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## MILTON'S CONCEPT OF MATTER

By ALBERTA JEAN ROWELL

*That which is the abyss of nothingness to the physicist, who knows only the world of visible causes and effects, is the boundless space of the Divine Plenum to the Occultist.*

—S. D. Vol. 1, p. 148

For a long time John Milton's *Paradise Lost* was considered merely an evangelical poem, shaped in the epic mould to suit the grandeur of the poet's religious intention which was to "justify the ways of God to man." As the literary vehicle of an orthodox theology its fame probably surpassed that of the *Divine Comedy*. Also, more than any other factor, it has been deemed responsible for a literal interpretation of the myths of Genesis as well as for the purely arbitrary assumption that the forbidden fruit was an apple.<sup>1</sup>

How ironical does all this appear in the light of subsequent research. Now all students of Milton share with Shelley the conviction that the keen poet in *Paradise Lost* was in reality indicting Christian dogma and glorifying matter, the special bane of the Puritan. Not till the publication in 1825 of his theological treatise *De Doctrina* was the extent of his heresies revealed. In it he defends the anti-scholastic theory that the first matter proceeded incor-

ruptible from God and was a substantial something, not the nothingness claimed by the Augustan tradition.

Thus Milton re-affirmed the fundamental Platonic idea that *nihil ex nihilo fecit*. That he had assimilated Platonism as well as Stoicism<sup>2</sup> which had had a popular revival in his day, is implied in the logic of his arguments. Dexterously he had interwoven these philosophies into the pattern of his Christian beliefs. Moreover, by asserting the basic goodness of matter he separated himself from the Puritan attitude which charged human nature with utter worthlessness and poured contempt on all the body's pride.

Milton's *De Doctrina* furnished a magic key for the understanding of his major opus. As a poetic rendering of his eclectic idealism, of which the chief Christian ingredient is an extreme passion for individual liberty, *Paradise Lost* ranks among the great metaphysical poems of the world. But the thought gems culled from many an ancient tome which sparkle with the light of Truth, old but ever new, in the unadorned prose of *De Doctrina* shine with a lesser light in the jeweled style of the long philosophical poem. With the instinct of a true Platonist Milton had skilfully

wrapped his ideas round in the fictional habiliments of myth and metaphor.

Influenced by Renaissance Platonism Milton early recognized the artistic convention which disguised esoteric truth in the beautiful symbology of figurative language. For instance, in the second *Prologion* he explains that when Pythagoras, "the god of the philosophers", referred to the music of the spheres, he wished merely to convey the idea of the harmonious relationship of the orbs to one another as they obeyed the eternal laws of necessity. And in his Latin poem *De Idea Platonica* he describes the Greek master as "the greatest of myth makers".

In fact, Renaissance Platonism, which had proved such a powerful literary stimulus to Spenser and others, was deeply interfused throughout the mental and spiritual climate of the times. For the seventeenth century scholar what an alluring medley of ingenious reasonings, allegorizings and occult significances mingled and fused in that rich and variegated stream of thought wherein the myths of Plato were but the cloak of hidden mysteries, and the elements of Christian doctrine and the Kabbala curiously but wonderfully conjoined.

But not all seventeenth century scholars focussed their attention after the manner of the mediævalist on the obscure and mysterious or indulged to satiety their penchant for abstract reasoning. The moving panorama of the material world, subject to the reign of inexorable law, had captured the imaginations of many. Naturally the cleavage between rationalism and mediævalism resulted in a divided world-view. Some, like the Cambridge Platonists, managed to salvage their religious dogmas by insisting that they were couched in the language of accommodation. Others, like Sir Thomas Browne, achieved the miracle of dwelling simultaneously, with equal ease, in opposite worlds. Quite in conformity with this

double-mindedness was the Puritan's sharp contrast between the flesh and the spirit.

Now John Milton, Puritan so-called by those who ignore his rejection of an anthropomorphic God, his indifference to the doctrine of vicarious atonement, his radical opinions on divorce and his concept of the Nazarene in *Paradise Regained* as a man who by reason of merit participated in the expansive consciousness of Deity, did not believe that the flesh and spirit were ultimately opposed. On the ethical plane he therefore created for himself a sane and unified outlook. It was his postulate concerning the purity of the first matter, however, that warranted him in assuming the intrinsic goodness of desires when governed by reason.<sup>3</sup>

Milton further defines pristine matter, in the *De Doctrina*, as "the productive stock of every subsequent good" and the container in potential form of all spiritual as well as corporal reality. The same idea receives poetic treatment in *Paradise Lost*. Thus Gabriel expounds upon the relationship between Matter and spirit (P.L.V. 1.469-74)—

O Adam, one Almighty is from whom  
All things proceed, and up to him  
return,

If not depraved from good, created all  
Such to perfection, one first matter all,  
Indu'd with various forms, various  
degrees

Of substance . . . . .

Moreover, in *Paradise Lost* the Deity identifies Himself as space which seems to correspond to the seminal reason of the Stoic view. Now in the role of a theologian God repeats statements made by Milton in the *De Doctrina* when He describes His attributes of omnipresence, infinitude and omnipotence. He says (P. L. V. 1, 167-9)—

Boundless the deep, because I am who  
fill  
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.

The "great Mother", says Milton elsewhere, was forced to conceive because of the "warm prolific humours" that filled her.

Nor was matter mechanical or unintelligent in its progressive manifestation of innumerable forms. Milton presents us with a concrete picture of that Darkness fecundated by "vital virtue" and "vital breath". Even his Satan recognizes the inherent dynamism and purposiveness of all-pervading life. The wily angel rejects the necessity of an anthropomorphic creator when he points out to Eve that the earth is self-productive, pregnant with life which the sun beguiles into visible activity. This same Lucifer asserts, wise with the wisdom of the ages, that he himself, had been produced from his "own quickening power".

But how does Milton account for the evil in the world, if primordial matter was without taint of imperfection? In other words, how could matter emerge from the Divine nature in a state of disorder? He plainly sets forth in the prose exposition of his theories that the original matter was not bad for it "merely received embellishment from the accession of forms, which are themselves material". Nor is its essence degraded even now in spite of the introduction of the principle of irrationality or the Fall. From the Miltonic standpoint, the latter was the subordination of reason to desire or animal impulse.

Finally, no contradiction was therefore involved for Milton in the doctrine that the material emanates from the spiritual. He explains in the *De Doctrina* that since Spirit was the most "excellent substance" it naturally would contain within itself the more inferior one. In *Paradise Lost* he further elaborates on the idea of this unity of the life-essence which manifests in a hierarchical order of graduated spirituality. He presents us with the analogy of the flower. Its roots are fixed in earth.

But its green stem is "more ærie" and is crowned with flower that emits a perfumed breath. Even the flower's fruits, man's nourishment, asserts Milton, is transmuted into sense, reason, fancy and understanding. Thus matter completes its destined cycle which is ascent to spirit.

Primal matter insubordinate to the controlling agency of Reason (what the Stoics would call the absence of Light) is poetized as the "hoarie deep", ruled by Chaos and Night. The darkness is without bound for in it time and space, and breadth and depth slumber still. Atoms madly whirl lashed by contrary innumerable winds. Likewise Plato in the *Timæus* gives us a similar account of the turmoil and confusion that characterized the foster-mother space, or first matter, before the interference of the creator. But "the confused and formless", says Milton in *De Doctrina*, was later "adorned and digested into order by the hand of God".

In conclusion, Milton's view of matter coincided with that of the Stoics. Like them, he regarded matter as the infinite and prolific womb of all life, sentient and divine; as identical with spirit; and as eternal as God. Whether he derived his philosophy from the Stoics, Plato or the Kabbala is still a matter of controversy. At any rate his respect for the *visible* garments of Deity place him beyond the pale of Puritanism. But he had no spiritual affinity with the gay and debonair Cavaliers, the seventeenth century equivalents of our modern self-expressionists. For him there was only the *via media* between liberty gone rampant and asceticism. For him the inner state of the man, whose emotions were unrationalized, was comparable to Chaos who ruled the "hoarie deep" before the advent of divine order.

#### Notes:

- 1 See J. E. C. Weldon in *Milton's Theology*, Nineteenth Century, 1912.

- <sup>2</sup> In the opinion of Mr. Saurat, author of the interesting book, *Milton, Man and Thinker*, Milton derives most of his philosophy from the *Zohar*. He ignores other possible and important sources.
- <sup>3</sup> It was the Stoicism of the Roman period which upheld the legitimacy of desire dominated by reason.

## THE LEGEND OF THE GRAIL

BY R. MACHELL.

(Concluded From Page 8)

Just so from the remains of the old occult ceremonies and initiations sprang all the many religions of the earth; indeed, I have read that all religions take their rise from the divulgence of some part of the great Esoteric Wisdom Religion. Now, if the disciples of this school give out their knowledge to unfit persons the same thing happens; it is turned into a religious system, which is the most powerful instrument in the hands of the ambitious, and the priest-hoods spring up and thrive and the land perishes, spiritually, and the springs of knowledge no longer flow and the spirits of the earth are no longer serviceable to the wanderer in search of truth. So the Knights of the Round Table, the brothers of humanity, go out and destroy these systems and seek again the Graal, the vessel that contains the truth, the ark, and the spear of power, the two symbols of the Bacchus, the gold cup and the rod with cone at the top, the magnetic fir cone; for wine is the symbol of spirit, and the Bacchus was a pure spiritual principle before it was degraded by the popular fancy to the rank of genius of debauchery. So you will see the winged eagle-headed figures in Assyrian sculptures bearing the vessel and the cone.

Then comes the history of the knight who is to be the Grail finder. This history seems to be based on a regular formula, for though it varies widely,

the variations are due principally to the omission or addition of incidents. When collated and examined an interesting formula is discovered, which Nutt calls the Aryan expulsion and return formula. Thus:—

- I. Hero is born: (a) out of wedlock, (b) posthumously, (c) supernaturally, (d) one of twins.
- II. Mother, princess residing in her own country.
- III. Father: (a) God, (b) Hero,—from afar.
- IV. Tokens and warnings of hero's future greatness.
- V. He is in consequence driven forth from home.
- VI. Is suckled by wild beast.
- VII. Is brought up by a childless couple, or shepherd, or widow.
- VIII. Is of passionate and violent disposition.
- IX. Seeks service in foreign lands.
- IX. (a) Attacks and slays monsters.  
" (b) Acquires magical knowledge through eating a fish or other magic animal.
- X. Returns to his own native country, retreats, and again returns.
- XI. Overcomes his enemies, frees his mother, seats himself on the throne.

