

The Secret Doctrine and the Higher Evolution of Man

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[Page 3] THERE is abundant evidence of the existence of the Secret Doctrine in the remotest antiquity. Not alone in those inaccessible books to which Madame Blavatsky refers are its records to be traced, but in the oldest records preserved from the forgotten dynasties and the buried civilizations of the past may be found fragments of archaic wisdom.

It is true that these records have been seldom understood, and been often misinterpreted through the pride, the arrogance, or the ignorance of man. Monuments have been deliberately destroyed, and records defaced or burned in order that other traditions might stand unchallenged. The ignorant zealots, that in the earlier and Middle Ages overran the whole of Europe, a greater part of Asia, and even invaded the western continent, have, in the sacred name of religion, done their best and their worst in this work of destruction.

By persecuting and terrorizing the living, and by destroying the monuments of the dead, these priestly Vandals have imagined that an undisputed empire would at last be attained, where every knee should bend and every tongue confess the supremacy of the destroyers, as the vicegerents of a tribal deity whose servants and favourites they were. Ancient scriptures have been distorted out of all recognition, and interpolations have been added till the disfigured text was imagined as secure. Religious despotism, the most unrelenting and sanguinary that the world has ever seen, has thus entrenched itself by every imaginable fraud, and Church Fathers, renowned for zeal and piety, have been canonized for crimes that are too horrible even to be named. It might seem, indeed, a hopeless task to recover the archaic records, and to restore the Secret Doctrine from such a past. History has so often repeated itself that, were there no other reason, those who possessed the Secret Wisdom and who were anxious to preserve it to posterity, must have devised some method to conceal their sacred treasure from the profane. There was, however, a still deeper reason [Page 4] to be found in the nature and necessary mode of transmission of the doctrine itself. In these later days, the traditions of the Church, and the dicta of materialistic science, have proven quite as effective as the Vandalism of the past, and now when discussion is comparatively free, a sneering scepticism belittles or denies, where in the old *régime*, persecution, fraud and destruction kept the truth from the world.

Turn whithersoever we may the records still remain. They are not alone to be found in the ruins of ancient grandeur, in libraries hidden in inaccessible caves, in traditions and myths that permeate all modern life, but in the thefts made unblushingly with the trade marks so skillfully defaced those who sought to destroy have unwittingly become the agents of preservation. Even the prying eyes of modern critical research, without the key to the ancient mysteries, have discovered these frauds. Herculean has been the task, long and painful the journey, fought out step by step in the face of anathema, and the charge of profaning holy things. When modern Christendom entered the field of empire under the banner of Constantine, and

dethroned the Christos of the new dispensation, the attempt was made to conquer a kingdom of this world, and secularize that which had been preached in Judea as the kingdom of heaven. Then was seen a strange paradox. Christendom appropriated the books of Moses, while anathematizing and persecuting the Jews, whose tribal deity became the God of the Christian world; and the *Pentateuch* so unqualifiedly adopted by the Christian Church, embodied the Kabala or Secret Doctrine, that the Church was so anxious to obliterate and to destroy! If proof be desired at this point, one has only to consult Madame Blavatsky's quotations made in her *Secret Doctrine* from the MS. of the greatest Kabbalist of modern times. But the irony of fate does not end here. In adopting wholesale from the pagan world, the fast and feast days of the Christian Church, Sabianism, the solar and lunar cycles, and the deities of the pre-Christian world passed into the new dispensation with only a change of names. Every good Catholic, who, on the rosary of St. Dominick, counts off his Ave Marias makes an unconscious obeisance to ancient Kabbalism, as can easily be demonstrated. Thus the would-be destroyers of the Secret Doctrine have been made its unconscious preservers.

All who are familiar with the history of English supremacy in India are aware of one fact, and that is, that the so-called supremacy instigated by love of gain, has been confined to secular affairs, and left untouched the ancient religions. The Brahmins are a proud and haughty race, among whom neither Christian missionaries nor English [Page 5] officials have been able to gain a footing, while in Ceylon, notwithstanding the horrible persecution to which the people were once subjected by the Portuguese Christian missionaries, Buddhism flourishes unmixed, and untrammelled by invading faiths. While the Christian secularism has sought to efface and destroy the records of the ancient Wisdom Religion, these Eastern peoples have sought in every way to preserve it as the most sacred heritage of thousands of generations of ancestors.

