

# THEOSOPHY & SCIENCE

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The age of the Earth, Anthropology, Science and Theosophy have been shown to be in corroboration.<sup>1</sup> Theosophy believes that everything in the world is orderly phenomena unless they have faith in this fact. The Theosophical Research centre has published a transaction discussing the possible links in the occult and orthodox science approaches to the study of the physical matter.<sup>2</sup> Integration of science, ethics, aesthetics and religion through their relation to the conscious being of man has been discussed by Theosophy.<sup>3</sup> Theosophy has a rational element in it which has to be integrated with scientific knowledge,<sup>4</sup> and which a well defined methodology is needed.<sup>5</sup> The need for effective study of those aspects of science and Theosophy which can be regarded as valid knowledge has been stressed by modern scientists.<sup>6</sup> &<sup>7</sup> **Annie Besant** has defined science as God manifested as knowledge.<sup>8</sup> Previous to Theosophy it was conceived that Science and Religion are antagonistic to each other. But the views of the great scientists are in consonance with religion. **Albert Einstein**, the originator of the theory of Relativity says, "I believe in God..... who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of the universe. I believe that intelligence is manifested throughout all Nature. The basis of scientific work is the conviction that the world is an ordered and comprehensible entity and not a thing of chance."<sup>9</sup> Religion and science are considered to be two sides of the same thing. Once let science again be the material side of Religion" said Annie Besant.<sup>10</sup> **Sir Artheir S. Edington** wrote, "The old atheism is gone.....Religion belongs to the realm of spirit and Mind and cannot be shaken."<sup>11</sup> **Einstein** has also observed, "Religion without science is blind, and

science without religion is lame."

According to Theosophy there is a difference between the science of the East and the West. According to **Annie Besant**, ".....There is a profound difference between the science of the East and of the West..... One begins from the pole of spirit, the other begins from the pole of matter; so that one, as it were; comes downwards, and the other claims upwards, one starts from Purusha the other climbs up from Prakriti."<sup>12</sup> The spiritual world is the true reality, not the material world, and this fact has now been recognized by the scientists. According to J.B.S. Haldane, "The material world, which has been taken for a world of blind mechanism, is in reality a spiritual world seemed very partially imperfectly. The only real world is the spiritual world..... The truth is that, not Matter, not Force, not any physical thing but Mind, personality, is the central fact of the Universe."<sup>13</sup> Theosophical Science believes that world does not consist of matter only. It is not only science of our physical earth, but consists of both the super physical as well as physical.<sup>14</sup>

"There", says Annie Besant, "Opens before you, immense vistas of life, for glory and then, when that vision of yours, you can follow your living dead into the realms of the heavenly world."<sup>15</sup> This extended knowledge of super

<sup>1</sup>. For further details see D.D. Kanga's book, Where Science and Theosophy Meet, Part-I, 1936, The Adyar Library Association, Adyar, pp. 141-60.

<sup>2</sup>. The Field of Occult Chemistry, T.P.H. London.

<sup>3</sup>. "Main Currents" 17 (4), p 75.

<sup>4</sup>. "Science Group Journal" October, 58 p 3.

<sup>5</sup>. "Ibid" December, 58, p 13.

<sup>6</sup>. Science Group Journal, April, 60, p 10,16.

<sup>7</sup>. "Ibid" 5(1), p 7.

<sup>8</sup>. Bhagwan Dass, The Essential Unity of All Religions, p,23.

<sup>9</sup>. Annie Besant, Brahma Vidya.

<sup>10</sup>. "Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>. Bhagwan Dass, The Essential Unity of All Religions, p,24.

<sup>12</sup>. Annie Besant, Brahma Vidya.

<sup>13</sup>. Bhagwan Dass, The Essential Unity of All Religions, p,23.

<sup>14</sup>. Annie Besant, Ideals of Theosophy, p,58.

<sup>15</sup>. Annie Besant, Ideals of Theosophy, p,76.

physical changes one's attitude towards self and all that is around. Man learns about that is unseen and unfelt and "The whole world is changed by knowing more of the invisible worlds and objects."<sup>16</sup>

