

Brotherhood by Dr. Th. Pascal

Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, Vol XXX, Part II

Published in 1919

Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Chennai [Madras] India
The Theosophist Office, Adyar, Madras. India

THE chief objects of the Theosophical Society are, first, to make known *to the few* the existence of the Path, the cross-road, the way taken by the strong, which, cutting through the winding evolutionary ascent, climbs straight to the summit of the mountain towards the temple of light with which it is crowned; second, and above all, to bring to the knowledge *of the many* three mighty laws which are veritable guides for mankind, and the basis of all Evolution:

The *Law of Unity*, which proves that we are brothers.

The *Law of Causality*, which treats of physical, moral, mental and spiritual laws, and teaches that we reap what we have sown.

The *Law of Evolution*, which shows the mechanism of progress and the indispensable means by which it is achieved — returns to earth-life, reincarnations.

On this occasion, I shall endeavour to set forth the Law of Unity — an exceedingly difficult subject, for which I crave the utmost indulgence, though I know I shall be pardoned for being so bold as to undertake it, once I have given some faint idea of its vast importance; for, indeed, the study of Unity leads on to supreme Knowledge, and its practice to the heights of Perfection.

Spirit implies one First Cause; that is to say, an uncreated, causeless Cause, the original Unity. It has ever rejected Duality, even in the loftiest of systems. Monism forms the basis of the highest philosophies: of the Hindû Vedânta, and especially of the most perfect form thereof, the Advaita; it is at the foundation of the finest metaphysical speculations — the Upanishats, which have been, are now and always will be, the admiration of the most sublime intellects; it is the rock on which transcendent materialism itself is built, the materialism of Haeckel and of such as think along similar lines. It may seem strange to see materialism make use of the term Unity, but not when one reflects that materialism possesses almost the monopoly — if this may be said without hurting anyone — of rationalism. It seeks and reasons, discusses and resists, fighting every inch of the ground and yielding to the conviction of reason alone; as is well known, the best and most zealous, the most faithful and firmly-convinced adherents of the Theosophical Society have in many cases been materialists.

The spiritual man possesses other qualities, also admirable, though his characteristic is not that he reasons, but rather believes; he is a man of faith, but his faith is often something vague though strong, cloudy though invincible.

Nevertheless, great difficulty is encountered in convincing the ignorant and selfish individual of the

present day of the reality of Unity. Such a one feels himself so firmly imprisoned in matter, so bound down by it, he is so conscious of being born and dying with it, matter so completely separates him from the beings around him, that under these conditions he finds it difficult, in practice, to resist this apparent proof of separation; accordingly, both spiritual men and materialists are almost equally self-seeking, speaking generally; and so long as man feels not the faintest vibration within himself of the life of another, so long as a common divine Life does not make his heart beat in unison with that of the whole of mankind, he will find it difficult sincerely to believe that he is in reality one with others.

And yet probability is entirely in favour of monism; the greatest minds have believed in and defended it, cold reason requires it; an obscure but profound and more or less universal feeling of Unity and devotion, in times of great misfortune, often springs to the surface of the humblest individuals, binding together all beings — the sentiment of humanity shining forth in love and sacrifice.

Besides, about so important a question it is impossible to remain in doubt. Everywhere error is a powerful cause of evil, Truth alone creates peace. If Unity be error what is the use of offering violence to our lower nature? But if it be Truth, no effort should be spared in fulfilling her behests.

Let us then make an attempt to face this great problem, and get to the bottom of it, to obtain faith by means of light and become capable of accomplishing our duty.

Well, then, all such as have fathomed this mysterious abyss with sufficient attention and care, affirm that we are one. One and the same Life is in us, and though our forms differ and our qualities shine forth or remain hidden, we still feel that we are human, of the same nature. To take an example, look at a row of electric lamps; their forms may vary, their brilliancy be greater or smaller, but the light within them, the fluid circulating through them, is one. So also, in like manner, the brightness of human qualities depends on the perfection of the centres that produce them. These qualities are different, because the centres, the instruments, which create them, are by no means identical: thus, the one producing mentality is not composed of atoms similar to those which manifest will or love. But the life animating these centres is one; it is the divine life of the Infinite, our common Father, and if we are His sons, are we not then brothers?

What is Unity?

The Infinite, the Perfect, the first, causeless, supreme Cause, the Cause of everything: of force, of matter, of the qualities and laws of the world, of Evolution. At the same time infinitely great and infinitely small; capable of enveloping the Universe and of dwelling in the tiniest of atoms, the Infinite, the Perfect is not manifested; it is latent, a unit. This it is which in the centre of our being gives us the innate idea of Unity, an idea which nothing in the world could give birth to, for nothing in the universe is one; everything is compound. Such is the One. How does it become multiple? By being manifested, that is to say, by becoming objective.