Indifferent to civil supremacy, and taught by centuries of oppression, and the scorn and contempt of the invader for everything but gold, these intellectual and innocent people have carefully concealed, while they sacredly cherished their ancient lore. But just as the Christian Vandal failed to destroy, so do the people of India fail altogether to conceal the Ancient Wisdom. The sacred books of the East are slowly finding their way to Western lands, and many a scroll, hoary with age, and treasured above all earthly possessions, has already found its way to the library of the Theosophical Society at Adyar.

Since the decline of the civilization of Greece and the gradual loss of the mysteries, and since the Essenes — the Therapeutiae, the Gnostics, the Kabbalists, the Alchemists and the Rosicrucians became gradually extinct, the only remaining agency that could convey the symbols of the Secret Doctrine to the Western world has been the order of the Freemasons. Every Mason may have observed that no exact and specific history of his order is to be found. There are, indeed, traditions, and he is often reminded of "ancient land-marks", but if he endeavours to follow back along the line of history, and to ascertain when and how his order originated, whence the traditions, and what the meaning of its symbols, he is lost in a labyrinth of uncertainty and conjecture. In these ancient land-marks is preserved many of the symbols of the Secret Doctrine, and the traditions that are generally taken as records of historical events, are parables and allegories that are thousands of years old, and that can be correctly interpreted only with a key to the Secret Doctrine.

There are hundreds of volumes, and even some of modern date, like the writings of Ernest de Bunsen, S. F. Dunlap and Heckethorne, that refer more or less clearly to the Secret Doctrine, or the ancient Wisdom Religion. To all these evidences we may add the writings of Jacob Boëhme and his followers, from

Freher and Gichtel to St. Martin in France and the Rev. William Law in England, and even down to as late a date as 1854, when it was attempted to revive Theosophy in England and America. It may readily be conceded that this Secret Doctrine, [Page 6] now called Theosophy, is no modern invention, and that the founders of the Theosophical Society — Madame H. P. Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott, William Q. Judge, and others — are dealing neither with romance nor engaged in wholesale deception, notwithstanding the calumnies to the contrary. Whether the Theosophical movement shall fall or prevail, one thing is very certain; and that is that no other movement of modern times seeking to solve the riddle of existence, and to aid mankind in working out the higher evolution of the human race, has ever been so fortified by tradition, so supported by direct inheritance from the past, and with such an unbroken line of transmission from prehistoric ages as this. The evidence at this point to any one who loves truth well enough to listen, and who is intelligent enough to understand and to weigh evidence, is simply overwhelming. This evidence is gathered and annotated in Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* with labour and conscientiousness worthy of praise from any one who does not take pride in traducing and vilifying a woman. But outside of these volumes the evidence may be again gathered by any one who will take the pains and who cares to know the truth.

Madame Blavatsky has put forth no claims for herself as the possessor of arcane wisdom, nor has she been content to state what she has learned from Masters, whose servant she has from the first declared herself to be. On the contrary, she has undertaken the herculean task of gathering the threads of secret wisdom woven into the fabric of all literature for thousands of years, and the range of subjects and of authors that she introduces as witnesses to the existence of the Secret Doctrine is well-nigh appalling.

A charlatan, or even a *littérateur* with a just ambition for fame, might have asserted what she knew, and concealed the sources of such knowledge, and have had a blind and enthusiastic following. She chose the opposite course; was satisfied to be counted as nothing herself, pointed out with painstaking detail the proofs of the threads of wisdom in all ages, so that every earnest and intelligent student could find it for himself, and has received as her reward slander, scorn and contempt from thousands, and thankful appreciation from the few. The threats of man and the shameless and brutal manner in which these threats have been executed on one who was known never to retaliate, were not likely to deflect from her course one who for years had worked in the very face of death. There stand the records; let him read them who will. The rabble may applaud or deride; but it is, after all, the conscientious few, the lovers of righteousness, [Page 7] that shape the destinies of humanity, and when the rabble are silent these are at least heard. For the verdict of these Madame Blavatsky awaits as calmly as the Sphinx, whose riddle she long ago solved.

