he thinks - to regard himself as slighted and wronged, in consequence of such an "ungenerous", "selfish" refusal to work under *his* guidance, he cannot help thinking himself at the bottom of his heart, as a most *forgiving, generous* man, who, instead of resenting our refusal is nevertheless "willing to go on in their (our) way". And this irreverence of ours for *his* opinions cannot be pleasing to him; and thus the feeling of this great wrong we do him rises, and becomes proportional to the magnitude of our "selfishness" and "huffishness". Hence his disenchantment, and the sincere pain he feels at finding the Lodge and all of us so much below the mark of *his* ideal. He laughs, for my defending H.P.B.; and giving way to a feeling unworthy of his nature, very unfortunately forgets that his is just the disposition to warrant friends and foes at calling him "protector of the poor" and like names, and that his enemies among others, never fail to apply such epithets to himself; and yet, far from falling upon him as an insult, that chivalrous feeling which has ever prompted him to take the defence of the weak and the oppressed and to redress the wrongs done by his colleagues - as in the last instance of the Simla municipality row - it covers him with a garment of undying glory spun out of the gratitude and affection for him of the people he so fearlessly defends. Both of you labour under the strange impression that *we can*, and even *do* care for anything that may be said or thought of us. Disabuse your minds, and remember that the first requisite in even a simple fakir, is that he should have trained himself to remain as indifferent to moral pain as to physical suffering. Nothing can give US *personal* pain or pleasure. And what I now say is, rather to bring you to understand *us* than *yourselves* which is the most difficult science to learn. That Mr. Hume's intention - prompted by a feeling as transient as it was hasty, and due to a sense of growing irritation against me whom he accused of a desire "to sit upon him" - was to revenge himself by an ironical, hence (to the European mind) an insulting fling at me - is as certain as that he missed the mark. Ignorant, or rather forgetful of the fact that we Asiatics, are utterly devoid of that sense of the ridiculous which prompts the Western mind to caricature the best, the noblest aspirations of mankind - could I yet feel offended or flattered by the world's opinion I would have felt rather complimented than otherwise. My Rajput blood will never permit me to see a woman hurt in her feelings - though she be a "visionary", and the now called "imaginary" wrong but another of her "fancies" - without defending her; and Mr. Hume knows enough of our traditions and customs to be sufficiently aware of that remnant of chivalrous feeling for our women in our otherwise degenerated race. Therefore do I say, that whether hoping that the satirical epithets would reach and hurt me, or aware of the fact that he was apostrophizing a granite pillar - the feeling that prompted him was unworthy of his nobler and better nature, as in the first case it was to be regarded as a petty feeling of revenge, and in the second as *childishness*. Then in his letter to O. he complains of or denounces (you must forgive the limited number of English words I have at my command) the attitude of "half threat" to break with you that he imagines he finds in our letters. Nothing could be more erroneous. We have no more the intention of breaking with him, than an orthodox Hindu has of leaving the house he is visiting until told that his company is no more wanted. But when the latter is hinted to

him he leaves. So with us. Mr. Hume quite prides himself at repeating that personally he has no desire to see us, no curiosity to meet us; that our philosophy and teaching cannot benefit *him* in the least, *him* who has learnt and knows all that can be learnt; that he cares not a snap whether we break with him or not, nor is he in the least concerned whether we are pleased with him or not. *Qui bono* then? Between the (by him) imagined reverence we expect from him, and that uncalled for combativeness, which may degenerate at any day with him, into unexpressed yet real hostility, there is an abyss and no middle ground that even the Chohan can see. Though he cannot now be accused of not making, as in the past, any allowance for circumstances and our own peculiar rules and laws, yet he is always hurrying towards that black borderland of amity, where trust is obscured and dark suspicions and erroneous impressions cloud the whole horizon. I, am as I was; and, as I was and am, so am I likely always to be - the slave of my duty to the Lodge and mankind, not only taught, but desirous to subordinate every preference for individuals to a love for the human race. It is gratuitous, therefore, to accuse me or any one of us of selfishness, and desire to regard or treat you as "paltry Pelingis" and to "ride donkeys", only because we are unable to find convenient horses. Neither the Chohan, nor K.H., nor myself ever under valued Mr. Hume's worth. He has done invaluable service to the Th. Soc. and to H.P.B. and is alone capable of making the Society an efficient agent for good. When the spiritual soul is left to guide him, no purer, no better, nor kinder man can be found. But, when his *fifth* principle rises in irrepressible pride, we will always confront and challenge it. Unmoved by his excellent worldly counsel as to how you should be armed with proofs of our reality, or how you should set about the joint work in the way that seems the best to HIM, I will remain so unmoved, till I receive contrary orders. Referring to your last letter (Mr. Sinnett's) clothe your ideas as you may, in the pleasantest of phrases, you are nevertheless surprised and as regards Mr. Sinnett disappointed, that I should neither accord permission for phenomena nor yet any of us make one step towards you. I cannot help it, and whatever the consequences there will be no change in my attitude until my Brother's return among the living. You know both of us love our country and our race; that we regard the Theos. Society as a great potentiality for their good in proper hands; that he has joyfully welcomed Mr. Hume's identification with the cause and that I have placed a high - but only a proper - value upon it. And so you ought to realize that whatever we *could* do to bind you and him closer to us we would do with all our heart. But still if the choice lies between our disobeying the lightest injunction of our Chohan as to when we may see either of you, or what we may write, or how, or where, and the loss of your good opinion, even the feeling of your strong animosity and the disruption of the Society, we should not hesitate a single instant. It may be considered unreasonable, selfish, huffish and ridiculous, denounced as jesuitical and the blame all lain at our door, but law is LAW with us, and no power can make us abate one jot or tittle of our duty. We have given you a chance to obtain all you desired by improving your magnetism, by pointing you to a nobler ideal to work up to and Mr. Hume has been shown what he already knew how he may benefit immensely some millions of his fellow men. Choose according to your best light. Your choice is made I know - but Mr. Hume may yet change his ideas more than once; I shall be the same to my group and promise whatever he may determine. Nor, do we fail to appreciate the great concessions made already by him; concessions the more great in our sight, as he becomes less interested in our existence, and makes a violence to his feelings solely in the hope of benefitting humanity. No one in his place would have accommodated himself to his situation with such a good grace as he has, or stood more strictly upon the declaration "of primary objects" at the meeting of 21st Aug.; while "proving to the native community that members of the ruling class" also are desirous of promoting the commendable projects of the T.S., he bides his time, for even the obtaining of our metaphysical truths. He has already done an immense good and has yet received nothing in return. Nor does he expect anything. Reminding you that the present is an

