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I desire to draw the attention of members to a beautiful book published by Miss Esther Bright, with the title: "Old Memories and Letters of Annie Besant." Miss Bright was until lately the Corresponding Secretary of the English Division of the E. S. T. for many long years. Her connection with the Society dates from the time of H. P. B. Miss Bright was one of the few persons who were very close to Dr. Besant in her private life; she received a letter from Dr. Besant nearly every week. I have seen most of these letters, and Miss Bright has extracted from them much that gives a most fascinating picture of our late Outer Head. Much of the letters reveal Dr. Besant as a woman, and only incidentally as the great leader. The letters will bring back beautiful memories to those who knew her, and to those who have not known Dr. Besant, a true glimpse is given of one to whom we owe so much.

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C. J.



THE MANOR FROM THE HARBOUR

To the left, "The Heads," the entrance to the Harbour. To the right, the centre of the City, and the docks.

1936]

THE MANOR

III

THE MANOR

THE building, The Manor, is a large one which might almost have been built specially for the use of the Community. It was a house built in 1912 by Mr. Bakewell, who began building it as an 8-room cottage and finally ended up by making it a 52-room mansion. The house is on a steep hillside, and so the entrance from the road is on the first floor (American, 2nd floor). On the 1st floor, where is the main entrance, the hall forms a Greek Cross, the lengthwise arms measuring 50 ft. each, and the intersecting arms 25 ft. each; the width is 10 ft. This floor contains two very large rooms. The most important is a beautiful room 40 x 20 feet, whose walls and ceiling are all lined with embossed metal. This room was used by Brother Leadbeater as his bed-sitting room, where he met all who had business with him. When he left The Manor to settle at Adyar, the room was transformed into a Temple for Masonic and other ritual work. On the same floor is the general meeting room of the Community; it also is large, being 30 x 20 feet. This room is at the moment my sitting-room and office. There are 7 other rooms on this floor.

The floor below is the basement floor, though it is completely open to the garden on three sides. The dining-room is on this floor and is 40 x 20 feet, and it can seat 50 persons on the two sides of a long U-shaped table, the bottom part of which is not curved but squared. On this floor are all the service rooms, the main kitchen, store-rooms, etc. This floor also contains 4 bedrooms, all looking out on to a garden and the harbour. On this floor, in one arm of the Greek Cross passage, is the house Chapel of the Liberal Catholic Church; the public can attend entering by a garden

3. Miss V. K. Maddox, Administrator-General of International Co-Freemasonry in Australia.

C. J.

OUR DUTY AT PRESENT

THE present is obviously a period of transition for our Society and for the School from an epoch during which a vast flood of teaching has been given to another which will have its own distinctive features of development. Such transitions are inevitable from time to time. We have been assured by the Master Himself that "Annie Besant, our oldest worker, is ready to take the burden when the new life comes to raise itself on the foundations of the old which is behind us". Necessarily during this transition there must be some marking of time, as seen from the outside. But from the standpoint of the inner vision, it is a time for consolidation, for the development of self-dependance by those who have hitherto been eager and faithful followers and have shown the virtues of such following. To their loyalty to the leaders who attracted them must now be added loyalty to the work and its chief representatives for the time.

We must realize that the work of the Masters is work that will extend through the coming centuries and will develop in many ways according to the possibilities of the times. Some parts of Their plan are known already; but we are far from knowing it in its fulness. In the carrying out of that plan there will be many phases, many different modes of action, even ups and downs. There must be some in the outer world in each generation on whom They can depend to carry out Their

plans for the time; but also some on whom They can depend for employment at any time, anywhere, who have renounced once for all not only all personal aims and objectives but even personal predilections and are willing to live only to carry out the one Will, the Will of the Hierarchy and the one Plan, Their plan. It is part of the purpose of the E.S. to act as a channel to draw recruits to this band.

It has been said by the Masters, in one of Their letters, that the Sun gives all and takes nothing from his system. Is not there an example for us all to copy? We must be willing—those of us who aspire to be of this dauntless band—to give all that we have, first our hearts in entirety, and ask for nothing.