The conscientious student having satisfied himself as to the existence of a complete body of knowledge, designated by many names and symbolized by many glyphs — a knowledge referred to always vaguely by many writers, and entering more or less into the ceremonies of initiation of secret orders, both of the past and of the present, next undertakes to discover the principles of that knowledge. Upon what philosophy is it based? What scientific principles, what laws does it unfold? What data of ethics does it set forth, and upon what terms may it be acquired?

The Secret Doctrine rests upon a philosophy as broad as the universe, and at the same time cultivates a science based upon mathematics and the laws of rhythm and harmony. It shows the relation by definite laws and coordinate development of man to nature, and points out those immutable principles that determine the evolution of man on every plane of being; it establishes the ethical principles of Universal

Brotherhood as the basis of all human relations, and this without subterfuge or qualification. It places neither price nor condition upon this knowledge, but declares it to be the divine birthright of every human soul, *when that soul shall have come to desire it above all things, and to be determined to honour every truth by its most beneficent use for the welfare of all humanity*. The selfish, the egotist, the sensuous and the time-serving, could only degrade both themselves and it by premature knowledge; therefore, from all such it is for ever concealed. Many good men and women have neither sought nor desired it; many evil and selfish persons have sought for it in vain. Goodness alone is not a passport to its favour, for it is both virtue and knowledge. The most beneficent of men might through ignorance alone destroy a city by dynamite. The most intelligent, possessed of power without virtue, knowledge without beneficence, might prove equally inimical to humanity. The qualification always required is that rounding-up of the complex nature of man, so that he shall become at once a centre of power for the highest and best use. Thus sayeth the *Voice of the Silence*:

Shall he not use the gifts which it confers for his own rest and bliss, his well-earn'd weal and glory — he, the subduer of the great Delusion?

Nay, O thou candidate for Nature's hidden lore! If one would follow in the steps of holy Tathâgata, those gifts and powers are not for Self. [Page 8]

Know, if of Amitabha, the "Boundless Age" thou wouldst become co-worker, then must thou shed the light acquired, like to the Bôdhisattvas twain upon the span of all three worlds.

Know that the stream of superhuman knowledge and the Deva-Wisdom thou hast won, must, from thyself, the channel of Alaya, be poured forth into another bed.

Know, O Narjol, thou of the Secret Path, its pure fresh waters must be used to sweeter make the Ocean's bitter waves — that mighty sea of sorrow formed of the tears of men.

Alas! when once thou hast become like the fix'd star in highest heaven, that bright celestial orb must shine from out the spatial depths for all — save for itself; give light to all, but take from none.

The Secret Doctrine inculcates no blind faith, fosters no superstition, honours no zeal born of ignorance. It teaches that it may enlighten, and enlightens that it may serve and bless. It answers the questions of the intelligent mind only as it is served by willing and beneficent hands.

We have heard a great deal of late years regarding the law of evolution and the descent of man. At many points the Secret Doctrine is in accord with modern teaching. At one point, however, there is a very radical departure. The modern advocates of evolution, looking at man as the crowning work of the evolutionary process, consider him as a perfected animal evolved to and upon the human plane. In point of time, therefore, man is thought to be the crowning work, the latest creation. In this view of evolution the visible and material elements are considered almost exclusively. The philosophical method upon which these conclusions are based is the inductive. It proceeds from particulars to universals, and deduces the law from the facts and phenomena of experience.

The Secret Doctrine, on the contrary, teaches that man was created first in the evolutionary chain of

organisms. It teaches that as man is a part of the earth he inhabits, partaking of its substance, involved in its processes and governed by its laws, so has his development, step by step, coincided with the development of the earth. Hence, when the earth was a vapoury mass man's form was ethereal, and his body solidified as the earth condensed and became more solid. The philosophy upon which these views are based pursues the opposite method from that of the modern evolutionists. It proceeds from universals to particulars, on that mathematical principle that the whole includes all of its parts, and that the law of the whole inheres in every part. This method, however, no more disregards the facts of experience than its opposite denies the immanence and immutability of law. While, however, the modern evolutionist is groping after the law and hunting for [Page 9] his "missing links", the student of the Secret Doctrine is taught by analogy to decipher the meaning of the Smaragdine tablet, "As above, so below", and discerning in himself the foundations and potency of all things, and being, therefore, an epitome of nature, he is taught the line of least resistance in entering into that universal consciousness from which his intelligence proceeds, and towards which his evolution ever tends.