Aryan expulsion and return formula (*Folklore Record*, Vol. IV.), Alfred Nutt.

Almost all the heroes of antiquity have histories corresponding in many respects to this formula. And for this there are good reasons. The true hero is the Higher Ego, which is the God in man, born of the Immortal Spiritual Soul in conjunction with the Universal Principle. This I take to be the allegory of the twins. Thus Manas the Mind Principle is said to be dual, the one aspect living by day, the other by night, the day and night being symbols of life incarnate and discarnate. This is the allegory of Castor and Pollux, one said

to be of divine origin, the other of human, but of the same mother. I believe the myth of the birth of the Hero or Saviour from an immaculate virgin is common not only to Roman and Greek, Egyptian and Hindoo mythology, but also to the mythology of the Red Indian and Central American Indians. In fact the Heroes and Saviours and Avatars seem to be variations on the same theme, which has now been again given out, but this time more plainly to the world by the Adepts who have caused the Theosophical Society to spring into existence. This is the teaching of the dual Manas, the higher and lower aspects of the Ego, sprung from Atma, Buddhi. And here I must point out that we must distinguish between the application of the myth to the outer history of the life and deeds of the incarnate Hero, and the internal application to the real Ego; and this is to each of us of real interest, for it represents the history of our own internal development, the Hero and his enemies being the spirit and the passions of each one of us. The country in which these events occur is the body; the cities, fortresses, deserts, etc., are all magnetic and vital centres in the body, seats of the various emotions, sensations and passions; the mystic castles, cities, and lands, with their inhabitants, are the astral body; and the Grail Castle I take to be the highest of these bodies, which forms the link between physical, astral, and spiritual astral, in which alone is to be found the real enlightenment, and which is so hard to find, and to hold in sight when found. The difficulty of following out the allegory in detail is largely due to the difficulty of realizing that, while in an allegorical representation the different phases and aspects of the one consciousness are symbolized as different personages, and classified in philosophical analysis under different heads, they are all in reality the same individual consciousness under different

conditions. So different stages of this internal progress are told as different legends, afterwards, perhaps, woven into a whole and made to fit in with the history of the external life of some hero. And though the external events will have a correspondence with the internal, still they belong to another category, and must be kept on their own line if we would avoid confusion.

Mother, princess residing in her own country. This would be equivalent to Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul, which is inseparable from Atma, the latter being the Universal principle always in every hierarchy, the Eternal Father immutable and unchangeable in regard to all else below it, and corresponding to the divine Father, which is symbolized as a God or as a Hero from afar.

In Manas is said to reside the individualizing tendency, which produces separation from the divine Parents, or rather the illusion of separateness, which causes the lower aspect of Manas to appear as cast out from its paradise and is symbolized in the allegory of the fallen angels, of the exiled son, of the flight into other lands and so on. In some cases the child is suckled by wild beasts, which I suppose would correspond to the lower ego being housed in the body and fed by the lower nature, which is said to be fourfold, and is symbolized by the four sacred animals, which correspond to the four Mahara-jahs and the four evangelists.

Then this lower Manas becomes for a time almost wholly influenced and controlled by Kama, the principle of desire in the widest sense, which appears allegorically as the foster mother, and in this condition is said to be of passionate and violent disposition. The mind then seeking knowledge wanders in the region of the material planes, and is so said to seek service in foreign lands. And then come all the various exploits, the slaying of monsters, as the mind frees itself and attacks false ideals, false

principles, ignorance and superstition, and thereby begins to acquire truer knowledge of the powers and forces of nature. Finally overcoming all the passions, which have now become his enemies, he reasserts his divine nature, and seats himself on the throne as lord of the mind and body, the crowned King, the Initiate, the anointed Saviour, the Divine Hero once more.

This is of course a mere suggestion of a possible reading of the foundation of these allegories. Particular legends may have a special relation to some one phase of the development, and then all the characters will find their correspondence in some sub-divisions perhaps of what might in another case be viewed as one principle. In the Quest of the Grail I think that the knight must be looked upon as the lower ego in search of the Truth, the Elixir of Life which gives immortality. And this is no hallucination of fanatics, but an allegorical expression of fact. Man becomes immortal when he has acquired the knowledge during life of the states of death and after, and the mastery over the lower nature which makes him able at will to learn and return to the conditions of material life and so to pass consciously over the Bridge Perillous; thus passing with full consciousness from life in one physical body to life in another without break in the chain of conscious existence; so attaining immortality, not by perpetuating a physical body necessarily, but by so uniting the lower with the higher mind as to be independent of and master of the lower material planes of nature.

In the *Mabinogi of Peredur*, which appears to be the Welsh equivalent of the French *Percevauld le Galois*, the mother gives him some strange instructions. If he requires food and none will give it him he must take it by force. Now if the knight is the Ego, the food must be knowledge or experience, and we are reminded of the saying that the

Kingdom of Heaven must be taken by violence, and so the thinker who is unable to get answers to his questions as to the how and the why of life, must go out and seek for himself. Then again, she tells her son that if he see a fair jewel he must possess himself of it and give it to another. The jewel is to be regarded as a jewel of wisdom, seeing that the seeker is the mind; and here is the Theosophic teaching that knowledge is not to be hoarded up but given out to others, and this in no way clashes with the teaching, "Cast not your pearls before swine," if we read it with a view to its possible meaning, for, intellectually, pearls are esoteric truths and swine are exoteric ritualists of dead letter worship.

When the knight has found the Grail Castle, the court of the Rich Fisher, he sees the procession of mystic symbols, and if he fails to ask concerning these mysteries he has failed in the final trial and passes out into a desert, land and court and castle are invisible to him once more and the land remains in its barren condition; but if he ask the questions he is at once enlightened and all is well, the land becomes fertile, the wounded king is healed, and he is crowned king, the late guardian of the Grail speaks the secret words to his successor and he becomes the guardian of the spiritual wisdom from which light flows to all parts of the land. Again, when Galahad takes his seat in the Seige Perillous and receives no harm, at once all those knights who had dared to try the chair and had been swallowed by the earth, come to life again. What can this mean? Are these knights former incarnations in which the trial had been essayed? And is it another way of saying that at a certain stage of progress and initiation the past lives become known to the candidate? Perhaps it may be so. And the same story is told in the legend of the Sleeping Beauty and in the description of how the locusts

cross the stream in Olive Schreiner's *Three Dreams in a Desert*, when she asks, "And what of those who are swept away by the stream and whose bodies do not even serve to make a bridge for the others to pass over?" and the guide, the old man, says, "They serve to make a path to the river." So perhaps those bold pioneers who have tried the path of Occultism and perhaps failed to reach the goal, and whose ruined lives are swept away on the stream of vice or of madness, should be very lovingly thought of, and if possible protected, by those who follow on the track and profit by the work they have done before they fell, and by the example of the danger of that particular fault which caused that failure, remembering that when the light is reached the greatest failure may appear as one step secured on the upward path.

### MEMORY

The deep unfathomed caves of the human mind contain many unsolved mysteries for the psychologist, and the psychotherapist. Regarding these mysteries, they disagree upon many principles, but most of them have come to the conclusion that, the conscious reasoning mind or that portion of the mind that can be explored at will is by far the smallest part of the human individuality. The conscious mind includes only those powers, processes, and activities of thought, memory and imagination of which we are aware, but beyond this restricted area is a much wider, and extensive field, a part of which under unusual circumstances it may be possible for the human being to become conscious. These unusual circumstances in the language of the psychologist are: sleep and delirium, trance and hallucination, hysteria and intoxication.

Stanley Hall uses the iceberg to illustrate the relationship of the conscious to the subconscious, or unconscious mind. Only one tenth part of the

iceberg is visible. and to the casual observer that part of it might appear to be travelling with the wind, but closer inspection would indicate that the prevailing wind is having very little effect upon the direction in which it travels because the greater portion of it, *i.e.*, the submerged nine-tenths is being acted upon by invisible forces beneath the surface of the water.

One of the greatest of all the mysteries of the human mind is that of memory and science is amazed and bewildered at the immense scope, yet at the same time the minuteness of the memory of a human individual. Because during a lifetime most of us forget in detail at least a hundred times as much as we remember, we may entertain the delusion that the records written upon the tablets of our memories have been completely obliterated, but those scientists who have given this subject years of careful research and investigation have gathered a mass of evidence to show that the most trivial of our past experiences are always stored away somewhere in our mental treasure house. In this respect the great French philosopher Bergson says: "The Unconscious is our historical past. In reality the past is preserved automatically. In its entirety probably it follows us at every instant; all that we have felt, thought and willed from our earliest infancy is there, leaning over the present which is about to join it, pressing against the portals of consciousness that would fain leave it outside."

Dr. Hudson in his *Law of Psychic Phenomena*, and the Poet Coleridge in the *Biographia Literaria* give many instances of people who in a trance condition, or in a state of delirium performed prodigious feats of memory that they could not possibly do under ordinary circumstances.

Dr. Josephine A. Jackson cites the following case of a patient of hers; A

young girl lapsed for several weeks into a state of mind in which she forgot all memories and ideas of her adult life, and during that time her memories were all relative to her early childhood, and she described events that occurred when she was less than two years old. This girl's mother verified what the daughter had related to Dr. Jackson, and recalled that these incidents had occurred on her wedding anniversary when her daughter was not quite twenty-three months old.

If there is no such thing as total oblivion, and memory is manifestly undying then where is it registered? Has materialistic science any adequate answer to the question? In spite of the materialistic psychologists learned disquisitions about neurographs if by that they mean that these neurographs are permanently registered somewhere in our bodies particularly in the cells of the brain, then the theosophical student with all due respect to what the psychoanalyst has done for humanity can readily see that the materialist is dealing with something that is beyond his mental horizon, and to be honest with himself must either confess abysmal ignorance upon this particular phase of the subject, or walk still farther down the valley of humiliation, and recognize what the Archaic Philosophy has taught since time immemorial.

It is obvious to any thoughtful person that memory must be registered in some medium more tenuous than the vesicles of the brain, which was Herbert Spencer's way of explaining this phenomenon in his *Principles of Psychology* because our bodies are continually in a state of flux. Cytologists tell us that the cells of the whole human body including the brain are being continually reproduced, much in the same way that the continued life of society is maintained by the birth of its individual members. The continued life of the human body is brought about by the

multiplication of its cells through division.