Those who have resolved to make this sacrifice, who indeed are trying to make it already, however often they may fail to attain the pure standard of its perfection, ought not to be seriously perturbed by *anything*. In the eternal combat between the forces of Light and of Darkness there must be times when the latter seem to get the upper hand; but what of that? We know from inner conviction, as well as from our studies, from the story of the Atlantean and later times, that eventually the Powers of Righteousness must prevail. We know from our studies of the constitution of the universe—the macrocosm, of which man the microcosm is a reflection—and of the resistless sweep of the evolutionary tide, that ultimately the Hidden Spark, the Hidden Light, must shine in perfect glory. Those of us, therefore, who have ranged ourselves on the side of the Good Law, may well be content to bide our time in spite of temporary reverses.

If we are members of the Esoteric School, especially Pledged Members, it is because we feel that the School is Their School, and believe that those who are at the

head of the School and of the Society are the agents of the Hierarchy for the purposes for which the Society was started, and that while they are fallible, being human and not yet Adepts, they are endeavouring sincerely and whole-heartedly to be guided by the Masters and live but for the accomplishment of Their work. Hence even if we see or imagine that certain decisions on their part are not the best, it is our duty nevertheless to give them all possible help and support, minimizing the consequences of those mistakes—if mistakes they be—and making up as far as we can, in our own respective ways, for their deficiencies.

Of course we must have put aside long ago all thought of our personal progress, even though this be subtly disguised sometimes as desire for enhanced usefulness. If our study of the Chains and Rounds and Races has taught us anything, it must have taught us to think in terms of long evolutionary stretches, not of years or even decades. Where we are in the scale of evolution in reality matters not all: to think it does is part of the great illusion. The only reality which there is to attain is that which we gain by delight in the continual pouring out of ourselves, just as the only knowledge which is worth possessing is the knowledge of the One Self, which is in the lowest as well as the highest. We must realize then that all that we need for our own happiness and unfoldment is eternally in ourselves; but we gain this happiness and unfoldment as we transcend ourselves and identify ourselves with others.

N. S. R.

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LETTER 2

A constant sense of abject dependence upon a Deity which he regards as the sole source of power makes a man lose all self-reliance and the spurs to activity and initiative. Having begun by creating a father and a guide unto himself, he becomes like a boy and remains so to his old age, expecting to be led by the hand on the smallest as well as the greatest events of life. The saying, "Help thyself, and God will help thee," he so interprets that when an undertaking results to his own advantage, he credits it to himself only; when a failure, he charges it to the will of his God. The Founders prayed to no Deity in beginning The Theosophical Society, nor asked His help since. Are we expected to become the nursing mothers of the Bengal Theosophical Society? Did we help the Founders? No; they were helped by the inspiration of self-reliance, and sustained by their reverence for the rights of man, and their love for a country whose national honour has long been trampled into the mud, under the feet of her meek and lazy sons, indifferent to her woes, unmindful to her dying glory. . . . Your sins? The greatest of them is your fathering upon your God the task of purging you of them. This is no creditable piety, but an indolent and selfish weakness. Though vanity would whisper to the contrary, heed only your common sense.

M.

NOTES BY THE O.H.

The Pictures

I HAVE noted in many places that the pictures of the Masters are not correctly displayed. The way that they should be placed in a Shrine Room is as follows:

THE STAR OF THE KING

THE LORD BUDDHA

THE BODHISATTVA THE MANU THE MAHACHOHAN

MASTER R. MASTER K.H. MASTER M. MASTER J.

It is advisable not to have on the same altar or setting where are placed the pictures of the Masters, any pictures of the Outer Heads of the School. They should be distinctly on one side, so that those who meditate may see only the pictures of the Great Ones.

Abstinence from meat, alcohol, tobacco, etc.

I have the following from a Warden:

"I wonder whether you know that people are very strange about their attitude to your instructions? Some of course take what you have said about smokers and meat and fish-eaters not attending E.S. meetings, *as now in force*, and they remain away from meetings; but others seem to regard all that you have printed in *The Disciple* merely as an intimation of rules that you will enforce in the future and they come to meetings while habitually smoking and eating meat or fish. I tell you this because I am not sure whether you know it. Perhaps in the next *Disciple* you would think it well to make the matter perfectly clear."