Modern evolutionary writers have pointed out the conditions of an endless existence, Given a natural and unbiassed inheritance, and the establishment of harmony between the internal forces impelling to action and the environment of the individual, there would result that perfect equilibrium which is contemplated in an endless existence and universal knowledge. Life forces would rule out disease and death, and the line of least resistance would have become the line of no resistance. [The following is Mr Herbert Spencer's statement: "Were there no changes in the environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to meet; and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there would be eternal existence and universal knowledge". – *Principles of Biology*, p 88.] The equation of life will thus have been solved by the perfect equilibrium established; an equilibrium of action and life, and not of stagnation and death.

If this dream of the modern evolutionist be justified by law, and hoped for as the ultimatum of the human race, it may be worthy of note that it is clearly pointed out in the Secret Doctrine, the very aim of which is to establish precisely this perfected equilibrium, through the merging of the individual in the universal. This is. no modern dream, no ancient fable, but the one reality, the very core and essence of the Secret Doctrine; and it was taught before the pyramids were built, nay, before Atlantis sank beneath the western sea. The Secret Doctrine not only declares that man must conquer his environment and become at one with nature, before attaining to endless conscious existence; but that he must also conquer himself and become at one with divinity before he can escape from the "wheel of Ixion," the cycles of birth and death. Nor does the Secret Doctrine set such a prize before the mind of man, and leave him in ignorance as to how so great a work is to be accomplished. Such a process involves an immense period of time, and the most supreme effort on the part of the individual. [The Mahatma has arrived at this condition so far as this earth is concerned. Mr Spencer overlooks the principle of reincarnation that removes many difficulties] He who does not conceive the possibility of such a life, and he who, conceiving it, strives not to attain to it, are alike left to the cycle of necessity, the "Great Illusion". [Page 10] The method of the higher evolution is thus expressed by the Poet-Laureate:

To shape and use, arise and fly,
The reeling faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

The higher evolution of man proceeds on two opposite lines. Man must cast off the animal, and as he

riser he must by constant effort involve by use the divine. Viewed from the physical and earthly plane, man is an improved animal; viewed from the higher, spiritual plane, man is a fallen God. He must not only cease to do evil, conquer his appetites and passions, and subdue self, but he must learn to do good, and so press towards the mark of his high calling continually.

Evolution, as conceived in modern times, proceeds largely on physical grounds. It recognizes the life germ as a starting point, and concerns itself with its form of expression, and its modification through environment. In other words, it is interested mainly with phenomena and the result of development. It regards vegetable, animal, and human organisms, as expanded germs. It regards evolution as that orderly process, following the line of least resistance, responding to all deflecting or modifying conditions, that results in a variety of forms, classified into general groups, and capable of still higher perfection. The potency of all this perfectibility, and the ideal that continually adjusts itself to conditions, and as continually rises higher, is admitted *en bloc*, and then practically ignored. The germ is supposed thus to receive its endowment once for all, while the conditions of environment need to be continually adjusted and renewed. On the contrary, the Secret Doctrine posits a centre of life, a "nucleole" within a cell; a laya-centre, as dependent upon its invisible spiritual source of being for its renewal and maintenance, as is the body upon the conditions of its environment.

The "nucleole", therefore, as continually involves its potencies from the fountain of all life, as the body evolves its structure from the material world on the physical plane. This idea of involution, continually supplementing evolution, rounds up the philosophical equation of life as displayed in organisms, and explains that which modern evolution strives in vain to solve. There are no "missing links" in the evolution taught by the Secret Doctrine.

The Secret Doctrine does not stop with a metaphysical concept, or a philosophical outline. It not only teaches man to know, it helps him to become; and this practical result is the meaning of all real initiations. [Page 11] The Secret Doctrine teaches that, when man is once liberated from the bondage of his appetites and passions, he also becomes free from the trammels of matter on the physical plane. As he rises above, and shakes himself free from his environment, through the orderly process of evolution, the line of least resistance becomes the line of no resistance. So also, by the ever-increasing potency of involution in the centre of his being, does he absorb more and more of that divine energy, and enter into fuller consciousness of that divine intelligence and power which is the unfailing source of all life. Just as man has passed from the animal to the human plane, so may he pass from the human to the supra-human, or to the divine plane.