The world is full of ignorance, but it is beyond my comprehension why our materialistic scientists persistently ignore one of the fundamental tenets of the Ancient Wisdom; that there is a great Universal Mind or Oversoul, which has been given a variety of names by the wise men of different parts of the world at different times. According to the Archaic Philosophy this Universal mind is omniscient, and must therefore have an infallible memory. Our physicists tell us of different aspects of the ether of space by means of which light, sound, electricity, etc., travel, and perhaps they will some day tell us of a memory ether.

Flammarion the great French astronomer speaking of the astral light in *Uranie* says, "The light emanating from all these suns that people immensity, the light reflected through space by all these worlds lighted by these suns, photographs throughout the boundless heaven the centuries, the days, the moments as they pass . . . . From this it results that the histories of all the worlds are travelling through space without dispersing altogether, and that all the events of the past are present and live evermore in the bosom of the infinite."

The astral light is the great register of all our thoughts and deeds, and might be compared to a photographic plate, but a thousand times more sensitive, is like an immense picture gallery of the universe, and in it the seer can see any event that has ever happened. The Egyptians spoke of it as the Recorder, and it is the Recording Angel of the Christians.

If in accordance with the Esoteric Doctrine that aspect of the Absolute, Universal Mind is all-wise and has a perfect memory it would appear that although the individual soul or ego will not partake of that omniscience until it



becomes completely at one with the All-in-All, yet compared to the memory of the lower personality it is so vastly superior to it that it might be said to be relatively infallible. It would appear to me then, logically deducible from the preceding premises, that every event that occurs within the consciousness of the ego is stored up within it, and the amount of wisdom that it can impress upon the physical brain of the lower personality determines the extent of the memory of that particular person. The threshold of consciousness is continually shifting, and this shifting is what divides what is remembered from that which is forgotten and varies with the material conditions of the moment.

The age and physical well-being of any person concerned has obviously much to do with his or her ability to retain, recall, and recognize mental contents. The sensitive brain of a genius would be much more responsive than the dull brain of a moron, but on the other hand the dull brain would be less likely to become the hyper-sensitive brain of a madman. A great deal more could be said about the different methods advocated by experts in regard to memory training but the object of this discourse is to elucidate if possible some of the metaphysical aspects of the problem, because much more literature has been written upon the subject of mnemonics.

The foregoing all has a definite bearing upon the question that is so frequently asked theosophical students by those who hear about the doctrine of re-incarnation for the first time—If it is true that we have actually lived on earth before, then why do we not remember something about it? When we consider the fact that the lower personality remembers such an infinitesimal part of what has actually happened within the purview of the individual consciousness then this question is not so cogent as it would at first appear,

and my answer would be that when we have acquired the ability to remember everything at will, that has occurred during this incarnation then we shall have risen to the stature of adeptship, and when we have accomplished that Herculean task it will be possible for us to remember everything that has occurred during the great cycle of time that is spoken of in eastern metaphysics as a manvantara. To the greatest of seers the past, present and future are one, and they do not speculate as to the validity of this doctrine, they know it to be a fact in nature.

E. J. Norman.

### WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Mr. Joseph Hone has written a biography of the late Irish poet, dramatist and essayist which, to judge by his acknowledgments in a Prefatory Note, might be regarded as a composite work, but he anneals his material and vitalizes it with excellent results and while it may not be the last word on Yeats it will be an indispensable record for those who wish to arrive at a basic understanding of the man. Undoubtedly Mr. Hone has been discreet in his reticences but he has supplied enough to satisfy the ordinary reader, and indicated between the lines sufficient for the more perspicacious to come to their own conclusions. A portrait of Yeats as a frontispiece to the volume will remind Canadian readers of his cousin, Norah Holland, who is not mentioned in the book, but who shared some of the family gifts in verse.

I am afraid that it is not possible for me to rise to the appreciation of Yeats as a poet that the critics or Mr. Hone expect from one. When in Ireland in 1897-8 I was several times in Dublin and met Mr. Yeats at that time at the Theosophical headquarters in Eustace Street, where they had recently moved from Ely Place. He was certainly aloof, if not repellent, to use Mr. Hone's word,

and as he was not communicative I did not attempt any intimacy with him, having also at that time regarded, as I still do, George Russell as a bigger and better man. I was much taken with the song "Down by the Salley Gardens" and frequently whistled the air. When in Donegal in 1898 visiting relatives of my Mother, they asked me where I had learned it. I referred them to the little Irish song and tune book where it was attributed to Yeats. Mrs. Arthur Cary said she had known it from her childhood, sung to her by her nurse, and we traced it back to 1850 at least, both song and words though Yeats had made slight changes in the words. Quiller Couch gives it in his *Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*, along with eight other selections including "Innisfree" and "The Fiddler of Dooney", but he omits "The Indian Upon God" and another little three-stanza gem which the anthologists overlook. If Yeats lives by his poetry it will be by such selections. If he were the author of "The Salley Gardens" it must have been in a previous incarnation.

Yeats had met Charles Johnston, and George Russell of the Dublin Theosophists during Madame Blavatsky's lifetime. He must have met Claude Falls Wright also but Mr. Hone does not mention him nor Fred Dick nor D. N. Dunlop nor others influential in the group. It is stated that Johnston went to see Madame Blavatsky in London and that she told him to go back to Dublin and start a Theosophical Lodge. The record was that Wright went to London, got similar instructions and followed them. But Yeats never joined the Society. He became entangled with the G. D. and with a native interest in phenomena was lost for ever to the spiritual ideals of Theosophy. Mr. Hone's book fully confirms this explanation of his character, his failure to co-operate with Johnston and Russell, and his gradual descent towards psychic and kamic

levels. He actually submitted to the Steinach operation in 1934 (p. 468).

The great romance of his life was his devotion to Maud Gonne, the daughter of an English Colonel, who had espoused the cause of distressful Ireland like an incarnation of Wolfe Tone or Grattan himself. But Maud never looked kindly on Willie, and though her marriage to Major MacBride nearly brought Yeats to tragedy, he got over it and married his secretary, who proved to be a medium. Russell and I had a theory that if all the Irish would settle their differences and use their common sense they could run the British Empire, which would be a more worthy aim and better for the world than merely making Ireland independent. He had arranged with Maude Gonne one evening to come down to Eustace Street and discuss the matter, but after waiting for her appearance, she sent a lady of title to excuse her and explain why she was unable to come. So a great chance was missed by somebody. The picture of Maud Gonne in this volume is too much the "bold-faced huzzy", for her beauty was rare and enchanting.

No one interested in the Irish literary revival can afford to miss Mr. Hone's picture of the Dublin group of writers. There is little of Standish O'Grady, who after Curry was the father of the movement, but Hyde, George Moore, Lady Gregory, Synge, Lennox Robinson, the Abbey Theatre, Joyce, McKenna, and most of the Renaissance group appear in these pages.

It will astonish none who knew the family to find that Yeats' father, J. B. Yeats, becomes an important figure in the story. He was a great artist, and though a Bohemian, living in New York the latter part of his life, and rivalling Wilkins Micawber in its earlier stages, he was a notable figure, and a lovable one.

Why did Yeats ignore *The Secret Doctrine*? Well, it was not published

till 1888, and by that time he was wholly committed to MacGregor Mathers, The Golden Dawn and the tawdry phenomenologists who constituted this substitute for metaphysical truth. Yeats was eager to operate enchantments, work charms and cast spells. It is related how he pronounced some conjuration and had a vision of "a marvellous naked woman shooting an arrow at a star". He was always steeped in sex, and his father wrote to him: "Your interest is in *mundane* things, whether beyond the stars or not." He had not the necessary concentration to study the synthetic philosophy of *The Secret Doctrine* or *The Mahatma Letters*, and mathematics was a closed book to him. Mr. Hone also records: "He had no ear for music as it is understood in Western Europe. He could not hum a tune and his notion of pitch was wildly inaccurate."

As to his later reading Mr. Hone mentions his advice—"Read Whitehead and from that go to Stephen MacKenna's Plotinus and to the *Timaeus*." Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* he particularly noted. He gave much attention to Berkeley and at pp. 393-4 there is a summary of his reading in 1924, beginning with Croce's *Philosophy of Vico*. "As he could not read Italian, his wife made summaries for him of this and other Facist literature for his easy reference. A little later, through Wildon Carr's translation, he acquainted himself with, and admired for its concentrated logic (its 'intensity of thought which is beauty') Gentile's *Teoria generale dello Spirito come Atto puro*. Thus, his philosophic as opposed to his occult background was formed by the modern Italians, with a foundation of Plato and Plotinus, Boehme and Swedenborg. He read Croce's *Philosophy of the Practical* (annotated) in 1896, and in the same year his *Hegel*, Bergson's *Matter and Memory* and *Creative Evolution* in 1927; McTaggart's *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology* in 1928;

Kant's *Prolegomena* in 1929; and, much later, Husserl's *Ideas*."

Yeats lived restlessly, so that there is little of the intimate life of an Irish home in this book. But there are glimpses of Coole, and his devotion to Ballylee led him to try to establish a home there in the old tower which he refurbished to some extent though he could not put upon it a roof of the expensive slates he bought for the purpose. It was too damp and stormy and he finally abandoned it. His uncle and grandfather are brought into the picture and the atmosphere of the rollicking life of that older generation is rendered conceivable, even to the cry of the banshee that warned of their departure. All the topsy-turvy politics of the last half-century is less difficult to understand while one reads of the antipathies, the prejudices, the hostilities, nearly all personal and based on traditions of one kind or another, historical, religious, social, tribal and generally very childish, so that Yeats was always indulging one enmity or another, with Moore, with Martyn, with Russell, with Ezra Pound, with any of his best friends. His small nose was too often in the air over insignificant trifles.

Yeats was awarded the Nobel prize and many critics are quoted to affirm that he was the greatest poet of his day. It is for posterity to determine. It might be that he may yet be considered a greater prose writer than he was a poet (*The Secret Rose, Ideas of Good and Evil, The Celtic Twilight*). But it must always be regretted that he fell a victim to the lures of ceremonial magic. —(*W. B. Yeats: 1865-1939. By Joseph Hone. \$7.50. The Macmillans of Canada*).  
A. E. S. S.