The instructions sent by me to the Corresponding Secretaries, and through them to the Wardens, are perfectly clear. But evidently they have not been explained

Him if it was not possible to do something to help certain members who had turned bitterly against our Brother, yet had once served the Society and had much good in them still. Their actions, however, had been of such an obstructive kind that they had rejected the great opportunity for this life. The words used by the Mahachohan were: "For this day their sun is set, but there will be other days for them in the future and you can help them then."

It is similarly true that for many to-day their sun has set "for this day". You can see this tragic happening, this setting of the sun, in many who were members of the School.

This testing will come to us all again and again, because the selection is rigid. In the Fifth Root-Race there was a selection of the physical bodies; those selected were led from Atlantis to Arabia, and from Arabia to Central Asia; and then there were further selections by picking out a few individuals whose bodies were coming towards the type and allowing the others to be killed. Among those whose physical bodies were rejected, those of loyal heart were sent to be reborn as the descendants of the very few selected. Now, at the moment, it is a selection not of physical bodies but of souls.

All the time, then, for you and for me the selection will go on; and this selection, this proving, is something which will happen to us all till we cross the threshold of Adeptship. It is that to which reference is made in *Light on the Path*, in Rule 18 (Part II).

The knowledge which is now yours is only yours because your soul has become one with all pure souls and with the inmost. It is a trust vested in you by the Most High. Betray it, misuse your knowledge or neglect it, and it is possible even now

for you to fall from the high estate you have attained. Great ones fall back, even from the threshold, unable to sustain the weight of their responsibility, unable to pass on.

The Masters know when there is the beginning of trouble. To-day a Meteorological Bureau can foresee the beginnings of a cyclone. They can draw curves of air pressure and see where a cyclone is forming; as telegrams come in from meteorological stations, they can tell in what direction it is passing, and send out warnings to ships. Similarly, the Masters foresee, but They do not interfere. Certainly They give warnings to Their officers, with regard to some aspects of the troubles, but They do not prevent them. Because each Theosophical cyclone is used by Them to test how many will remain within the net and how many will slip out. It is necessary that those who are to work with Them should understand the needs of the work and make many sacrifices. The hardest sacrifice of all is that of our standpoint, what we call our convictions, to which we cling so tenaciously; we do not realize that often, in so doing our vision is limited, and that we are obstructing Their work and not helping.

The great problem is, seeing that a testing is taking place *all the time*, how are we to come through each test, so that we are found still within the ranks of the workers of the Masters and not without. It is a hard problem to solve, but I think we may say that one quality necessary for us all is the strictest probity in action. The word "probity" means a sort of righteousness, a sensitiveness to the inner principles of conduct, so that nothing is done by us which stains the purity and cleanness of the Masters' work. On this we have a warning from the Master K. H. with regard to the need of the strictest probity in Their work. There

was none more devoted to Them than Damodar K. Mavalankar. He did not exactly fail, but he did make complications for the Masters' work through his over-zealousness, and by not being strictly accurate. He worked always with the best intentions, and to help H. P. B.; but all the same he did misrepresent some facts in order, as he thought, to defend her. So there came to him as Karma very acute distress. Yet seeing that he was a faithful worker, and in order to make the pressure on him less, the Master led him to Thibet to be with Him. But Damodar had to pay in acute suffering. It was then that the Master said in a famous letter:

"The poor boy has had his *fall*. Before he could stand in the presence of the 'Masters' he had to undergo the severest trials that a neophyte ever passed through, to atone for the many questionable doings in which he had over-zealously taken part, bringing disgrace upon the sacred science and its adepts. The mental and physical suffering was too much for his weak frame, which has been quite prostrated, but he will recover in course of time. This ought to be a warning to you all. You have believed 'not wisely but too well'. To unlock the gates of the mystery you must not only lead a life of the strictest probity, but learn to discriminate truth from falsehood. You have talked a great deal about Karma but have hardly realized the true significance of that doctrine. The time is come when you must lay the foundation of that strict conduct—in the individual as well as in the collective body—which, ever wakeful, guards against conscious as well as unconscious deception."

In these matters the greatest danger lies in the deception of ourselves. None of us want to deceive

ourselves; yet guided and influenced by subtle dispositions in our natures, we often do deceive ourselves. There is no question that Mr. W. Q. Judge deceived himself, though no doubt there was a good motive in his actions. Similarly, too, Mr. T. H. Martyn deceived himself; he was a very fine worker and yet he did great injury in Sydney to the work of the Masters.