We have only to consider the signs of the times, and to take into account the trend of the age, to be made aware that a new order of faculties has already passed from the latent germinal state, and that these are budding forth in the humanity of today. It is generally conceived that this is a new thing under the sun, and that the tide of life has never before reached such levels. This false conclusion is based upon and largely supported by that half truth called the modern doctrine of evolution, that undertakes to solve the equation of life by dealing with one of its members only.

While it is generally conceded that civilization runs in cycles, and while every age shows special development along certain definite lines, it is, nevertheless, a mistake to suppose that in the higher evolution of man the present age shows a higher level than has ever been attained in the past. I need not

pause here to institute comparisons, if one will but remember the age of the pyramids, the origin of the signs of the zodiac, the lost arts, and the civilizations of Egypt and India, to say nothing of still more ancient grandeur, the records of which have not yet found their way to our modern times. The birth of modern spiritualism dates from the "Rochester knockings", and these phenomena are supposed to be altogether new. One who comes to such a conclusion must be ignorant of the ancient oracles in Greece, and of the method of the Pythoness. William Godwin shows in his *Lives of the Necromancers*, that in the second century of our era the following method was pursued. He says: "The method with ordinary inquirers was for them to communicate their requests in writing, which they were enjoined to roll up and carefully seal, and these scrolls were returned to them in a few days, with the seals apparently unbroken, but with an answer written within, strikingly appropriate to the demand that was preferred".

It would be easy to multiply evidence at this point, to show that [Page 12] in all ages, and in many lands, every phase of psychic phenomena now witnessed has been seen. It is not to be regarded, therefore, as a strange and incredible thing, that they are plainly referred to in the *Vedas* and other ancient writings, no less than in the *Old and New Testaments*. It need not excite surprise that these phenomena are fully taken into account in the *Secret Doctrine*. While these phenomena often transcend the physical plane, and the known laws of matter, it by no means follows that they indicate in the individual a higher evolution in the sense contemplated in the Secret Doctrine. They are frequently the result of an abnormal or one-sided development or of disease, as in the case of the Seeress of Prevorst. It is the aim of the instruction afforded by the Secret Doctrine, and one of the results obtained, to so round up the development of the disciple, or neophyte, that these higher faculties shall unfold normally, and be consistent with both physical health and mental and moral integrity. There is contained, accordingly, in the Secret Doctrine a complete knowledge of the laws that govern, and the safe processes that unfold and develop these higher powers. It is this knowledge that the more intelligent among the spiritualists, the more liberal among the scientists and the religionists, and the more advanced students generally, are just beginning to seek. They may, if they choose, go on denying that these problems have ever been solved by any one, and that the laws governing them have been known to all genuine initiates for thousands of years. They may scout and deny wholesale the accounts of Albertus Magnus, and Apollonius of Tyana, and scores of other initiates, but the records stand just the same.

Coincident with the discovery of radiant matter, and etheric and inter-etheric force, comes the vague whisper that there is a sixth sense in man. So that, whether from empirical testimony and isolated facts in psychic phenomena, or in that vague searching for basic principles and underlying laws, the trend of the age is towards that complete body of knowledge of the entire nature of man to be found only in the Secret Doctrine, and to be acquired only as the practical result of initiation.

Initiation and magic! These are old words, supposed to represent superstition and fraud. Modern "exact science", says some one, has exploded these humbugs long ago. Let us see. Magic is a knowledge of the hidden and subtler forces of nature, and of the laws that govern them, so that to the ignorant and superstitious the phenomena occurring under these laws seem miraculous, because it passes their understanding. Therefore the chemist, the physicist the electrician, the scientist of today, is a magician to the unlettered savage, or even to [Page 13] the uneducated in our own land. In short, he who transcends the common knowledge and the ordinary intelligence is by just so much a magician.