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## OCCULTISM AS IS

The prejudice of the modern against the teachings of the ancients is like the contempt of the boy for the ideas of his grandfather. The boy has been trained in the modern school, and can doubtless teach his grandfather many things, but he still has a very limited view. The old man may be wrong in many respects, but he really knows much more than the boy. We of today are so puffed up by the discoveries of science that we tend to look with contempt on our scientific grandfathers, the ancients. Modern civilization tends to intense specializing. In place of the philosopher we have innumerable specialists working in little gardens and unable or unwilling to look over the fence to see what their neighbours are doing, and outside of their little patch their opinions have no more value than those of a hottentot. The old philosophers did not have the advantage of so many facts, and those they had they often patched together in strange ways. But they had much more time to think over what they did have. We have elsewhere pointed out how the modern world is reviving many of these old views. It is therefore right to treat the opinions of the ancients with some respect, for while they contain much of error they are also full of suggestion, and proceeded from minds quite as mature, and much less overloaded than our own. In the ancient wisdom is often to be found the key to modern problems. Facts in psychical research now well established find their explanation in these old ideas. Astrology has fallen into disrepute, but it is inconceivable that it could have been pursued for thousands of years had it been wholly false, and no one can study it earnestly without being convinced that its conclusions do not rest on coincidences merely.

One source of the prejudice against occultism is the undeniable fact that not a few who dabble in occult studies lose

their mental balance. It is also true that every now and then some one becomes insane on religion, yet no one blames religion for this; on the contrary, for one who has gone mad on it, thousands have been saved from ruin by its influence. Every field of investigation has its dangers which are well known and against which one must be prepared. It is nothing against the science of chemistry that some foolhardy novice poisons, suffocates or blows himself up, nor can it be made a reproach against medicine that a student practices on himself with drugs till he is ruined. He who is foolish enough to try to get an insight into the hidden regions of thought or nature by tampering with his delicately adjusted brain, whether by drugs, or by any of the methods recommended by spiritualists, hypnotists or those who seek knowledge by methods of respiration, has no one but himself to blame if he throws the mechanism out of gear. —By the late Dr. H. N. Stokes, from *The O. E. Critic*, June 19, 1912.

## ASTRAL BODIES RETURN

In Madame Blavatsky's Essay on "My Books" which is happily reprinted in the new edition of *Isis Unveiled* (Rider & Co.) along with her article on "Theories About Reincarnation," she calls attention to an unfortunate typographical error which has probably caused more discussion than any other sentence in the book. Authors are not responsible for printers' errors, but readers are bound to take note of the corrections, and in this case it is essential. The case or cases I have in mind are noted by many correspondents and others in recent months—the frequent death of comparatively young, able and often prominent men of from 35 to 45 years of age. Why is it?

An understanding of the laws and method of reincarnation may help to explain at least some of these premature

deaths. A man is born first in the astral world, or over-world, the *ouranos* of the Greek, translated heaven in the New Testament. This astral monad or body is sown, to use St. Paul's expression, in the physical body of the mother to be; sown in mortality, in corruption, in weakness, a psychic body, as he says, though theologians and others who should know better, continue to translate the word *psuche* as "natural" misleading the poor innocent Sunday School scholars and the pewholders to think that the body of flesh and blood has to be buried and resurrected, instead of the obvious teaching that the psychic or astral body buried in the flesh of the infant, must in the developing man be resurrected as a spiritual being, changed from the mortal, corruptible and weak psychic into an immortal, incorruptible and powerful spiritual body. As the Church never teaches people why they are born it is not remarkable that so few ever make the attempt to become spiritually immortal, following the teaching of Jesus to his disciples that they should be perfect.

It is obvious that when so few are aware of the goal very few will make any effort to reach it. Moreover, the chances and changes of this mortal life, while rigidly adapted to a right and fair adjustment to the merits and capacities of each, leaves the will of each perfectly free to take any course that may be chosen. This may lead to indiscretions and what are called "sins" by the theologians, *poneros*, wasteful and worthless acts, and *hamartias*, failure and "missing the mark," the result of ignorance, lack of experience, insufficient energy. When death occurs at an early age, prior to the 28th year it is said by some, then it happens in many cases that the ordinary routine of reincarnation is suspended, and instead of a prolonged interval in other conditions, the astral monad or psychic body, still charged with a large amount of the astral forces

with which it set out, is given an opportunity to use these unexpended energies in a new birth.

"Instead of running down to the end of its natural period of time in a body, [the astral monad] finds itself (a) violently thrown out of it whether by early death or accident, or (b) is compelled in consequence of its unfinished task to reappear, (*i.e.*, *the same astral body wedded to the same immortal monad*) on earth again, in order to complete the unfinished task. Thus it must try a second time to carry out the purpose of creative intelligence" or *law*.

That this is what occurs in the case of many young and able men who were killed in the last Great War seems to be a reasonable suggestion. A great many were killed who had not reached the age of 28 and the unexpended energies of their astral bodies, like that of an electric battery, would carry them to a suitable family, perhaps of their own relatives, to complete the natural term of their physical lives. In such cases, although their physical bodies were in good condition, the exhaustion of the forces of the astral body, which is the real co-ordinating agency, would cause the sudden and apparently premature death of the physical frame. The world must learn that men are not merely bodies, but centres of energy, and more or less intelligence and moral force, using physical bodies for the experience thus to be gained.

While thinking over these matters there came to me from the middle West a story which, if it can be corroborated, would be excellent as an illustration of the principles set forth. I have no reason to doubt the good faith of my informant, nor the correctness of the facts stated, but what would the average buffoon parson make of them if he had no better authority to abuse? The case in question is said to have happened at an airport during the first Transcontinental Air Race some years

ago.

It seems that a gentleman took his young son, a lad of about ten at the time, to see the air race. When the Army flyers came on the field and began to take off, the lad raced from the stands and was on the field before he could be stopped, demanding that he be given *his* plane. It caused quite a commotion and the army men in charge took opportunity to engage him in conversation and found to their amazement that he knew all parts of the various machines, their speed, ranges, endurance, etc. He even said he knew personally one of the fliers who was in the race. The airmen were rather puzzled, but they immediately requested permission to take him up in a dual control machine and were astonished to find that he handled it skilfully even to bringing in the ship to a three-point landing. He ended the performance by calling the one flier he asserted he knew, by name, and asked did he not remember a certain Buddy of his, whose name he mentioned, who was killed on a certain date during the Battle of the Marne. He was that man, he said, and as he had insisted on this since he was old enough to talk, they were all inclined to believe him. His father at any rate was convinced. This young man died quite suddenly at the age of 20. If anyone else will certify to the facts of this story it will be in the interests of science and truth.

## THE WAR

The significant thing about the War is the anxiety of the United Nations to be prepared for the Peace. Mr. Eden's visit to Washington and Ottawa added emphasis to the great speech which Mr. Churchill made in the House of Commons on his recovery from the attack of pneumonia which followed his mysterious appearances in the arena of conflict. Since then also have been divulged plans for an international

coinage, or at least some substitute for such a convenient medium, to be arranged by the bankers with the utilization of gold to take care of inequalities. In the meantime the actual fighting goes on with more and more definite results on land and still more desperate efforts on sea where the submarines threaten the Allies as never before. But the overwhelming destruction rained upon German-infested Europe by block-bombing may well be regarded as check-mate to the submarines. As we go to press the defeat of the Nazi forces in Tunis and their probable annihilation have been recognized by Berlin as inevitable. Humanity would dictate a surrender but the German mind is steeled to massacre.

In Russia the efforts of Germany to maintain a foothold for a well-poised summer campaign are not having the success that promises any encouragement. The Russian armies at the moment have the initiative all along the fighting line.

The Eastern battle fields are less satisfactory for the Allies. Burma is a hot spot where it has been all that the British troops could do to maintain a footing. The Japanese are making the most of the advantages they have gained, and are still labouring under the delusion that they can conquer the United States and the rest of the world. It may not be till Hitler and his legions are exorcized that Japan may be awakened from her dream of empire, but her fate is written in the book of Doom. China calls to her western brothers and that call for succour will not be left unheard.

Canada has made a great contribution to the general result. Mr. Eden terms it amazing. Those in Canada itself who are inclined to decry what has been done should provide themselves with the summaries provided by the Government of the actual achievement. On a per capita basis it is said to out-rival all other

countries. And well it may. For the world is now trying, and trying hard to forestall another great war for the next generation. And humanity can only reap what it sows. What it now sows in love and generosity it will reap in due time, and will return rejoicing bringing in its sheaves.

A. E. S. S.

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## OFFICE NOTES

A South American correspondent observes: "It seems that the 'Spirit of the Earth,' the God Ea, as it was called on the Babylonian tiles, is losing grip little by little, and that Prometheus is about to be unbound, but, nevertheless, Catholic Bishops here, although they now declare themselves anti-totalitarian, they say they are still anti-liberals, and they are certainly pro-German." The only answer to this mystery is in the S. D.

\* \* \*

Mr. J. T. S. Morris, Secretary-Treasurer of The Canadian Federation of T. S. Lodges, has taken up his duties with the R. C. E., and gives his change of address to 671 Richards Street, Vancouver, B.C., the Hermes Lodge Room. He hopes to be able to fulfil the remainder of his term of office, but should this

prove to be impossible Mrs. Marjory has agreed to act as Deputy Secretary-Treasurer.

\* \* \*

Our United States friends have been combing the second-hand booksellers for copies of *Through the Gates of Gold* by Mabel Collins, otherwise the Master Hilarion. We reprinted this book in our volume xvi which can be had bound in cloth for \$2. The unbound issues containing the book can be had for \$1. We have reprinted many valuable books not otherwise obtainable and subscribers to our magazine are aware of the advantages they possess in a complete file of *The Canadian Theosophist*.

\* \* \*

We are warned to beware when all men speak well of us. But all men do not, so we take leave to offer the opinion of a good authority to any of our readers who may be in doubt. *Buddhism in England* in its January-February issue, page 117, observes: "*The Canadian Theosophist* is one of the most virile Theosophical journals in existence. It admits no woolliness of thought or 'padding'; its articles are well-informed; its correspondence pungent. We do not always agree with its attitude or its controversies, but always salute its vigour. We have been glad to notice regular extracts from the pen of one who passed from us many years ago, and wrote under the name of *The Dreamer*, for his teaching meets the basic needs of the seeker as fully now as when they were first given." Is our contemporary right about *The Dreamer*? We understood this to be the pen name of Upendranath Basu, and his address is given in *The Theosophical Year Book* as Chaukhamba, Benares. He was born in 1862.