answer to *all* your letters, and to all your objections and suggestions, I may add that you are right and that in spite of all “your earthiness” my blessed Brother certainly entertains a real regard for you, and Mr. Hume, who I am happy to find has some good feeling for him, though he is not like you and really *is* “too proud to look for his reward in our protection”. Only where you are and will be ever wrong, my dear sir, it is in entertaining the idea that phenomena can ever become “a powerful engine” to shake the foundations of erroneous beliefs in the Western mind. None but those who see for themselves will ever believe do what you may. “Satisfy us and then we will satisfy the world”, you once said. You were satisfied and what are the results? And I wish I could impress upon your minds the deep conviction that we do not wish Mr. Hume or you to prove conclusively to the public that we really exist. Please realize the fact that so long as men doubt there will be curiosity and enquiry, and that enquiry stimulates reflection which begets effort; but let our secret be once thoroughly vulgarized and not only will sceptical society derive no great good but our privacy would be constantly endangered and have to be continually guarded at an unreasonable cost of power. Have patience, friend of my friend. It took Mr. Hume years to kill enough birds to make up his book; and he did not command them to leave their leafy retreats, but had to wait for them to come and let him stuff and label them: so must you be patient with us. Ah, Sahibs, Sahibs! if you could only catalogue and label *us* and set us up in the British Museum, then indeed might your *world* have the absolute, the desiccated ⁵ truth.

And so it all comes around again as usual to the starting point. You have been chasing us around your own shadows, just catching a vanishing glimpse of us now and again, but never coming near enough to escape the gaunt skeleton of suspicion that is at your heel and stares you in the future. So I fear may be to the end of the chapter, as you not have the patience to read the volume to its end. For you are trying to penetrate the things of the spirit with the eyes of the flesh, to bend the inflexible to your own crude model of what should be, and finding it will not bend, you are as likely as not to break that model and - bid good-bye for ever to the dream.

And now for a few parting words of explanation. O’s *memo*, which produced such disastrous results and a most unique *qui proquo*, was written on the 27th. On the night of the 25th, my beloved Brother told me, that having heard Mr. Hume say in H.P.B.’s room that he had never himself heard O.⁶ state to him that, he, O., had personally seen us, and also had heard add, that were Olcott to tell him so, he had confidence enough in the man to believe in what he said, - he, K.H. thought of asking me to go and tell O. to do so; believing it might please Mr. Hume to learn some of the details. K.H. wishes are - law to me. And that is why Mr. Hume received that letter from O., at a time when his doubts were already settled. At the same time as I delivered my message to O., I satisfied his curiosity as to your Society and told what I thought of it. O. asked my permission to send to you these notes which I accorded. Now, that is the *whole* secret. For reasons of my own I desired you should know what I thought of the situation, a few hours after my beloved Brother, went out of this world. When the letter reached you my feelings were somewhat changed and I altered, as said before, the memo a good deal. As O’s style had made me laugh, I added my postscriptum which related solely to Olcott, but was nevertheless applied wholly by Mr. Hume to himself!

⁵ *Desiccated* - We follow the chronological edition in correcting the spelling of this word. (CCA)

⁶ “O.” - Henry Steel Olcott. (CCA)