Do the Masters not know about such possible failures? Cannot They see that much of the future? They do see. But They are just to all who desire to work, and They give to each the opportunities which he has earned, though he may reject future opportunities later on. They treat us as if we would always serve Them well and not fail. Yet They are not blind; They can foresee. Nevertheless They treat us as if They did not foresee, for they are anxious to draw out of us the utmost good. An example of this is the case of the late Mohini M. Chatterjee. The Master K. H. received him as a pupil in 1883. He was sent to London next year to help H. P. B. and he was a brilliant exponent of Theosophy. His Master considered the question whether he could be developed so as to be used as one of Their agents for communications. But there was danger for him. The Master M. wrote as follows in 1884 (Letter III, *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series):

"Remains Mohini; he has not reached that stage of physiological development that enables a chela to send and receive letters. His evolution has been more upon the intellectual plane, and just now a greater activity is beginning in the borderland between that and the spiritual, and his utterances will as hitherto be largely inspired by his Master. With every day he will improve. If his short-sighted friends do not spoil him by their foolish compliments and he does not yield to the seductive

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influences which converge towards him, there is a future for him—but he is not ready for physical transference. Moreover, when or if he once falls under the spells of the worldly life, his inspiration will cease and his name will be written on the 'roll' as a failure. There is danger for him. His Master perceives it and—hesitates."

In 1885, Mohini Chatterjee quarrelled with H. P. B., and "dropped out of the ranks". He never came back. He became blind and passed away this year. Still, even in his old age, something of the old influences remained, and he tried to help the poor and ignorant by simple ethical instruction.

We have to be acutely sensitive to the highest principles of honour, so that we know instinctively that certain things are not honourable. We have to say swiftly: "No, I cannot join in that type of action however much it seems necessary. It is impossible." We must be awake and alive to the inner quality of our soul. We have to be on guard and to acquire that very delicate sensitiveness of consciousness which is aware when things are not right. It is a very difficult thing to acquire.

Sometimes we can help ourselves by preserving a state of intense charity, or brotherliness, as we would say. But we must take care that brotherliness does not become sentimentality. There are certain times when we have to fight. In this world of much darkness, we must not give in to evil in the name of brotherhood. We have to resist certain things, and therefore fighting is very much a part of the life of the Occultist. But he has to fight with *clean weapons*, and that is the hardest thing. The men who fight against us are often unscrupulous, their weapons are not clean; of course it hurts them in the long run far more than they realize. It is

hard to be the true warrior, the true Kshatriya, who fights not for himself but for his Chief, and always with clean weapons, and can never do anything against the principles of the highest honour.

But perhaps the most important thing in all this difficult path of ours, where we are tested again and again, is not to allow the bridge between our lower and higher self to be broken. If we were to examine the "ordinary person," there is in him a bridge between his higher and lower self, but it is like a bamboo bridge over a torrent, rather shaky and liable to be swept away in a storm. But when a man has ceased to be an "ordinary person" and enters the ranks of the idealists, the bridge becomes firmer. It may be a narrow bridge but still it is a firmer one. When you enter the School and accept its ideals, the bridge is stronger and wider, but you have to see that it is passable; you must prevent the weeds from growing and obstructing. It is keeping open the bridge that is done by meditation. The purpose of meditation is to keep open the bridge between your higher and lower self. If you allow the work of meditation to drop into the background, and your mind is not being trained, and there is not normally on the horizon of your mind the work of the Master, then, when your higher self wants to assist you, he cannot, because the bridge has been so filled up with obstacles that he cannot cross it. It is necessary that we should keep our bridge open by a daily subjecting of ourselves to the influences of our great ideals. That is one object of meditation.

So many people say they cannot meditate, and that they have not the time, and so on. One pathetic case has come to me of a member who has to work hard, get up at six, prepare breakfast for five, then go to work, come back at six in the evening and then prepare

dinner for five, with other duties also. It is true that meditation seems impossible, yet nevertheless something must be done, even a very hurried two minutes' meditation, so as to pledge oneself anew, and sound the keynote for the day which will be spent in the turmoil of our work. If you cannot do fifteen minutes at one sitting, do it in little bits, though it is not so effective. You *must* keep in touch with your higher self, because a testing is taking place again and again, and you must become aware of your higher nature all the time.