\* \* \*

The Aryan Path (Bombay) has an article on "Eire in War Time" by R. M. Fox of Dublin. Those who do not understand the Irish situation, its neu-



trality, its government, its protests against United States troops landing in Ulster, its rebel army, its change from a cattle-raising country to a tillage country, its decision to make peat a national fuel instead of coal, and its development of wheat growing from 21,000 acres to 650,000 acres last year to make Eire quite independent of imported grain, will find this an illuminating discourse.

✧ ✧ ✧

Mr. Herbert Tweedie of the Toronto Lodge died on Saturday, March 27, at the advanced age of 86. He belonged to the early years of the Movement in Toronto, having joined, I believe, about 1894 when the Lodge met at 365 Spadina Avenue after the campaign led by Claude Falls Wright. He was one of the tall large men with Samuel L. Beckett, John Randall, Arthur Taylor, F. E. Titus, R. E. Port, when even that present great Evangelist, Rev. Philpott attended the meetings and stuck at the doctrine of Karma which nullified his appreciation of Brotherhood. Unlike Mr. Tweedie who had studied for the ministry, and John Randall, who was a typical Methodist exhorter in style and spirit, orthodoxy claimed him for its own. In 1918 when the Toronto Lodge decided to enter a larger field of activity and undertook the ownership of property, Mr. Tweedie, Mr. Alfred Cornwell and Mr. Joseph Stanford were appointed the first trustees. All these have now passed away and there are very few of Mr. Tweedie's contemporaries remaining and none of these were able to be present at the funeral which was held on Tuesday, March 30. Among the pall bearers, was Mr. Dudley W. Barr, and also in attendance were G. I. Kinman, Mrs. Arthur Cornwell, Edward W. Hermon, J. L. Purdy and N. W. J. Haydon. The Anglican Funeral service was arranged for by Mr. Tweedie's son and daughter.

✧ ✧ ✧

Here is part of a letter from a busy worker in the far West, with no near neighbours, who yet finds time "to share her dew-drop with a fellow-flower": You ask for suggestions concerning possible improvements of the magazine. All I can say is, that it is very helpful just as it is now. It is the "original literature of the Theosophical Movement" that I always look for most. The Atlanto-Aryan Teaching was very much appreciated although much of it was too hard for me to understand. "On the Threshold" is a real help. When I read the words: "Keep a watch over yourself during the waking hours . . . and before you go to sleep fix yourself intensely on the Supreme . . ." I went to work right away, but find it a most difficult task. I tried for four nights but being always very tired, did not get far before falling asleep. The fourth night a strange thing happened. I found myself gazing at a vision which is very hard to describe in words. I could call it "Unity in Diversity". I don't know how long it lasted, I lay awake after, wondering if it was I who had seen it. But there was the conviction that the Self is always there, guiding and helping with patience. I am in a very out-of-the-way place, with very few neighbours and far between. I seldom leave the farm because it is so far to walk to anyone. No one here is interested but I found there are ways and means to contact people who are. Occasionally I write a letter to our weekly farm paper, not about Theosophy, because if I would the Editor would not print it, but letters which bring me correspondence from people who are interested in Theosophy. I have a bunch of pamphlets, etc., which I can lend out. I packed up all the Canadian Theosophists with "On the Threshold" and sent them to a woman, who, I thought would value it as much as I did. But my greatest duty lies with my children. I may disagree with some Theosophists about

the way in which to teach children, but was happy to see your article in one issue, where you mention Dickens' prayer: "Keep my memory green". When I asked one former teacher of my children, with whom I correspond regularly, just what it was that attracted her to Theosophy, she said: It was your children. It is with real sorrow that I read of the death of Dr. Stokes. "The Canadian Theosophist" and the "O. E. Library Critic" are all I allow myself, but there will be no more Critic now. It is always with real gratitude that I turn the pages of your magazine and think of the great amount of work connected with it.

### THE THREE TRUTHS

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent forlack of speech.

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.—Idyll of the White Lotus.

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### THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE

A meeting of members of the General Executive was held on Sunday afternoon, the 4th inst., at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, only Dr. Wilks of Vancouver and Mr. Griffiths of Montreal, being absent. The Acting Treasurer submitted reports of the Funds and membership. By the latter it appeared that already with three months to go there were a few more paid up members than the total of last year. But 26 of these were new members, indicating that more than twenty were in danger of lapse for non-payment of dues. An effort to rectify this is incumbent on the Lodge officials. There were funds in sight to take care of the next two months. The General Secretary reported that the Election had been rendered unnecessary by the renomination by various Lodges of the present officials. Vancouver Lodge was first to voice the desire to omit any election proceedings during the war. Orpheus Lodge followed this up with a nomination of the General Secretary and Dr. Wilks. Then Toronto Lodge notified officially the nomination of the present General Secretary and the present Executive. Montreal followed in line, and Hamilton and Edmonton immediately after. Some discussion ensued as to the legality of a third term, and the General Secretary suggested that if any doubt remained, a ballot could be cast for the nominees. Mr. Kinman moved and Col. Thomson seconded a motion that the General Secretary cast a ballot for the nominations and this was carried unanimously. Mr. Kinman reported having seen Mr. Elmsley about the situation in London, and suggested that it be permitted to germinate in the meantime. This was agreed to. The death of Mr. Herbert Tweedle of the Toronto Lodge was reported, and the health of Mrs. Alfred Cornwell was said to be precarious. On motion the General Secretary was instructed to

convey the sympathies of the Executive to Mrs. Cornwell. Mr. Belcher called attention to the remarkably fine article by Mr. Barr on the front page of the Toronto Theosophical News, which he thought most excellently done. As the 4th of July is to be a national holiday it was decided to meet to receive the annual reports on July 11.

### AMONG THE LODGES

Mr. Cedric Weaver has sent me a copy of the Montreal Lodge Bulletin for March which is highly creditable to the Lodge, its members and the compiler. We regret that space does not permit the presentation of all its contents, for it is just the thing in any lodge that would awaken and sustain the interest of members and at the same time serve to hand to friendly enquirers about Theosophy and its activities. The report of the meetings of the recently established Discussion Class augurs well for its usefulness. It is intended to enlist the interest of prospective members. We quote one paragraph which concerns all our members everywhere:—"There are three questions which any member of the Theosophical Society can ask himself or herself: Why did I join? Is my membership worthwhile to myself? Has my membership any value for others? Most of us joined because we were interested. We saw in the 'objects' of the Society a promise that here we would find an answer to many questions that had puzzled us in our daily lives. We have found some sort of an answer to our questions. We know why we joined and most of us consider that we have received value for our money. But we should remember the parable of the talents—if we do not make use of what we have it shall be taken from us. Like an unused muscle, the knowledge we have gained will fade away if neglected. If we believe the Society to be of benefit to mankind it is up to us to implement

that belief; we ourselves must spread the knowledge gained or the Society will die. In our reaction to that fact lies the answer to our third question—and there are only two courses open to us: we can so act ourselves that people knowing us will take us as examples to be emulated, or we can attend, regularly, the meetings of our Lodge, designed as those meetings are to increase both our own understanding and that of other people. It is not the hidden light that lightens the pathway of the wanderer, but the light that is carried openly and held out with deliberate intent to help . . . Make use of your membership."

### THE MAGAZINES

The following magazines have been received: Toronto Theosophical News, March; National Money News, February; La Voz Interna, Mendoza, Argentina; The Maha-Bodhi Journal, Calcutta, Sept.-October; Ancient Wisdom, February; Lucifer, Boston, March; Theosophy, Los Angeles, March; Theosophy in New Zealand, Jan.-March; Evolucion, Buenos Aires, January; The American Theosophist, March; The Indian Theosophist, November; The Federation Quarterly, October; Boletin of the T. S. in Mexico, November-February; The Theosophical Worker, November; The Aryan Path, November.

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"THE THING THAT  
AGGRAVATES US"

Editor, *The Canadian Theosophist*.—We are very much interested in the informative article which appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist* of December 15th, 1942, by Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, "A Confutative Critique of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* by Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz. Under the headline of—"Act so as to Know Thyself by means of Symbols in Thine own Mind." It is a very arresting Injunction. And if we are introspective, it should free us from a personal attitude while reading and considering the reply of Dr. Evans-Wentz, to an article that appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist* August 15th, 1942—"The Threat of Psychism," by Basil Crump. In it Mr. Basil Crump criticized the different Schools or Systems of training and Philosophy of the East.

We did take notice of Basil Crump's criticism of the various systems of occultism that appeared—and after reading it, we noticed the date of the article—March 30th, 1928. It left us with a cold and crumpled feeling. Our first question was: "What is it doing here, after fifteen years since it was written? Then we thought the Editor had just used it to fill up the space, to complete the copy for the printers; but when the December number of *The Canadian Theosophist* came and after reading the headline—"Act so as to know Thyself by means of Symbols in Thine own Mind." And following Dr. W. Evans-Wentz, defence of his Guru, the late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup, we were moved to say, concerning our own remarks about the article by Basil Crump of August 30th, 1942—Yes, "God moves in a mysterious way." Because it was not accidental—its appearance in the magazine of August 15th, 1942, the reply has been a storehouse of knowledge imparted to us, which we would

not have had just in this way.

The reply that appeared in the January issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*, Mr. Smythe's, the editor and Mrs. Henderson of Victoria, are away entirely from the Symbology which Dr. Evans-Wentz dealt with. Nor do we believe that Kipling's words, which Mr. Smythe quotes that "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." Never is a long, long word and we feel that it is poor psychology and poor theosophy—The Ever Becoming is lost sight of—to inject Kipling's words into this discussion while the surge of political disputes are on between Britain and India.

But concerning the various Schools and Systems of Philosophy that Mr. Basil Crump has attacked, Dr. Evans-Wentz points out that they should not be viewed Theosophically, but in a sectarian way.

Paul Carus, in his book *The Gospel of Buddha* begins with "Buddhism, like Christianity, is split up into numerable sects, and these Sects not infrequently cling to their sectarian tenets as being the main and most indispensable features of their religion." Then he advises the reader that "the present book has none of the sectarian doctrines, but takes an ideal position upon which all true Buddhists may stand as upon common ground. Why cannot theosophists do that? Of course in the different Systems—different technique.

