

VARIOUS AUTHORS on NATURE (shorter quotes)

I.K. TAIMNI ‘Principles of Theosophical Work’

[Professor Taimni touches upon the task of the TS: who we are, in what way the TS is different from other organizations, and what task we need to fulfil in order to regenerate the world and in whose name.]

One of the most inspiring and illuminative ideas that Theosophy has given to the modern world is that of the working out of a Great Plan in the apparently chaotic and purposeless phenomena taking place eternally in different parts of the Universe. No one who observes even casually the **working of Nature** can reasonably doubt that there is some kind of Intelligence at work behind the natural phenomena, but it is a great Step from this vague and general belief to the definite conception that everything in manifestation, right from a Solar System to a grain of dust, is governed by Law and is part of a Great Plan which is gradually unfolding itself in the Universe in its different parts and at different times. Science is interested only in the Investigation of these natural phenomena but is not concerned with the question whether there is a plan behind them. Philosophy merely wonders whether there is such a plan. But Occultism knows and asserts on the basis of direct knowledge that there is a Plan behind the whole manifested Universe and that each unit in this vast scheme, whether small or great, is working out a part of this Plan.

One naturally wonders what can be the purpose of this mighty, endless Scheme and philosophers have been speculating in vain, since times immemorial, about the ‘why’ of the Universe. The Student of Divine Wisdom understands that knowledge concerning these ultimate Problems lies beyond the scope of the human intellect and it is therefore useless to search for an intellectual solution of the ‘why’ of manifestation. This Great Mystery of the Universe is hidden in the depths of Divine consciousness and only those who can dive deep into that unfathomable Ocean of knowledge can know directly something of this Supreme Secret.

We thus see that the Theosophical Society is not quite like the other societies scattered throughout the world, in which a group of people combine and work together to attain a definite object. Like other societies it has also a definite work to do in the world, namely, the study and dissemination of truths concerning the deeper Problems of life. *But it has another and a far more important function, and that is to serve as a direct agency in the work of the Elder Brethren for the reclamation and regeneration of the world.*

P. KRISHNA ‘Right Living in Modern Society’

When I am very tense and so on, I want to sit in silence, I find I go to nature and I sit there — we go for picnics. We go to see beautiful sights in nature. All that nature does for us. Then where is the problem with nature? Surely the problem is not out there. There is no problem with nature. It does not take too much to see that the problems have originated from the greed in man.

If you see the history of man, for a very long time man lived with nature, worshipped nature, worshipped the tree, the sun, the sky, the rain, and he lived in harmony with them, adjusted to nature, like the animals live. We are not the only ones who live with nature, the birds, the animals, the plants, they all live in great harmony. It has been going on for millions of years before man ever entered the scene and even after man entered the scene it went on the same way. He lived in harmony with nature for millions of years. Somewhere along the line instead of being part of nature and a friend of nature, man started feeling important, he started feeling he was master of nature and he could exploit nature for his own benefit. With the Industrial Revolution you could cut down large numbers of trees in order to make paper, in order to increase the prosperity of your own country, you could use rivers and the water to make electricity and the whole attitude of looking upon nature

not as a friend, but as a resource, as raw material for increasing the Gross National Product, that kind of outlook came into the human mind. This is a recent phenomenon. Even now if you look at the tribal people you find that their attitude towards nature is one of friendship. If you go to the villager in India you find that he worships the cow, he has great relationship to the world respect for the river and the sunrise and the rain. He does not complain about the rain saying it makes his dress dirty, that he cannot move so far when it is raining and so on. He doesn't have that kind of feeling. He feels a sense of joy when it rains. To him that is part of nature and he has always related with it that way, but we, educated and scientific minds have lost that quality of feeling for our surroundings. Instead we have started looking upon a river as a resource. How can I utilize this — how can I use the tree? We value the tree for what it gives us. If a tree doesn't give fruit you want to cut it down, and there starts the mischief.

Please don't accept any of this. I am just looking around and putting before you what thoughts come to my mind. Look at them very critically whether that is so or it is not so. I may be completely mistaken.

There is no end to human greed. There is no end to human desires. You can go on exploiting more and more. But is it really a resource for all times to come? Even if you view it as a resource, when you are trying to use tremendous amounts of it, are you not going to deprive the future generations? Because you are going to pollute the air, you are going to pollute the waters and in doing so you might have a comfortable life now but what happens to the future generations? So after all even when you view it as a resource it is not intelligent to use that entire resource immediately. It is like spending all your money today and tomorrow you would be a beggar. One doesn't do that, but in modern society, out of this competition between nations, to have economic gains, one has started exploiting nature more and more.

And now they are discovering that nature has started reacting because it is all one complete whole. The earth and all its environment is like one single biological organism, like our body is. If you cut my hand it affects the whole body. In the same way if you play with the trees it affects other aspects, it causes floods, it causes global warming.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY - NEW YORK 'Our Role and Relationship with Nature'

Our relationship with nature has historically been one of imbalance and overuse. Nearly every step in human history has unfortunately been accompanied with a leap in environmental degradation. At first, humans were incredibly in-tune with their surroundings. Nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes used to roam the lands, following the ebb and flow of the seasons. These tribes had a measurable impact on the environment, but their influence was relatively manageable due to their population size. With advancements in technology and agriculture though, humans began to find more efficient ways of sustaining themselves. These advancements allowed for more permanent settlements, which led to rapid population growth and a distancing from nature.