Theosophy is not only in consonance with science but even ahead of it. "Theosophy is the experience of the greatly wise from times immemorial."<sup>17</sup> Theosophy is the eternal mountain of experienced Truth. "Theosophy discloses the Universal Law, the Inexorable Purpose, the Divine Design."<sup>18</sup> Theosophy and science are actually beginning to meet in realms of theory, and even in the realms of so-called fact the statements of Theosophy are slowly beginning to find "endorsement in the discoveries of science."<sup>19</sup> Theosophy has actually reached the stage about which science is dreaming. Philosophical principals have now become part of science. "The recognition of the nature of commences and its disavowal before rigorous principles is one of the pregnant philosophical principles of modern science, making it more venture some and less bound by tradition."<sup>20</sup> Remarkd S.J. Ayer, "It is apparent that a revulsion against ancient outworn customs and an over-enthusiastic appreciation of the new technology have made Indians not only willing but eager to embrace a through going materialism for which they are not really fitted..... But the total resources of the Darsans represent a living tradition in India, wide and deep enough to embrace the arts in all their best forms; as well as science and the human social values."<sup>21</sup> The changing philosophy of science and its emergence in the present day has been theosophically commented upon in a special number of American Theosophist.<sup>22</sup> Several authors have discussed some of the various aspects of science and its emerging philosophy. Thus, theosophy goes ahead of science. Natural philosophy can do this by being a discipline specialized in the investigation of the results of natural science, and not in the investigation of any one aspect of nature.<sup>23</sup> The role of science as a cultural force is stressed in a series of papers by different thinkers.<sup>24</sup> Science Society Group views the role of science in our lives theosophically.<sup>25</sup> Understanding should be through both science and religion.<sup>26</sup> Theosophy has brought science to a useful stage. "Theosophy with its profound understanding of Prana and Kundalini, derived from the ancient Indian scriptures, brings back to science a spiritual background to energy, life and self-consciousness, the ring-pass-nots of our universe, a background to which science and religion can both contribute"<sup>27</sup> This background is very important in the absence of which science would become harmful to humanity.

Theosophy is in consonance with science in one more way. The Theosophical method is the same as the scientific method. "It applies to everything the scientific method of .....observation and then tabulates the result and makes deductions from them." says C.W. Leadbeater'.<sup>28</sup> Annie Besant also writes, "Theosophy accepts the method of science- observation, experiment, arrangement of ascertained facts, induction, hypothesis, deduction, verification, assertion of the discovered truth- but immediately increases its area."<sup>29</sup> One who has a good scientific training will find the theosophical method very easy.<sup>30</sup> There is one more fact. Theosophy overcomes the weaknesses of science.<sup>31</sup> In the first place science takes over-hasty generalization which characterizes the inductive method in practice. It does not take into account the possible contradictions which might be inherent, making scientific theories unscientific. On the other hand Theosophy does not overlook this possibility. Secondly, the scientists have a tendency to ignore those facts which tend to prove a spiritual nature in man. But Theosophy does not ignore this nature. Thirdly, science cannot give a real philosophy of life. Theosophy does it. Science can only describe a process but Theosophy apart from doing this also gives direction. Theosophy is, thus, a continuation of science. The scientific knowledge acquired by the Adepts is stated in modern Theosophy. Though both Theosophy and Science show the ladder of evolution, Theosophy goes higher than science. Theosophy applied to scientific facts is considered not mainly for its utilitarian value to add to man's comforts, but primarily because its understanding shows man the true harmony of the larger whole of which he is

<sup>16</sup>. Bhagwan Dass, The Essential Unity of All Religions, p.23.

<sup>17</sup>. D.D. Kanga, Where Theosophy and Science Met (Forward by G.S. Arundale), p.vii.

<sup>18</sup>. Ibid, p. viii.

<sup>19</sup>. Ibid,

<sup>20</sup>. Main Currents, 25(2),p. 49

<sup>21</sup>. Ibid, 21 (2), pp. 42-3

<sup>22</sup>. American Theosophist, November, 1962.

<sup>23</sup>. Main Currents, 23 (5), p. 126.

<sup>24</sup>. "Science as a Cultural Force", Henry Woolf, Ed. , John Hopkih, Press, Baltimore Md, rev. in Main Currents, 24 (4), p. 111.

<sup>25</sup>. Theosophist, Science Society Group (1) Newsletter 3.

<sup>26</sup>. Main Currents, 19 (4), p. 79.

<sup>27</sup>. Theosophist, 84 (6), p. 385.

<sup>28</sup>. C.W. Leadbeater, A Textbook of Theosophy, p.8.

<sup>29</sup>. Annie Besant, Theosophy, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup>. C. Jinarajadasa, Practical Theosophy., p. 38

<sup>31</sup>. For a detailed exposition of this view see Practical Theosophy of C.Jinarajadasa, pp. 40-42.

but a part.<sup>32</sup> Theosophical ideals must, therefore, be applied to science. "The message of Theosophy to science is to bring out her real strength as an aid to the discovery of truth."<sup>33</sup> Both aim at the discovery of truth but in their own way. If science and Theosophy are both understood and practiced correctly, it can be said that "the truer the Theosophist, the more scientific he is, just as the truer the scientist is to his ideal method, the more of a Theosophist he is, in fact though not in name."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>. C. Jinarajadasa, Practical Theosophy, p. 45-46.

<sup>33</sup>. Ibid., p. 49

<sup>34</sup>. C. Jinarajadasa, Practical Theosophy, p. 45-46.