The Sex-Symbology is used signatory of Strength or Weakness, Masculine and Feminine, making the balance or Completion. The Kabala gives Masculine and Feminine influence to numbers and Alphabetical letters. The Signs of the Zodiac have Masculine and Feminine and so it runs through all pulsing activities.

It has taken many years for some of us to understand that, "An Adept—the highest and the lowest is one, only during the exercise of his occult powers.

When the inner man rests, the Adept becomes an ordinary man, limited to his physical senses and functions of his physical brain." But it would follow that they would be 'good men' by their training and unfoldment. The Watcher at the threshold, never sleeps.

Annie Besant was ahead of the modern psychologists and psychoanalysts. She wrote more than thirty years ago, "The thing that aggravates us in others, is the thing that we have not yet overcome within ourselves."

We are indebted to Dr. Evans-Wentz for his very interesting outline of Tibetan Buddhism and the interesting story of Dawa-Samdup and his renunciation of the world and dedicating his life to study and training. And intent upon following a religious career and had vowed to a life long chastity,—a wonderful experience—even if he did respond to his father's request and return to his ancestral home and marry and beget children. Buddha's experience was *vice-versa*—he walked out from happiness and love, leaving his beautiful wife and little son, taking only his bowl with him, and he pursued his chosen path to the end. But even Buddha was not outside of the Law of Karma or Dharma, both forces continue to weave their web. We set the pattern by our Thoughts and Actions and our temperament supplies the colours, "Till Life's last picture is Painted."

"Act so as to Know Thyself by Means of Symbols in Thine own Mind."—The Guru Tilopa.

Janet Inman.

Hamilton, Feb. 25, 1943.

#### ALLEGED POLITICAL ERROR

Editor, *The Canadian Theosophist*:—A few days after mailing you our thoughts on the discussion between Mr. Crump and Dr. Evans-Wentz. concerning the different Schools of occultism, etc., we recalled a serious error we have made in it. That is, by bringing in a

political comment on your criticism when you remarked: "East is East and West is West," etc. We see now, that if it were out of place to make this remark, that it was much worse for us to emphasize it, and to add a political reason for same, forgetting that the Canadian Theosophical Society, years ago, within the Toronto Lodge, had made a ruling, which has now become a 'tenet'. It was. "That the members are free to identify themselves with any political party they may choose, but that all politics must be kept out of all lodge work."

So I am herewith acknowledging the error and hope it shall meet the ethical and tenetical demands of the Editor of *The Canadian Theosophist*, the Canadian Theosophical Society, members and friends in the Theosophical Movement. Fraternally and humbly,

Janet Inman.

Hamilton, March 17, 1943.

#### VEGETARIAN DATA

Editor, *The Canadian Theosophist*:—In your issue 15 March, 1943, attention is drawn to the discovery in Siberia of frozen remains of horses, etc., in a log stable, as probably dating to the cataclysm of 12,000 years ago when as further stated the Rocky Mountains were thrown up, etc.

It is as well, when endeavouring to place events as taking place in terms of Time such as Geological Time, to be on the side of reason and near fact, therefore hundreds of thousands is more suitable for expressing glacial and past-glacial periods of world movements and millions applicable to Atlantean and Lemurian epochs.

The discovery in Siberia of mammoth remains ready for roasting for Non-Vegetarians was because this animal appeared to have tumbled head-over-heels over a cut-bank, got stuck in a slough below and just froze to death where he was and preserved for future

use. If you were a Non-Vegetarian you too, would get a tremendous kick out of the fact of eating meat kept for so long before being served up.

Therefore it is reasonable to surmise the first case cited of the horses saddled and ready, as overtaken by a snow-slide, completely engulfed and preserved, again for the time for those in 1943 who turn to horse flesh as a food.

We have started the Canadian Vegetarian Association here in Victoria.

Mrs. K. Anderson Bell is secretary. Personally I have been vegetarian for 30 years and was connected with the Tolstoy Movement of the early 1900s. Also a follower of the Thomas Lake Harris School of Occultism, for 30 years.

A. J. A. Bell.

Victoria, B.C.

### PERSONALITY WORSHIP

Dr. Arundale writes as follows in the December *Theosophist*:

"There are those today who, making an image in their own likeness of the world's great forerunner of Truth, H. P. Blavatsky, themselves bow down in idol-worship before it, and spurn all who refuse to be deceived into bowing down likewise. There are also those who reject H. P. Blavatsky's appointed successor, Annie Besant, because she extended the sovereignty of H. P. Blavatsky over kingdoms of life which H. P. B. had no time to reach, concerned as she was with primary essentials. All Annie Besant's marvellous work passes them by, as does the real greatness of the mighty individual they profess to worship.

"This weakens the power of The Society to come to the rescue of the world, and in particular of India, in the great emergencies to meet which it was partly fashioned."

Dr. Arundale in this once more makes the mistake which H. P. B. herself was constantly pointing out, which is em-

phasized by the Masters continually, and which has been the ruin of THE and all other Theosophical Societies whether they come under Dr. Arundale's purview or not. Personality, its inflation, and its worship will wreck any movement, and it is astonishing that the chief exponents of Theosophy as officially designated do not see this. In a century from now the personalities which are wrangled over will be as historically overlaid as any previous celebrities of earlier centuries. I was as friendly with Mrs. Besant from 1893 onwards as any similar worker in the T. S. and she went out of her way to indicate her friendly attitude towards me as Dr. Arundale is well aware. But Annie Besant was no greater celebrity than Cæsar who "turned to clay" like the rest. One prominent Theosophist who sought my suffrages was known as a Leader. I told him that had he come out as an ordinary worker he would have drawn the whole Theosophical world to his support. "I was told to call myself Leader," he informed me. "Whoever told you that did not know his business," I replied. And so it is with all the Societies. In any really democratic organization there is no room for personality worship or inflation of any kind. Russia has the idea. Blavatsky, Olcott, Judge, Besant, Tingley, Crosbie, Purucker, Arundale and lots of others who have their day and cease to be, for the most part have served to split up the Theosophical Movement into sections if not sects, with the result that the high principles of Theosophy are smothered in the laudations of persons who fail to represent the principles with sufficient clarity to "attract the best minds." All these Theosophical personalities have had their faults and their weaknesses as well as their strength and their measure of service. We have only attracted the scorn or the ridicule of the vast public by setting them up as idols, and if Dr.

Arundale condemns idolatry he should bethink himself of his attitude towards Mrs. Besant herself and others of whom he has approved. Let us love and cherish the enduring in all whom we esteem, but forget not that oblivion awaits their dust.

A. E. S. S.

## INTRODUCTION

### TO "SERAPHITA"

BY GEORGE FREDERIC PARSONS.

(Continued from Page 5.)

The function of the Specialist, following Balzac's theosophy, is to stimulate and develop the higher culture while working out his own enfranchisement. When the world has proceeded so far upon the path of purely material evolution as to threaten a fatally one-sided outcome, one of these advanced souls is incarnated and lifts the divine standard anew. The very fact of the close commixture between Spirit and Matter renders it impossible that the inclination and tendency toward the loftier mysteries of life should ever be wholly lost, and when the wave of materialism seems at its height the reaction is nearest and the spirit of the age is best prepared for fresh impregnation by the Logos. No more poetical or striking picture of one of these spiritual transmutations can be found than that which the late Matthew Arnold embodied in "Obermann once More." This was the world of "some two thousand years" since:

"Like ours it looked in outward air,  
Its head was clear and true,  
Sumptuous its clothing, rich its fare,  
No pause its actions knew;

"Stout was its arm, each thew and bone  
Seemed puissant and alive,  
But, ah! its heart, its heart was stone,  
And so it could not thrive!

"On that hard Pagan world disgust  
And secret loathing fell;  
Deep weariness and sated lust  
Made human life a hell.

"In his cool hall, with haggard eyes,  
The Roman noble lay;  
He drove abroad, in furious guise,  
Along the Appian way.

"He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,  
And crowned his hair with flowers;  
No easier nor no quicker passed  
The impracticable hours.

"The brooding East with awe beheld  
Her impious younger world;  
The Roman tempest swelled and  
swelled,  
And on her head was hurled.

"The East bowed low before the blast  
In patient, deep disdain;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
And plunged in thought again.

"So well she mused, a morning broke  
Across her spirit gray;  
A conquering, new-born joy awoke  
And filled her life with day.

"'Poor world,' she cried, 'so deep  
accurst,  
That runn'st from pole to pole  
To seek a draught to slake thy thirst,—  
Go, seek it in thy soul!'

"She heard it, the victorious West,  
In crown and sword arrayed,  
She felt the void which mined her  
breast,  
She shivered and obeyed.

"She veiled her eagles, snapped her  
sword,  
And laid her sceptre down;  
Her stately purple she abhorred,  
And her imperial crown.

. . . . .

"Lust of the eye and pride of life  
She left it all behind,  
And hurried, torn with inward strife,  
The wilderness to find.

"Tears washed the trouble from her  
face!  
She changed into a child!  
'Mid weeds and wrecks she stood,—a  
place  
Of ruin,—but she smiled!"

The poet intimates that the influences brought by Christianity are now exhausted, that they have ceased to operate because faith is dead. Yet he is not without hope for the future. Human expectation, raised in modern times to great heights by the promise of the French Revolution, has indeed been sadly disappointed. Nevertheless,

"The world's great order dawns in  
sheen  
After long darkness rude,  
Divinelier imaged, clearer seen,  
With happier zeal pursued."

Despite all premature confidence and too sanguine anticipation, there is warrant for the inspiration which leads men to labour for the attainment of  
"One common wave of thought and joy  
Lifting mankind again!"

When the Hour arrives the Man will appear. That is the teaching of history and that is the doctrine of the sages. The darkest moments are those which precede the dawn, and it is at what seems the very point of desperation that relief is given. There is indeed nothing occult in this view. It is founded upon observation and experience. The mystery lies in the causes of these opportune and portentous events; in the evolution of the Avatars who in turn appear to change a world's course and to rekindle the pure flame of Religion and Spirituality. Balzac, however, has not encumbered his subtle and profound study, as an inferior artist would have been apt to do, by showing the Specialist in the discharge of his function of Deliverer. His purpose was to exhibit and analyze, as far as possible, that rare and precious form of existence in which the

progress of the spirit toward the Divine has been carried so far as to render continued toleration of earthly life impossible. Seraphita is the Specialist upon whom no world-mission has been laid; a final efflorescence of long-cultivated spirituality; the last, most delicate and fragile link between Mortality and Immortality. In the androgynous symbolism under which Seraphita is presented, the author has embodied an archaic and profound doctrine. The male and female qualities and characteristics are so manifestly complementary that human thought at a comparatively early stage arrived at the idea of the original union of the sexes in one relatively perfect and self-sufficient being. In the Divine World, according to Swedenborg, such a union consummates the attachment of those souls which during their corporeal life have been in complete sympathy. The Angel of Love and the Angel of Wisdom combine to form a single being which possesses both their qualities.