At the first step of this *processus*, it manifests force-matter. This it separates into atoms, with which it forms bodies, creating in these latter centres of qualities, which, as we shall presently see, produce

Egos. In the centres of the bodies the Infinite plays the part of the electric fluid in a series of lamps: the fluid produces light, the Infinite illumines our mental centres, giving birth to Egos therein; in this way, the One becomes the many, the illusory Egos to which we must presently return, for it is indispensable that we understand them, if we would have proof of our brotherhood.

The Infinite manifests itself, though through what mechanism I know not. It is latent, omnipresent, omnipotent, it is the root of all the forces in the world and possesses all power, including that of manifesting its potentialities. This power is its fiat: *it wills and can do what it wills*.

When it wills to create, it wills to manifest itself, and the objective world appears; just as when the savant, by some special artifice, creates the conditions which give birth to a force, this force appears, seeming to spring from nothing; it becomes present, as though issuing from a mysterious, invisible egg: such is the electric fluid. Omnipresent, though latent and imperceptible, it appears as the result of friction, or when subjected to chemical action, showing itself as double, with positive and negative poles: it is a duality. If we try to reduce this duality to polar unity, the fluid vanishes passes again into a latent condition and returns to zero, the image of the universal egg, the source of all forces. After all, this duality is the condition *sine qua non* of all manifestations. The Infinite, in order to manifest itself, may be said to separate into two, and to apply to each other the two portions of itself, to make them objective. Indeed, everywhere in nature, manifestation is due to "pairs of opposites". Try, for instance, to produce a force in a vacuum; you cannot do it; on the other hand, the greater the resistance you have, the greater the force you will be able to produce on that resistance. Try to paint a picture with one colour only; you will produce nothing but a coloured surface. In painting a picture, both light and shade are needed; only in this way come into being relief, form, and perspective — that is to say, a picture.

The first manifestation of the Infinite produces the first "pair of forces": Force-Matter. I say pair of forces, for matter is nothing but force, the negative pole, so to speak, of force. This primordial force-matter, this matter, so to speak more concisely, is the Biblical egg, brooded over by the Holy Ghost on the Cosmic waters; it is also the golden egg of Brahmâ in oriental cosmogonies. Primordial matter is so fine, so sublime and sensitive, that it responds in marvellous fashion to the life of the Infinite, which, thanks to the support which matter furnishes to its faculties (formerly latent, but from this time manifested), becomes an Ego, a Being, "I". This primordial matter is the centre of manifestation for all possible faculties, the perfect instrument of the cosmic Ego, of the supreme Energy which then becomes multiple Forces. In the Universe of primordial matter, which is the body of God, are manifested the three fundamental qualities of Being, the qualities every being will acquire and possess to a supreme degree at the end of its evolution: life (or force), intelligence, and love. Indeed, there is no Being who does not possess life, intelligence and love in some degree, however small. It is the Trinity, above as below, in the God of a world as in the Ego of a rudimentary body; that is why the Hebrew scriptures say that God created man in His image. Man, in effect, because he is in possession of this divine Trinity, is in the image of God.

How is the Ego born?

The centre of Intelligence, the mental body, in perceiving matter and the qualities of the body, is distinguished from these qualities and conceives of the Ego: an abstract thing, the product of the perception of the non-Ego (matter) by intelligence.

As soon as the Infinite limits its vibration (of an infinite frequency), the Universe, or rather Matter, appears, and an opposite is created, which allows of the absolute consciousness of the Infinite becoming limited consciousness, that of the Logos, the Cosmic Ego. The Ego requires the perception of a difference, of what is conceived of as the non-Ego.

The Universe is the body of the manifested God; in the Universe all qualities come to birth, amongst them the principal one, the Ego. The Supreme Ego — the Ego of the Infinite — is manifested not only in the mental centre of the Universe, where it constitutes the Logos, but also in each of the mental centres of the bodies the whole of which makes up the Universe, in each of the beings, from the Greatest (the Logos) to the most imperfect. Like the sun, the unique Ego, the Logos, is reflected in every mental mirror present in the world.