As society evolved, populations grew and more and more resources were required to fuel the expansion. With breakthroughs in agriculture, settlements became more permanent and cities began to take shape. This shift to city life inadvertently led to a distancing from nature. While many people were still in-tune with nature on a subsistent level, the need for more and more resources began to change our regard for nature.

Although our distancing from nature began several thousand years ago with advancements in agriculture and social order, it is the age of industry to which we owe our modern regard for nature. The growth of cities allowed for a separation between people and nature and our obsession with convenience and efficiency beckoned a new perspective on the environment. With technological advancements, nature became something we were no longer apart of and entirely subject to, but

something that we could control and profit off of. The growth of industry enabled humans to truly dominate the landscape and disrupt the natural systems that have been in place for billions of years. As we have removed ourselves further and further from nature, we have developed a willing ignorance of our role and relationship within it. With the growth of cities and trade we have moved from a subsistent, sustainable economy to one of greed and exploitation. Humans have always had an impact on the environment, but with the age of industry that impact has been ultra-magnified. Population growth has been exponentiated, cities have become the primary place of residence, and the majority of the world is now out of touch with the workings of nature.

Although every species plays a unique role in the biosphere and inherently has its own impact, not every species has the cognitive ability to measure their influence or the capacity to change it. Humans are unique in that respect, which is the root of the problem. We are capable of understanding our influence over nature, but we tend to ignore the Earth's reaction to our presence. I am not arguing that we purposefully degrade nature, but that environmental degradation is an inherent trait of our population's perpetual progression. We know we are crippling the environment. We have the ability to do something about it. Therefore, we should make change where change is necessary.

C.W. LEADBEATER

How shall we define occultism? The word is derived from the Latin *occultus*, hidden; so that it is the study of the hidden laws of nature. Since all the great laws of nature are in fact working in the invisible world far more than in the visible, occultism involves the acceptance of a much wider view of nature than that which is ordinarily taken. The occultist, then, is a man who studies all the laws of nature that he can reach or of which he can hear, and as a result of his study he identifies himself with these laws and devotes his life to the service of evolution.

Trees:

Strong influences are radiated by the vegetable kingdom also, and the different kinds of plants and trees vary greatly in their effect. Those who have not specially studied the subject invariably under-rate the strength, capacity and intelligence shown in vegetable life. I have already written upon this in *The Christian Creed*, p. 51 (2nd edition), so I will not repeat myself here, but will rather draw attention to the fact that trees-- especially old trees-- have a strong and definite individuality, well worthy the name of a soul. This soul, though temporary, in the sense that it is not yet a reincarnating entity, is nevertheless possessed of considerable power and intelligence along its own lines.

It has decided likes and dislikes, and to clairvoyant sight it shows quite clearly by a vivid rosy flush an emphatic enjoyment of the sunlight and the rain, and distinct pleasure also in the presence of those whom it has learnt to like, or with whom it has sympathetic vibrations. Emerson appears to have realized this, for he is quoted in Hutton's *Reminiscences* as saying of his trees: "I am sure they miss me; they seem to droop when I go away, and I know they brighten and bloom when I go back to them and shake hands with their lower branches."

An old forest tree is a high development of vegetable life, and when it is transferred from that kingdom it does not pass into the lowest form of animal life. In some cases its individuality is even sufficiently distinct to allow it to manifest itself temporarily outside its physical form, and when that is so it often takes the human shape. Matters may be otherwise arranged in other solar systems for aught we know, but in ours the Deity has chosen the human form to enshrine the highest intelligence, to be carried on to the utmost perfection as His scheme develops: and because that is so, there is always a tendency among lower kinds of life to reach upwards towards that form, and in their primitive way to imagine themselves as possessing it.

CHRIS WALKER

All human disaster comes from the disconnection from nature. The man or woman who lives, works, depends, and has to survive on nature will have this wisdom as common sense. The city dweller may never understand it, and lose that great connection if these Universal Laws of Nature are not shared.

Our humanity is heading in dangerous directions. Emotions, ego's and ideologies proliferate and run independent, individual scripts. The result can only be disaster at both a personal and family level. And for global circumstance, disaster is looming.

Aligning your organization, family and personal culture with Nature's Universal Law is a way of carrying forward your inheritance, a way of bringing the connection to nature and wisdom that comes with it, forward, into this day, without the benefits that become common sense from years of toil and co-existence with nature.

All human disaster comes from separation from nature, a separation that cannot be mended on two week vacations in the Bahamas, living in Ashrams, practicing meditation or chanting to Gods in temples. No, this is common sense that comes from the great wisdom of Nature's Laws... universal laws that make life, lived from the ego, transparent.

Let Nature Be your Guide... The Universal Laws of Nature....