To the theory of spiritual evolution taught by Swedenborg the doctrine of metempsychosis, or as it is more commonly termed at present, the doctrine of re-incarnation, is necessary. This doctrine may be traced to a remote antiquity, and while it is still comparatively unfamiliar to the Western world, it has for ages been at the very foundation of all Eastern religion and philosophy. The Rev. William A. Alger, in his "Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life," observes upon this subject: "No other doctrine has exerted so extensive, controlling, and permanent an influence upon mankind as that of the metempsychosis,—the notion that when the soul leaves the body it is born anew in another body, its rank, character, circumstances, and experience in each successive existence depending on its qualities, deeds, and attainments in its preceding lives. Such a theory, well matured, bore unresisted sway through



the great Eastern world long before Moses slept in his little ark of bulrushes on the shore of the Egyptian river; Alexander the Great gazed with amazement on the self-immolation by fire to which it inspired the Gymnosophists; Cæsar found its tenets propagated among the Gauls beyond the Rubicon; and at this hour it reigns despotic, as the learned and travelled Professor of Sanscrit at Oxford tells us, 'without any sign of decrepitude or decay, over the Burman, Chinese, Tartar, Tibetan, and Indian nations, including at least six hundred and fifty millions of mankind.' There is abundant evidence to prove that this scheme of thought prevailed at a very early period among the Egyptians, all classes and sects of the Hindus, the Persian disciples of the Magi, and the Druids, and, in a later age, among the Greeks and Romans as represented by Musæus, Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Macrobius, Ovid, and many others. It was generally adopted by the Jews from the time of the Babylonian captivity. Traces of it have been discovered among the ancient Scythians, the African tribes, some of the Pacific Islanders, and various aboriginal nations both of North and of South America."

In fact there is scarcely a division of the human family, advanced at all beyond the stage of savagery, in which either the germs of this theory or the fully developed belief may not be discovered. The form in which it has been held differs. Thus the Platonists and Pythagoreans supposed that human souls might inhabit the bodies of animals, birds, etc. The Manicheans went further, and taught that such spirits might be reborn in vegetable forms; and some have even imagined that sin and degradation could condemn human souls to imprisonment in rocks, stones, or the dust of the field. The Talmudists, the teachers of Oriental esotericism, and generally speaking the

older and more authoritative exponents of the wisdom-religion, maintained that human souls transmigrated through human bodies alone, rising, step by step, to higher planes. A very convenient collection of opinions upon re-incarnation has lately been published by Mr. E. D. Walker, and this work may be commended to those who desire to realize something of the extent to which the doctrine has been held both in the past and the present. By abundant quotations Mr. Walker shows, not only that it was a cardinal tenet of the so-called Pagan religions, but that many of the early Christians — notably Origen — maintained it; while the array of modern philosophers, poets, men of science, and theologians who have even in recent times received it is well calculated to give pause to reflective minds. Such names as Kant, Schelling, Leibnitz, Schopenhauer, Bruno, Herder, Lessing, Goethe, Boheme, Fichte, and others, are found in the list, and even the sceptical Hume, in his essay on the Immortality of the Soul, observes: "The metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can hearken to."

Schopenhauer declares that "the belief in metempsychosis presents itself as the natural conviction of man, whenever he reflects at all in an unprejudiced manner. It would really be that which Kant falsely asserts of his three pretended Ideas of the reason, a philosopheme natural to human reason, which proceeds from its forms; and when it is not found it must have been displaced by positive religious doctrines coming from a different source. I have also remarked that it is at once obvious to every one who hears of it for the first time." The same writer observes further: "In Christianity, however, the doctrine of original sin, that is, the doctrine of punishment for the sins of another individual, has taken the place of the transmigration of souls and the

expiation in this way of all the sins committed in an earlier life. Both identify, and that with a moral tendency, the existing man with one who has existed before; the transmigration of souls does so directly, original sin indirectly." This venerable doctrine, proceeding in an unbroken line from the pre-Vedic period to the present time, and held even now by the larger moiety of the earth's inhabitants, is, as Schopenhauer remarks, a natural belief; for it is that which most rationally and plausibly accounts for the most perplexing mysteries of existence. As developed by the subtle Hindu intellect it is full of attraction and persuasion to unprejudiced minds, and when the so-called law of Karma is applied to it, the resulting scheme may well seem to embrace and explain the most formidable considerations and objections.

Schopenhauer, it is true, raises the objection that in the Buddhist (or Hindu) doctrine of metempsychosis the discontinuousness of memory between re-births practically renders the process palingenesis and not metempsychosis. The German philosopher, however, but imperfectly apprehended the doctrine which he adapted so closely; for his substitution of the "will to live" for "Karma" is really little more than a change of terminology, his theory of the functions of Will being at bottom a Germanization of the law of Karma. Had he lived to study the later developments of Asiatic philosophy and metaphysics, it cannot be doubted that so open and clear an intelligence would have recognized the force of those deeper implications which round out and give consistency and completeness to the Oriental scheme of thought, and dissipate the surface difficulties of the subject. The advances made recently in Western psychology have contributed to the growth of a better understanding on many points, and among the most suggestive and illuminating studies may be

cited those of Ribot on disease of the memory, and on double and other abnormal conditions of personality. The persistence of memory was held to be indispensable to a true metempsychosis by Schopenhauer because he had no conception of the refinements of Hindu speculation, which postulate the deathless principle of man as a congeries of separable parts, to the perishable among which physical recollection belongs. The Hindu posits, however, an undying psychical memory, which is incognizable by the incarnate soul, but which, nevertheless, stores up every event of the numerous transmigrations through which it passes, to bring the whole series into the consciousness of the persistent spirit when it has accomplished all its educational changes, and has attained an elevation which enables it fully to comprehend itself and its evolution.

Science, nay, common experience and observation, throw some light upon this difficult subject. The phenomena of normal sleep serve to show how the persistence of physical life is maintained notwithstanding periodical, frequent, and continuous lapses of consciousness. The rarer phenomena of double personality, so carefully studied by Charcot, Azam, Binet, Ribot, Liégeois, and others, emphasize the lessons of every-day experience in this direction. The remarkable cases in which, memory having been lost for considerable periods of time, it has been recovered as suddenly as it had disappeared, point out the lines of reasoning upon which the apparent change of personality may be reconciled with latent persistence and continuation of individuality. And indeed Schopenhauer might have perceived that the action of the Hindu law of Karma would be futile and purposeless if, as he concluded, each re-birth involved, to all practical intents, the creation of a new person. For to what end should the results of acts done in

a former life follow and modify the succeeding incarnation if the two existences had no connection? Schopenhauer's misapprehension on this point was indeed far-reaching in its effect; for it led him to postulate a contradiction in terms,—an unconscious Will-force, namely. Volition implies consciousness, and unconsciousness volition is unthinkable, a mere arrangement of words representing no comprehensible idea.

Swedenborg, with all his crudities and anthropomorphic fancies, was far more logical in his theory of metempsychosis, which is in fact in many particulars accordant with the Hindu doctrine. Re-incarnation, according to the Swedish Sage, is a process whereby the evolution of the higher faculties is made possible. In common with many of the most profound and lucid thinkers, he perceived the inadequacy of a single lifetime to the work of psychical evolution, and he adopted, or attained by independent or intuitional methods, the Oriental explanation of that lapse of consciousness which Tennyson refers to in the lines:—

“Or, if through lower lives I came,  
Though all experience past became  
Consolidate in mind and frame,

“I might forget my weaker lot;  
For is not our first year forgot?  
The haunts of memory echo not.

“Some draught of Lethe doth await  
As old mythologies relate,  
The slipping through from state to  
state.”

As with the Hindus, he held that the break in memory which signaled the completion of a physical existence was itself a physical phenomenon; but that the psychical processes of evolution went on unaffected by the changes of death and re-birth, and that among

these processes was the transmission, across the gap caused by death, of the qualities and tendencies and spiritual attainments belonging to the individual undergoing re-incarnation. In Oriental terminology Swedenborg's embryo Angels were the products of continued operation of good Karma. They represented the best results of human aspiration faithfully maintained until the upward yearning had destroyed the strong attachments to earth and qualified the spirit to breathe the rarefied atmosphere of the Divine World. In this evolutionary process, moreover, the highest examples of human development were reached, and in these a type was attained which exhibited the ideal of humanity as it was or as it might have been immediately after the descent of Spirit into Matter, and before that Fall which in the symbolism of the occultists signifies the victory of Materialism over Spirituality, the beginning of that long course of mundane and gross development which men call civilization, and which has blinded them, by its material gains, to the extent of the divergence of the race from its only permanent and worthy interests.

*(To Be Continued)*

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One of the privileges of living in the Twentieth century is the opportunity of allying oneself with the Theosophical Movement originated by the Elder Brothers of the Race, and of making a conscious link, however slender, with them. Join any Theosophical Society which maintains the tradition of the Masters of Wisdom and study their Secret Doctrine. You can strengthen the link you make by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility. We should be able to build the future on foundations of Wisdom, Love and Justice.

# THEOSOPHY AND THE MODERN WORLD

Conducted by W. Frank Sutherland

## THE REGULATOR OF PROGRESS—II.

(Concluded from Page 32.)

Events following upon the crisis of 1929 did not altogether conform to the usual pattern. Formerly, recovery came first in the construction and capital goods industries. Subsequent to 1929, however, these industries were moribund and recovery was largely achieved by deficit financing on the part of governments. Money was poured into direct relief; vast works projects were undertaken; and latterly the armament industry has temporarily sufficed to restore prosperity.

According to the *Bulletin* of the Cleveland Trust Company, of March, 1939, early in 1920 the total sales of new capital securities in the preceding twelve months amounted to the modest sum of three billion dollars only, exclusive of refunding issues, federal issues, and foreign securities. By the end of 1929 the total sales per annum were at the rate of almost eight billions. In 1933, sales amounted to a little more than half a billion, but these were supplemented by a flow of new federal borrowings which with sales, however, amounted to less than two and a half billions.