Creation, however, does not stop at this manifestation. The personal Ego of the Universe (the Logos) also acts through intelligence and force-powers then manifested, though latent in it so long as it remains the Infinite, the unmanifested. Accordingly, it first separates primordial matter into atom-types that produce qualities; that is to say, the faculties of feeling, thinking and acting; with these atoms it builds up bodies (forms) and in each body places the atomic centres of qualities of life (force), intelligence and love. In each of these bodies the Infinite accordingly manifests an Ego by means of the mental centre, the instrument of perception and of separation. In this way, from the Supreme Ego, the Logos, to the lowest of beings, are ranged the immense numbers of Egos, Egos all the more imperfect in proportion as the bodies of the human beings to which they belong are themselves the more imperfect.

Antiquity, which was wont to express the higher truths in the form of a symbol or a myth, called this multiplication of the One the mutilation of Osiris (or that of Bacchus). Christians speak of the "Lamb slain before the foundation of the world" (*Revelation*, xiii, 8); Hindûs tell of the sacrificed man and horse, and in the following myth, the dice symbolise the different types of atoms.

Bacchus, when a child (that is to say, the manifested God at the beginning of evolution), was playing at dice, says the allegory; the Titan (the separating force which has always symbolised Evil) surprised him and tore his body into pieces. After a great lapse of time, the mutilated members again became joined together, and the divine body was constituted afresh.

Thus the divine body (primordial matter) is mutilated, and used to form milliards of bodies (fragments) which serve as instruments for beings.

In proportion as matter is split up into fragments, it becomes dense, and sub-states of matter appear; at the same time its sensitiveness lessens, it becomes progressively rigid, it no longer responds to the life animating it, and the qualities it manifests become less perfect. This is the Divine Limitation, the sacrifice of the Infinite, voluntarily submitting to this limitation in order to create beings and lead them on to supreme Perfection. Mutilation of the body and Limitation of the qualities are the two aspects of the same idea; Sacrifice.

Now let us see how the multiple Egos again become one, as is symbolised in antiquity by the Resurrection of Osiris, Easter Day.

The method of multiplication is easy to understand; that of unification is far more abstract. All the same, we shall endeavour to explain it, for it is the complement of the whole teaching on Unity.

By evolution the different states of matter separate, matter — physical, astral, mental, spiritual, and divine — disappears, and at the same time the bodies it forms melts away — the physical, astral, mental, spiritual, and divine bodies. Along with its progressive disappearance, the vibrations which it imposes on the Egos cease, and the consciousness of these Egos, being no longer sustained, is progressively transferred into finer bodies, where it lives the life of the corresponding worlds. In proportion as they have finer bodies as instruments of perception, the sphere of their perception enlarges, and when they are centred in the divine body (the ãtmic body of Theosophy), they have become capable of including the consciousness of all the Egos comprised in the Universe; they have each become as a Logos.

Now, what evolution normally produces very slowly, beings can rapidly attain by effort. Before setting forth this *processus*, which might be designated as abnormal and artificial, let us say a few words regarding the development of the Egos; it is so important thoroughly to understand.

The sphere of perception of an Ego is determined by that of the senses through which it perceives.

The physical senses are very limited; they are, besides, separated from one another and cannot take one another's place.

The astral senses possess a far wider power of perception, their field of action is greater; besides this, they apply to the whole extent of the astral body, thus explaining one of the peculiarities of astral perception — the possibility of seeing, touching, hearing, feeling, etc., at any part of the astral body. The matter which binds together the astral bodies is *endowed with faculties of far more perfect vibratory transmission* than that of the ether which binds physical bodies, and it begins to transmit to each being the sensorial vibrations and the perceptions of all the others; this is the beginning of perception in each being of the life common to all.

The mental senses are combined in a single synthetic sense; they possess a sphere of perception far more extensive than the astral senses and include a number of beings even greater than these latter. They can perceive at almost any distance in the planet, the atoms of the medium binding them have a more perfect power of vibratory transmission than those of the astral medium, and the sensations of the beings become more and more one: these beings live more and more the one life.

In the spiritual body (the buddhic) the sphere of sensorial perception reaches the limits of a whole planetary chain, and the medium uniting spiritual bodies is so fine that it transmits to the centres of every spiritual (buddhic) body the individual sensations of the beings in their perfection.

In the divine (ãtmic) body, the sphere of perception embraces every form of the solar system; throughout

this system, the life of the beings is one for those who are conscious in the ātmic body.

Finally, in the highest body (Ādi) the sphere of perception reaches the limits of the Universe itself; and, in this sphere, the beings whose bodies are fully developed enjoy perfect unity of life. Each Ego has become the perfect “percipient” of the consciousness of all the Egos in the Universe; it has become a Logos: evolution, so far as it is concerned, is completed.