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111

THE MANOR

THE building, The Manor, is a large one which might almost have been built specially for the use of the Community. It was a house built in 1912 by Mr. Bakewell, who began building it as an 8-room cottage and finally ended up by making it a 52-room mansion. The house is on a steep hillside, and so the entrance from the road is on the first floor (American, 2nd floor). On the 1st floor, where is the main entrance, the hall forms a Greek Cross, the lengthwise arms measuring 50 ft. each, and the intersecting arms 25 ft. each; the width is 10 ft. This floor contains two very large rooms. The most important is a beautiful room 40 x 20 feet, whose walls and ceiling are all lined with embossed metal. This room was used by Brother Leadbeater as his bed-sitting room, where he met all who had business with him. When he left The Manor to settle at Adyar, the room was transformed into a Temple for Masonic and other ritual work. On the same floor is the general meeting room of the Community; it also is large, being 30 x 20 feet. This room is at the moment my sitting-room and office. There are 7 other rooms on this floor.

The floor below is the basement floor, though it is completely open to the garden on three sides. The dining-room is on this floor and is 40 x 20 feet, and it can seat 50 persons on the two sides of a long U-shaped table, the bottom part of which is not curved but squared. On this floor are all the service rooms, the main kitchen, store-rooms, etc. This floor also contains 4 bedrooms, all looking out on to a garden and the harbour. On this floor, in one arm of the Greek Cross passage, is the house Chapel of the Liberal Catholic Church; the public can attend entering by a garden

entrance. Mass is celebrated every morning at 7 a.m., and Benediction Service on Mondays at 7.30 p.m. Other services as required are also held in the Chapel.

Above the main floor is the first floor, with 12 rooms, and above this is the top floor, consisting of one room 60 ft. x 10 ft., with windows on all sides, making an excellent sun parlour. The house faces nearly north, so receives all the sun (we are in the Southern Hemisphere).

As The Manor has now been arranged for the purpose of the Community, it contains a Temple, a Chapel, an assembly room, a library room, 32 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 shower rooms, dining-room, kitchen, 2 kitchenettes, 2 sculleries, 3 lavatories apart from bathrooms, and one laundry.

There are then the service outhouses, and these contain laundry, bathroom, 2 bedrooms, 2 garages, 2 offices, 2 storerooms, and 2 small buildings occupied at the moment by the 2GB Radio Transmitting Station. The front of the house is on Iluka Road, which begins with The Manor and ends a quarter of a mile further on in a *cul de sac*, so that there is no passing traffic. The Manor is situated within the municipality of Mosman, one of the suburbs of the city of Sydney.

As already mentioned, the front door is on the 1st floor, and it and the floor below have wide verandahs. The length of the verandahs is 85 feet, and the width 12 feet. The back of the house looks on to that part of the Harbour called Watson's Bay, Rushcutter Bay, Double Bay and Rose Bay. We are towards the entrance of the Harbour, and do not see the wharves; all the steamers, large and small, which pass in and out of Sydney Harbour are clearly seen from The Manor, and easily recognized. The garden of the house is down a

hillside, and though not very large has this special advantage, that it is completely surrounded by the natural woods of the National Reserve. This Reserve goes down to the water, and therefore no house can be built below The Manor. One side of The Manor also touches on the Reserve, and from the front door, with 20 steps, we are in the Reserve, among trees and shrubs in a state of nature.

After the house was built by Mr. Bakewell, it was very little occupied, and was named by the neighbours "Bakewell's Folly," since the rooms were so unsuited for a private residence. It happens, however, to be most convenient for the Community, where on occasion 50 people can reside, as several of the rooms are large and two and three people can sleep in them.

Each resident provides his sheets, pillowcases and towels, and pays for their washing. He or she makes the bed. There is a small staff on a subsistence allowance, all, except one, members of the Society, for service in the kitchen and the sweeping out of the various rooms, and the garden. There is no waiting done at the table; the dishes are on a buffet outside the dining-room and the members help themselves, and after the meal, remove the dishes from the dining-room. The washing-up is done by the service staff. In accordance with Brother Leadbeater's instructions no conversation takes place in the dining room.