Initiation deals not, as often supposed, in pompous ceremonies and high-sounding though empty rhetoric. Even in Greece, while the lesser mysteries were theoretical, philosophical, scientific and

dramatic, these were but preparatory to the greater mysteries. The lesser mysteries only have come down to us in modern times, and the "Master's word" has become a tradition only. Initiation into the greater mysteries, when the candidate was worthy and well qualified, duly and truly prepared, proceeded step by step with the higher evolution of the soul. The candidate must at every stage, and with each degree, become that which he desired also to know. He could become possessed of the knowledge of higher planes only as he obtained consciousness, and actually existed on those planes. If one will but reflect a moment, it will become apparent that this is the law on every plane of being; the lower no less than the higher. In science, in art, in music, and in mathematics, real knowledge means also achievement — conscious experience — on that plane, or in that department. A theory that remains untested is always a hypothesis unproved, and whether true or false, its possession is not knowledge. Initiation, therefore, into the greater mysteries, meant then, as it means now, the evolution of those higher faculties in man through which come consciousness of higher planes of being. This required then, as now, a definite mode of life, a prescribed code of ethics, and special instruction.

Every experience and all life is in one sense an initiation. There is an impelling power, a cosmic will, guided by cosmic or divine intelligence, back of all life, that pushes humanity towards its goal. Even in the natural order, at a certain stage of evolution, man can rise higher only by becoming a co-worker with both nature and divinity. In the real initiation, that blind resistance that springs from ignorance of the divine order was first eliminated. The neophyte was no longer either a laggard or rebellious. When, therefore, he started in the race, and passed from the lesser to the greater mysteries, he evolved at every step the latent faculties that could both sense and understand the newly acquired knowledge and power. Bulwer's *Zanoni* is no idle romance, but a philosophical outline of the principles of initiation, and the trials of the neophyte. The conditions and the causes of failure are there also clearly pointed out; so also are the transcendent powers of man foreshadowed, and the conditions outlined by which they may be attained.

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If now we turn to the records of hypnotism, of mind-reading, clairaudience, clairvoyance, and the various psychical phenomena witnessed in modern times, we shall find that, after making all due allowances for both fraud and self-deception, there are already foreshadowed in the present humanity higher faculties and more transcendent powers than are possessed by the average individual. No matter under what circumstances these phenomena may occur, if they really occur at all that fact alone proves that they are latent in man, and that they may manifest under certain conditions. They also reveal another and a higher plane of conscious existence than that on which the average daily life of man proceeds. In other words, these transcendent powers belong to man, and we have already reached a point in evolution where they begin to manifest. What, then, are these powers when fully developed, and what are the laws and conditions of their unfolding? This is the problem in the higher evolution of man. Is there a superhuman plane of consciousness, and how can that plane be reached and life be maintained upon it?

The first part of this question has already been answered so far as the present time and opportunity will permit. If one desires further evidence at this point he has only to consult current literature and current events, the records of daily life. When the scientist and the clergy so far admit the real existence of these phenomena as to seriously undertake their investigation, the liberal and intuitive need not trouble themselves about further proof.

As to the second part of the question — How can the supra-human plane of consciousness be reached, and life be maintained thereon? — I might say that to teach the one safe and true method of this higher

evolution was and is the special purpose for which the Theosophical Society was organized. The promoters of the Society have for the past fifteen years been offering to the world the complete philosophy of this higher evolution. The Society was organized on purely ethical grounds. Madame Blavatsky has not only taken the greatest pains to teach and to explain this philosophy, but she has written thousands of pages to prove by quotations from ancient and modern writers both the existence of the Secret Doctrine, or the ancient Wisdom Religion, and to illustrate and explain its purport. It has been the rarest thing in the world for her to be met with intelligent argument, courteous discussion, or attempted disproof. Ignorant misinterpretations, contemptuous misrepresentation, and the vilest personal abuse have more often been her reward. It therefore happens that with comparatively few exceptions among the intelligent millions of the so-called civilized [Page 15] races, the Secret Doctrine pertaining to the higher evolution of man, and derived from the archaic wisdom of the ages, has not yet had a hearing. The literature of the Society has been sown broadcast, and every possible effort has been put forth to bring it within the reach of all who desired such knowledge. Many have joined the Society looking for marvels and expecting to be taught magic in a few weeks or months. Others have seen in the Society an opportunity to play the mountebank, and have anticipated an easy conquest both over the Society itself and over the ignorant, miracle-loving public. All of these, however, have been disappointed, and either dropped off or been expelled for cause. The Society not only maintains its integrity but increases daily in power and usefulness. Madame Blavatsky sat at her desk like an imperturbable Sphinx, working many hours a day at the *third volume of the Secret Doctrine*, answering scores of letters from interested inquirers, smiling contemptuously at her traducers and pitying their blindness and impotent rage. Those who knew her best and loved her most are those who best appreciate her incomparable work and her stoical heroism, for they have learned from her the secret of the higher evolution, and undertaken with a like determination to realize it and to work for it. I have no defence to make of Madame Blavatsky. She neither needs nor desires it. Her work speaks for her, and will still speak when her traducers are forgotten. I speak of these things only as trammels that have in every age hedged about the Secret Doctrine and have prevented its apprehension by the people, and that hinder it today from thousands who would otherwise hear it gladly.