Now, resolute men who take the “cross-road,” the path I spoke of at the beginning, can bring about this *processus* (which evolution slowly works out) far more rapidly by the effort which quickly builds up the higher bodies and effects the voluntary transfer of the Ego of a lower body into a higher one: this constitutes the arduous training of the disciple under the guidance of his Master, a subject of which I shall make no mention here.

In this way, the most rudimentary Ego becomes greater and greater, continually adding fresh knowledge to that which it already possesses, extending ever wider its sphere of perception, embracing the consciousness of a continually increasing number of Egos, experiencing their struggles and hopes, until it becomes conscious of the total life of all beings and feels them all living in it, with a life which is its own.

Then, or rather long before this time, it feels that life is one and that Egos are brothers in process of development. Doubt is impossible.

Before continuing, let us halt for a moment.

If we are one, we are *solidaires*. Being *solidaire* means living one and the same life, being bound to all, affected by every vibration which moves the parts of the whole, influenced by every outpouring of good and evil in the world. To one wholly *solidaire*, the suffering and joy of each are the suffering and joy of all. Consciously to create a discordant vibration constitutes the crime of “treason against mankind,” whilst the creation of harmonious relations is a strict duty — for every infraction of the Law, whether physical, moral, mental, spiritual or divine — disturbs the whole Universe, and every collaboration with the Law is a help to all. Accordingly, our first duty is the fulfilment of the Law; this duty has one constant finality in view, general perfection, which it obtains by one constant means, help, the sacrifice of all for all; sacrifice to the Law, to the general good; the sacrifice of the individual to the Whole, that all may be happy.

I will now attempt to give the principal means of obtaining proof of the conceptions here advanced, the proof that we are one, and that Unity makes us brothers.

Complete proof consists in understanding and feeling, in becoming a God, or rather a divine instrument — for bodies are nothing else than the instruments of the supreme God, the Infinite, instruments which, when sufficiently perfect, manifest the qualities of the Logos, that is to say, divine intelligence, love and power. Understanding implies that one has become the thing understood, that one feels this thing and vibrates in tune with it. Vibrating in perfect tune implies that one has developed perfect centres of qualities (instruments). The following are these means, both general and special. The general means are:

Purity and the practice of Unity. Purity must be physical, moral and mental; that is to say, it must embrace all our bodies. It refines and renders sensitive the materials of the centres; that is to say, makes them vibratory to a high degree and capable of perfect synchronism.

The practice of Unity creates the wheels of the mechanism that produces qualities (of the instrument); it polishes them, improves and facilitates the working of the apparatus. The following are the main points in the practice of Unity. Always have present in mind the idea that every man is a child of the Infinite, a God in evolution, a young or elder brother. Help him by thoughts of light love and might — for who needs not this threefold aid, the better to judge, endure and kept from a spirit of revolt? We must remember that nothing is ours, that all we possess is a gift from God, a loan we ought to share with those of our brothers who are not so well endowed as we are. Might of love, light of intelligence, material wealth, even physical life, nothing is our own; we owe everything to all, with just one restriction — that we give with discernment. Without discernment, the best of aids may become a curse, the follies of the heart are no better than those of the head.

Let us not forget, also, that we have only duties' we have no rights. We should ask for nothing, desire nothing, but await everything from God, the supreme Wisdom, who knows our needs better than we do ourselves.

Let us be ever helping; first, those whom destiny has placed around us in order to facilitate our task of beneficence, and then those whom it brings in our path. With few exceptions, it is futile to waste our powers in distant efforts which are doomed to barrenness: God is economical in His profusion. But there must be no doubting, no thinking of the obstacles we may meet on the way. The supreme Watcher will see to all: everything combines to aid the man who aids others.

Let us ever be helping; benefits are the seeds of the divine qualities — gratitude and affection. We must help also by setting to all around us an example of such virtues as tolerance, sympathy and humility.

Faith in Providence too must be ours, for nothing evil or unjust can befall us. We must therefore be calm, gratefully welcoming the present trial, for it is our best instructor. In every event, let us seek for the path which God is pointing out to us; biding His time, waiting for the opportunities He sends, and the doors He opens to us.

Let us set an example of divine sympathy, showing forth neither reproach nor evil criticism nor antipathy, beholding in another a God, whose evolution will efface his defects and cause his good qualities to shine radiantly forth, a divine child destined to become a sage, a God.

With shortcomings and lapses into sin let us be indefatigably patient, correcting others by gentleness and affection, and taking care not to make use of the scourge of pain, which we may leave in the hands of the Logos, who alone knows the measure of its use.