Once a week there is a meeting of all the residents, with a brief address by me, or by another appointed for the purpose.

The Trustees of The Manor, appointed by me, are:

1. Mr. Ian Davidson, Corresponding Secretary of the E. S. T.;
2. Rt. Rev. D. M. Tweedie, Regionary Bishop of the L. C. C.;

3. Miss V. K. Maddox, Administrator-General of International Co-Freemasonry in Australia.

C. J.

OUR DUTY AT PRESENT

THE present is obviously a period of transition for our Society and for the School from an epoch during which a vast flood of teaching has been given to another which will have its own distinctive features of development. Such transitions are inevitable from time to time. We have been assured by the Master Himself that "Annie Besant, our oldest worker, is ready to take the burden when the new life comes to raise itself on the foundations of the old which is behind us". Necessarily during this transition there must be some marking of time, as seen from the outside. But from the standpoint of the inner vision, it is a time for consolidation, for the development of self-dependance by those who have hitherto been eager and faithful followers and have shown the virtues of such following. To their loyalty to the leaders who attracted them must now be added loyalty to the work and its chief representatives for the time.

We must realize that the work of the Masters is work that will extend through the coming centuries and will develop in many ways according to the possibilities of the times. Some parts of Their plan are known already; but we are far from knowing it in its fulness. In the carrying out of that plan there will be many phases, many different modes of action, even ups and downs. There must be some in the outer world in each generation on whom They can depend to carry out Their

plans for the time; but also some on whom They can depend for employment at any time, anywhere, who have renounced once for all not only all personal aims and objectives but even personal predilections and are willing to live only to carry out the one Will, the Will of the Hierarchy and the one Plan, Their plan. It is part of the purpose of the E.S. to act as a channel to draw recruits to this band.

It has been said by the Masters, in one of Their letters, that the Sun gives all and takes nothing from his system. Is not there an example for us all to copy? We must be willing—those of us who aspire to be of this dauntless band—to give all that we have, first our hearts in entirety, and ask for nothing.

Those who have resolved to make this sacrifice, who indeed are trying to make it already, however often they may fail to attain the pure standard of its perfection, ought not to be seriously perturbed by *anything*. In the eternal combat between the forces of Light and of Darkness there must be times when the latter seem to get the upper hand; but what of that? We know from inner conviction, as well as from our studies, from the story of the Atlantean and later times, that eventually the Powers of Righteousness must prevail. We know from our studies of the constitution of the universe—the macrocosm, of which man the microcosm is a reflection—and of the resistless sweep of the evolutionary tide, that ultimately the Hidden Spark, the Hidden Light, must shine in perfect glory. Those of us, therefore, who have ranged ourselves on the side of the Good Law, may well be content to bide our time in spite of temporary reverses.

If we are members of the Esoteric School, especially Pledged Members, it is because we feel that the School is Their School, and believe that those who are at the

head of the School and of the Society are the agents of the Hierarchy for the purposes for which the Society was started, and that while they are fallible, being human and not yet Adepts, they are endeavouring sincerely and whole-heartedly to be guided by the Masters and live but for the accomplishment of Their work. Hence even if we see or imagine that certain decisions on their part are not the best, it is our duty nevertheless to give them all possible help and support, minimizing the consequences of those mistakes—if mistakes they be—and making up as far as we can, in our own respective ways, for their deficiencies.

Of course we must have put aside long ago all thought of our personal progress, even though this be subtly disguised sometimes as desire for enhanced usefulness. If our study of the Chains and Rounds and Races has taught us anything, it must have taught us to think in terms of long evolutionary stretches, not of years or even decades. Where we are in the scale of evolution in reality matters not all: to think it does is part of the great illusion. The only reality which there is to attain is that which we gain by delight in the continual pouring out of ourselves, just as the only knowledge which is worth possessing is the knowledge of the One Self, which is in the lowest as well as the highest. We must realize then that all that we need for our own happiness and unfoldment is eternally in ourselves; but we gain this happiness and unfoldment as we transcend ourselves and identify ourselves with others.

N. S. R.

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