"The sum of these two classes of purchasing power increased vigorously in 1934, 1935 and 1936, and during that time business was recovering . . . By early 1937, the total contribution from public and private new borrowing was at a rate well above six billion a year. Then the new higher taxes came into effect. They included higher income taxes, those on undistributed profits, and social security taxes.

"Receipts from these taxes were so great that by the end of 1937 the government was taking away from purchasing power as much as it contributed.

. . . . The government had withdrawn its net contributions before, restoring sufficient business confidence to increase borrowings enough to compensate for the federal withdrawals. This restricted capital flow when corporate resources were depleted."

Quite evidently balancing the budget was not altogether a success, but there is every good reason for believing that while pump-priming may not have achieved its avowed object of restoring confidence to the point where business would once again have started off under its own steam, it did prevent business from collapsing altogether. There is reason also for believing that such failure as was experienced was not due to anything in the pump-priming procedure itself; rather it was due to the qualitative change which came over the business world itself with the onset of maturity. This, of course, is not the view held by many.

Perhaps in a way the pump-priming procedure in itself was a functional adaptation on the part of the productive system to the qualitative change which came with the onset of maturity. Even as the heart hypertrophies or enlarges when advancing years bring with them a lessened elasticity in the arteries, or even as other and more profound changes in the glandular balance of the body come with the menopause or the climacteric, so it may well be that the shift in emphasis from private to public initiative which was introduced with the New Deal, was part of an inevitable readjustment of society to meet new conditions. The analogy limps a trifle in one respect, for the changes which enter in with the onset of biological maturity are but the prelude to eventual senescence, death and decay, and it is not to be thought that these will neces-

sarily appear in the social organism for a long time to come. The present time is in some respects more like that of the metamorphosis of the insect, when the old organism breaks down within the outer shell and the new is built up out of what remains of the old.

Either way, the significance of what has taken place is profound.

Restricting discussion to the pump-priming mechanism, it is to be noted that it became possible only with the creation of the Federal Reserve System in the United States; and, in Canada, with the setting up of the government-owned Bank of Canada. It differed from the normal underwriting procedure in one important respect. Ordinarily, collateral, hypothecated against credits, finds its way into the hands of the investing public, and the ratio of savings, or time deposits, to demand deposits does not differ greatly from year to year, though such variations as do occur may be of much importance. But during the pump-priming era, in both the United States and Canada savings deposits as has already been remarked, grow to proportions entirely out of line with previous experience, as did also the volume of government securities held in the portfolios of the banks. The underwriting procedure thus was halted midway, and it seems clear that both the consequent piling up of investment funds and the relative lack of securities available for investment had a pronounced effect on interest rates and yields, these falling approximately to half their former values. Thus by this use of the central banking system governments found that they possessed a powerful control over investment yields.

Nor have other forms of investment escaped scot-free, what with low earnings during depression years and excess profits taxes and other burdens during times like the present, times which have been termed those of a "profitless pros-

perity". Slightly exaggerated the term may be yet it does recognize the fact that capital, like everything else, is subject to the law of diminishing returns.

The whole trend seems to be part and parcel of the general economic situation, and there is every indication that investments of all kinds will yield less and less from now on; or alternatively that they will be subject to periodical and catastrophic devaluations. One hazards the guess that crises of this sort will no longer be allowed to happen.

But to say that returns on invested capital will grow even smaller, is to say that the profit-motive which has heretofore furnished the driving force tending to make productivity effective, will no longer function so. There will thus arise the necessity for its replacement by some other driving urge. In the totalitarian states, which have by no means solved the problem, this something else appeared to be the attempt to conquer the whole world, by force of arms, and by underselling the democracies on a mass production basis, aided by slave labour.

Mass production methods and modern technology are, however, utterly incompatible with world slavery. Glass beads and mouth-organs have gone out of fashion, and there is something incongruous in a race of super-men working like slaves to produce paved roads and forty-mile to the gallon diesel-powered motor-cars for the rest of the world, serf and all alike.

#### The Shape of Things to Come

The democracies, however, by now have largely lost such ambitions, and with them the new urge replacing that of profits, or that of world domination, may well be that of production for use at least in large sectors of the economy. And if this be so, there seems to be no alternative to the adding of these sectors to the domain of public effort. This would particularly appear to be the case insofar as the supply of productive

capital is concerned. A greater measure of planning also seems to be inevitable.

One need not worry greatly over either prospect, if only our democracies remain true to the principles enshrined within them. For if the cardinal purpose of production be kept clearly in mind, ways and means can always be devised for its accomplishment, all within the ambit of democracy.

We are prone to forecast the future in the light of the present, are prone to argue pro and con concerning trends as if these trends would manifest within the institutions of the present. Consequently, we look forward to the initiating of programmes of reform with some apprehension, conscious as we are of the deficiencies in the tools with which we have to work. We forget thus that new trends bring along new institutions or modify old ones, and it is one of the chief advantages of democracy that it is flexible enough, at least in English-speaking countries, to adapt itself to change. It is a far cry from the old folk-meet to the modern parliamentary system and one doubts if perfection is even now with us.

Thus it were idle to blueprint the future, though changes which have already taken place are not without their significance. The modern underwriting procedure coupled with the equally modern taxation system now enables the state, or society at large, to furnish finance capital as required, to regulate production, to control the distribution of wealth. And precedents are even now being established in the procedure adopted in the armament industry, wherein the state furnishes share capital and exercises general control but wherein management is divorced from the civil service and functions much as it does in private industry. Thus one only of the factors of production need undergo radical change and that in ownership alone; the other factors: management, technology

and labour may remain much as at present constituted, though receiving welcome release from present restraints on productivity.

Nor need the degree of planning be great. Certainly planning need not be co-extensive with all the varied interests and activities of the individual. Nevertheless, in the natural course of events, our economy has reached and passed beyond one stage of integration after another, and if stages yet to come demand a greater integration still; a greater measure of planning; and demand, though it doesn't necessarily follow that it will be so, some increased measure of integration in the ordering of the life of the average citizen in respect of his contribution to the maintenance of society and himself; well then, so be it. It were better to lose, some measure of freedom thus, if need be, than that our society should descend into a twilight swiftly deepening into the darkness of another benighted age.

But even though there should be a medium of restriction in certain directions and arising out of planning for production, the individual need not, indeed he must not, suffer loss of freedom in any direction that really matters. On the contrary, he must have access to a greater measure of that rare commodity than now. For even in the sphere of the production of physical wealth, that into which planning might be expected most greatly to intrude, there is now precious little to be observed of freedom. Certainly there is none for the unemployed, and certainly little for the average wage-earner, with the spectres of unemployment, sickness and a penniless old age hovering in the background. To such, and to all whether wage-earners in the strictest sense or not, planning for use and security might bring about that state which President Roosevelt says is attainable in our time and in which the Four Freedoms will be exemplified.

"The first is freedom of speech and discussion—everywhere in the world.

"The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

"The third is freedom from want—which translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

"The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbour—anywhere in the world."

Planning to a degree is inevitable in modern society, whether this society be capitalistic, socialistic, or communistic in structure. But surely it should suffice to confine it to the production of physical wealth. Planning should never extend, nor need it extend, to limits where it interferes with the pursuit of wealth in the three higher categories of an earlier chapter. In these pursuits rugged individualism, or as it is euphemistically called "The Free Enterprise System", should forever remain inviolate.

To confine the problem of the future within the limits of physical wealth alone, without the greater vision of that which lies beyond, is to fall into the trap of materialism, even as has Germany, for the ideology of that country at this time, curiously distorted and perverted though it be, is but the inevitable outcome of the mechanistic era out of which, let us hope, we are now passing, though with travail.

Rauschnig in his latest book: *The Redemption of Democracy*, sums up the matter neatly:

"The Anglo-Saxon world is capable of being shaken, and has already been shaken to its foundations, because alien

ideas and standards have interfered with its own values and old experience, and because it seems to have lost the ability to distinguish between what belongs to it and what is alien to it. To begin with, there is the idea of rational planning, which has come from the world of technology, *where it belongs*, to intrude on political and social life. If this idea proceeds on the assumption of superiority to all historical accretions—the same assumption every other revolution has made—it too is revolutionary. Rational planning as a *principle* and not simply as a *tool* destroys historical values, and interrupts the continuity of development. When it establishes itself, it prepares the ground for destructive forces."

One can only hope that the chief interests of our democratic assemblies will shortly be those of guarding the four freedoms, cherishing them, and extending them well beyond their present limits. By thus stressing principles conducive to the good of society rather than those things we are dissatisfied with, we shall build up a driving force leading to progress rather than to retrogression.

These concluding thoughts are faintly suggestive of the old Biblical precept "Overcome evil with good" but in spite of their antiquity they are still worth considering.

W. F. S.

### THE SEA'S WAY

The song in my heart is the song of the sea,

My pulses thrust in tune

To the coral tides where the waves run free

And the silver waters croon.

The way of the sea is the way of a man  
Whose will must build and waste.

In an age-long strife, it must weave the plan

Of a love that knows not haste.

A. M. Stephen.

## DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OF REALITY

The problem of any religion which seeks to answer the soul's cry for that secret which can set the whole seeming chaos in some sort of order and give it inspiring significance, that religion or philosophy will be most eagerly embraced by mankind. And Buddhism, especially in its mystical form of Zen, I believe, has this power to make life, even in the gravest peril and discomfort, seem in a mysterious way worth while. Zen has this sorely needed aspect of Truth to offer perplexed and suffering humanity. We have the proofs of history, or maybe of some actual friend, that the highest types have somehow discovered in pain and suffering a stern but tender teacher of immortal secrets, the conferrer of spiritual liberty, even the initiator into amazing joys.

The modern Western world, it must be remembered, has passed through a deeply materialistic period, due in the main to the dominating belief that empirical knowledge could ultimately solve the riddle of the Universe. It is, however, being recognized more and more now that science alone and intellect alone never can satisfy the deepest yearnings of Mankind. There is a state of consciousness above thought, a plane of spiritual experience with which the intellect cannot deal. And Zen Buddhism, with its insistence on the possibility of gaining direct knowledge of Reality, if certain specific conditions are observed, is, I am convinced, a faith by which the world may regain a correct sense of values both for the individual and for the community of which he is a vital part.—Victor Rienarcker, in *Buddhism in England*, p. 35, July-August.

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