With all this, we must be humble; offering others the brilliant parts in life, and reserving for ourselves those that are hidden or unobtrusive; giving place to the God in evolution present in every man, and giving him the preference in all things.

Finally, let us rejoice in another's happiness and sympathise with him in his trouble.

Now I will pass on to the special means; those necessary for such as wish to take the "cross-road," the path of pain. This requires the directing hand of an experienced Guide; and He appears when the disciple is ready, without there being any necessity to summon Him. Here the task to be accomplished is the rapid perfecting of the centres by which the Infinite is manifested in beings; the centres of intelligence, love and might.

The mental body must become a perfect instrument of knowledge, capable of responding to every idea and coming into a state of perfect rest, so that, like the tranquil surface of a lake, it may reflect the plants growing on its banks, or the clouds flitting across the heavens. It must be "disciplined" to reflect truth; indeed it is the mental body that was symbolised by the mythical Proteus, who told the truth only after he had been chained down. How could troubled waters faithfully reflect any object? It is for this reason that the disciple ardently cultivates the control of the mental body, and at the same time perfects the mechanism of this instrument. Once this double task is well in hand, he may begin to make use of this precious auxiliary and apply it to any idea he pleases, especially a great one — one of those which the Logos or one of the mighty Beings sends out into the mental atmosphere, there to remain like a life-giving sun. The disciple practices vibrating in perfect tune with these ideas, feeling them part of himself and making them his own; then causing them to vibrate in a denser medium than that in which they had first been placed. This he attains by concentration.

When they are too fine to be perceived by his still imperfect mental body, he summons the Guide, begging Him to cause them to resound more loudly in his ears. In such cases he brings the mental body to rest in a complete void; then the vibration, which has now been made stronger, makes its impress on the sensitive mental matter.

The development of the centre of love is obtained by acquiring the virtues and their common root: Love. "A man becomes what he thinks," says an *Upanishat*; such is the principle. It is easy to prove this by thinking for a sufficient length of time either of the Good, the Beautiful and the True, or of the evil, the unseemly, and the false. Meditation on a virtue permits of the acquisition of that virtue more or less rapidly; it is all a question of time or of intensity.

It is also possible to contemplate this virtue either as an abstract principle, present in the Infinite which is imagined as at the centre of the being — this Molinos recommends in his *Spiritual Guide* — or as manifested in the Logos, or in one of those Beings who have made themselves His Messengers and appeared on earth as "Sons of God": Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster or Christ. It is here that we may find it useful to form, however imperfectly, an image of one of these Beings by thought and imagination. This image of mental substance directs the thought to that Being and attracts His attention. Into this form He sends a ray of His soul, to animate it and cause it to vibrate with the virtue it is desired to acquire. The image causes the mental body of the disciple to vibrate in tune, and he thus steadily develops the desired quality; such is the truth concealed in image-worship. And as the Logos, or any one of these great Beings, possesses all virtues in perfection, forming a synthesis of them in His great love, all that the disciple needs to do is to contemplate this mental image, this vibrating form, and to love it, in order to fill himself gradually with that sublime, that greatest Force of all — Love, the source and spring of every virtue.

The development of the centre of Force adds its quota to the Power which the two preceding centres produce by themselves. The Power that belongs to the mental centre is that of knowledge; knowledge is power. That of love is immense; it was the love radiating from certain martyrs which appeased the wild beasts' thirst for blood. A beloved Teacher told me that a friend of his in India, a Yogi, one day entered into Samādhi in the jungle. On awaking, a tiger was sporting by his side, like a kitten, and licking his bare feet — love had tamed the beast of the forest.

The vital vibration of a saint is so strongly in harmony with the Law that it corrects sickly and discordant vibrations, those not in accord with the Law; it heals and cures. I say nothing of the other powers possessed by man on his God-ward path; those who have had the good fortune to live with certain disciples have had instances of light and love, of calm, balanced thought radiating from these highly perfected instruments.

Such is the absolute, the inflexible proof of the presence of God in man. He who possesses this proof knows that God is the root and cause of his power, his light, and his love. All wonder-working mystics have proclaimed with the utmost sincerity: "It is God that worketh in me."

Without hoping to attain to these heights in a brief space of time, I would, all the same, earnestly recommend you to think of Unity for a few minutes every morning, to live it throughout the day, and each evening to see how far you have fallen short of its precepts. Gradually, you will feel better and purer; you will feel that God is manifesting Himself in you. Then, too, will you understand the assertion I advanced at the beginning, one which perhaps appeared to you an exaggeration: the study of Unity leads on to supreme Knowledge and its practice to the heights of perfection.