

RADHA BURNIER on NATURE

‘HUMAN REGENERATION’

The third Object (of the TS) is investigation of the hidden laws of **Nature** and of the powers latent in human beings. All natural laws are an expression of the divine intelligence. Those who do not understand them, who do not realize they are unchangeable and intransgressible, come up against an impenetrable wall, so to speak, and hurt themselves. Knowledge of the laws, on the other hand, is power to accelerate progress. If we do not understand how the great stream of evolution proceeds, what the great design is, we are led into foolishness and vanity. All the world is vanity because, if we think that we can work outside the law, we do not try to understand it. The law of harmony is perhaps the most important of all, for all other laws may be an expression of the great harmony of the universe.

This third Object implies study not only of **Nature** in its outer manifestation but of the relationship of all things, one to another, for all law is a statement of relationships. Those relationships are subtle, and many people think they do not exist. But an understanding of ourselves is connected with an understanding of laws and of the forces at work behind them. There are many such forces and many forms of intelligence at work everywhere. There is a hierarchy of intelligences, we are told, working for the great Plan. What is our own place in all this? Can we claim a place which is not in the Plan, or carve a place for ourselves according to our own notions? Do we have to abandon our ideas and find out how to live according to the Plan? Discovering the answers is the same as trying to understand what our potential powers are, what spiritual faculties are latent in human consciousness, and how they can be unfolded.

‘THE PROFANING OF THE ELEMENTS’ (*The Theosophist*, 1987)

Respect for all that pertained to **Nature** came spontaneously to people who looked upon it with wonder. The American Indian loved the earth on which he lived and did not think either of possessing it or exploiting it, though he took from it according to his needs in modest measure. Instances have been known of Australian aborigines who, feeling part of the earth and its elements, instinctively knew where water could be found under the sands of the desert. The modern attitude to the natural elements is, on the contrary, a profane one. The idea of conquest and utility has replaced the profound sense of wonder and worship which existed in relation to the earth, the waters, the mountains and natural phenomena of every kind. The result is that man is doing infinite harm to himself. Instead of worshipping the rivers and using their waters to purify himself, he pollutes them with chemicals, sewage, nuclear waste, and so forth. Words like Chernobyl, Bhopal, and the Rhine have acquired a new connotation, indicating disasters of different kinds. Efforts to divert rivers, mine the earth and make greedy use of the different elements have brought new problems and done serious damage. The indiscriminate destruction of forests is the cause of disastrous famines.

‘CLEAR VISION AND SANE LIVING’, (*The Theosophist*, 1989)

Human beings are part of the world of **Nature**, its loveliness, significance and subtle relationships, but we do not know it, and that is our tragedy. We are taught to believe that the ‘world’ is the world which we create and build, our constructions, railways, electronic miracles, political institutions, social structure, wars, divisions and so on. All this is human society, but to most people this is the ‘world’.

In the present day, for millions of people who live in urban areas, Nature is physically far away. They know nothing except streets, noise and artificial objects. Even people who live in the midst of

Nature in rural areas are unaware, because poverty compels them to labour from morning till night. Because they are poor, for them everything is an object to get and use. Others are so conditioned into thinking that what is important in life is to struggle and make themselves better that they are prisoners of their own self-centred activity, unaware of the real world.

‘CLEAR VISION AND SANE LIVING’, (*The Theosophist*, 1989)

We rarely look at a plant or a mountain or a fellow human being, but when we do, what do we see? Perhaps imperfectly the form, without awareness of the life within the form. Our past thoughts crystallize into an image or concept and project themselves between the mind and truth, which may be in a leaf, in a rock, in a human being, anywhere, everywhere. And because thoughts intervene, the object takes on a different appearance. The subjective content appears as the object, the projection of the mind as the truth. Only when the mind is like the mirror of which Chuang Tzu spoke, free of the dust referred to in *The Voice of the Silence*, it sees. As long as the mind is loaded with content in the form of reactions, ideas, ideology, judgements, analyses and so on, it cannot reflect truly. So, the mind must be pure, free, undistorted without contradictions, to see clearly. This means looking at oneself. It is by self-knowledge, by understanding what is happening within the mind, that clarity comes. Then the mind becomes freer and purer and has greater energy.