We are nearing not only the end of the century, but also the close of a great cycle. Events are rapidly shaping for the new age that is dawning. Creeds are crumbling into dust, old land-marks are being swept away, society heaves to its very foundations with the throes of a new life. Womanhood advances towards the throne of her divine kingdom, when, no longer either a slave or a sensuous toy, she shall stand side by side, shoulder to shoulder, and heart to heart, with a diviner manhood; and where together they shall seek and attain that higher evolution that lifts humanity up by involving divinity within, and bringing heaven down to earth's toiling millions: "That mighty sea of sorrow formed of the tears of men", that great sobbing, sorrowing heart of the orphaned humanity.

See you no meaning, my friends, in the clarion note of the Society — "There is no Religion higher than Truth"? Find you in your hearts no sympathy with its one basic principle of organization, of fellowship and [Page 16] of work — "The Universal Brotherhood of Man, without distinction of race, creed, sex, or colour"? What but these two principles, then, can be the basis of the higher evolution of man? What but love of man, loyalty to truth, and the fellowship and service of humanity, has ever lifted mankind out of the slough of animalism into the humane light of divinity? Say you that these principles are not new, and you but trifle with the unerring signs of the times, and the pressing needs of the hour. Say you Christ taught this, and the Churches believed and preached it? and I reply, they have made it of no account by their icy creeds and the councils of men; and further, that the Churches, like the mysteries and all the philosophies, are indebted to the Secret Doctrine or the Wisdom Religion, for all they hold that is either

true or beneficent.

As Theosophists, we stand for all that is true in religion, all that is true in science, all that is true in philosophy, and all that is true in nature; and to weave these truths into the fabric of man's being, and to exemplify them in his life, is the way, the truth and the life, the only way of the higher evolution of the divinity in man. What else but this taught Christ and all the Buddhas, the Avatars of all the ages? What but this higher evolution made them "Christos", the anointed, the twice-born? What but ignorance of truth, and unbrotherliness, make humanity a "sea of sorrow formed of the tears of men", and make countless millions mourn? It is selfishness and ignorance that anchor man to the animal plane. It is altruism and wisdom that reveal the divinity in man, and lift him to the supra-human plane. The Theosophical Society has no other creed but this, no other bond of union, no other basis of work. Be thou Jew or Greek, Mohammedan or Christian, Agnostic or Atheist, yet honouring truth above all things, and serving humanity unselfishly, and thou art thrice welcome. Recite thy mantrams and count thy beads in thine own way, worship the moon in her pale splendour beneath the stars, as did the people whose sages wrote the *Pentateuch*, or close thine eyes in adoration at the blazing glory of the rising sun, as did the Mithras-serving Constantine, none shall disturb thy prayer or persecute thee for thy truths sake. Truth wears many raiments and speaks in many tongues, in order that every soul may hear her voice and honour her by willing service.

That which marks the higher evolution of man is the breaking down of those barriers of selfishness and pride that specially characterize the animal Ego. To outgrow and get rid of these, is to break the shell, to escape from the chrysalis state, and unfold the wings of the spirit. It is to pass from the narrow sphere of the individual, to the divine [Page 17] birthright of the universal. To be merged in humanity, is to be born in divinity. It is not man's independence, but his *inter-dependence* that constitutes his real self-hood. And all this is not a mere matter of sentiment, it is based on scientific facts, governed by laws lying at the foundations of all life. The Secret Doctrine teaches the ethics, the science, and the philosophy of this higher evolution; and the mission of the Theosophical Society is to hold these truths before the world till all may find them who will.