

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Divine Wisdom

Brotherhood

Occult Science

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HELL AND DAMNATION

One of the glaring inconsistencies of the Christian churches is the association of the doctrines of hell-fire and eternal punishment with the figure of the wise and loving, the gentle and merciful Nazarene, Jesus. Canon Farrar did much in the '60s and '70s of the last century by his sermons on Eternal Hope to clear his church of the stigma. But the priestly orders still have abundant faith in Burns' statement "the fear of hell's the hangman's whip to keep the wretch in order." It is of note that Hamilton radio station CHML broadcast discussions of this subject, pointing out that the Hebrew word *sheol* and the Greek *hades*, both translated hell, have neither of them the meaning usually attributed to our English word, but merely indicate the place of departed spirits. We have all been so obsessed with Milton's great poem with its magnificent portrait of Satan or Lucifer, that the Miltonic picture of hell has fixed the idea of such a location and dominion in the popular mind of the cosmos. Practically it has supplanted the actual fact this earth of ours is our real hell, a place of discipline and purification and of such punishment as we ourselves insist upon incurring. It is in reality a school, and bad boys do not like school till they have reached some degree of maturity. One of the worst behaved boys we ever knew at school turned out to be an able scholar, took

his degrees as a doctor and became a clever and highly respected physician. But what about his hereafter, demands a dogmatist. People who ask such questions forget, if they ever knew, that there is neither time nor space for the states of consciousness beyond the waking state such as dream, trance and others we may enter at death. This is what makes it so difficult for the average citizen to understand what is told him in parables which he takes literally instead of trying to get at what they are intended to convey to the mind, since they have nothing to do with the body for which the mind is responsible. "Let that mind be in you," we read, "which is in Christ Jesus," and Paul tells us explicitly that Jesus Christ is in us unless we be reprobate. This is no more than to recognize God as Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent. Admitting this, is it not foolish apart from the love and mercy we attribute to the All-Father, to talk of an eternal hell or everlasting punishment? The kingdom of heaven is within us (*entos* is the Greek word) and the kingdom of evil darkness or ignorance is equally inside us. How then can we escape these perils but by relying on that Light that lightens every man coming into the world? St. Paul looks for a climax of perfection when God shall be all and in all. Where then can there be such conditions as hell implies?

A. E. S. S.

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THE MYSTERY OF ALL TIME

The inner light which guides men to greatness, and makes them noble, is a mystery through all time and must remain so while Time lasts for us; but there come moments, even in the midst of ordinary life, when Time has no hold upon us, and then all the circumstance of outward existence falls away, and we find ourselves face to face with the mystery beyond. In great trouble, in great joy, in keen excitement, in serious illness, these moments come. Afterwards they seem very wonderful, looking back upon them.

What is this mystery, and why is it so veiled, are the burning questions for anyone who has begun to realize its existence. Trouble most often rouses men to the consciousness of it, and forces them to ask these questions when those, whom one has loved better than oneself, are taken away into the formless abyss of the unknown by death, or are changed, by the experiences of life, till they are no longer recognizable as the same; then comes the wild hunger for knowledge. Why is it so? What is it, that surrounds us with a great dim cloud into which all loved things plunge in time and are lost to us, obliterated, utterly taken from us? It is this which makes life so unbearable to the emotinal natures, and which develops selfishness in narrow hearts. If there is no certainty and no permanence in life, then it seems to the Egotist, that there is no reasonable course but to attend to one's own affairs, and be content with the happiness of the first person singular. There are many persons sufficiently generous in temperament to wish others were happy also, and who, if they saw any way to do it, would gladly redress some of the existing ills—the misery of the poor, the social evil, the sufferings

of the diseased, the sorrow of those made desolate by death—these things the sentimental philanthropist shudders to think of. He does not act because he can do so little. Shall he take one miserable child and give it comfort when millions will be enduring the same fate when that one is dead? The inexorable cruelty of life continues on its giant course, and those who are born rich and healthy live in pleasant places, afraid to think of the horrors life holds within it. Loss, despair, unutterable pain, comes at last, and the one who has hitherto been fortunate is on a level with those to whom misery has been familiarized by a lifetime of experience. For trouble bites hardest when it springs on a new victim. Of course, there are profoundly selfish natures which do not suffer in this sense, which look only for personal comfort and are content with the small horizon visible to one person's sight; for these, there is but little trouble in the world, there is none of the passionate pain which exists in sensitive and poetic natures. The born artist is aware of pain as soon as he is aware of pleasure; he recognizes sadness as a part of human life before it has touched on his own. He has an innate consciousness of the mystery of the ages, that thing stirring within man's soul and which enables him to outlive pain and become great, which leads him on the road to the divine life. This gives him enthusiasm, a superb heroism indifferent to calamity; if he is a poet he will write his heart out even for a generation that has no eyes or ears for him; if he desires to help others personally, he is capable of giving his very life to save one wretched child from out a million of miserable ones. For it is not his puny personal effort in the world that he considers—not his little show of labour done: what he is

conscious of is the over-mastering desire to work with the beneficent forces of super-nature, to become one with the divine mystery, and when he can forget time and circumstances, he is face to face with that mystery. Many have fancied they must reach it by death; but none have come back to tell us that this is so. We have no proof that man is not as blind beyond the grave as he is on this side of it. Has he entered the eternal thought? If not, the mystery is a mystery still.

To one who is entering occultism in earnest, all the trouble of the world seems suddenly apparent. There is a point of experience when father and mother, wife and child, become indistinguishable, and when they seem no more familiar or friendly than a company of strangers. The one dearest of all may be close at hand and unchanged, and yet is as far as if death had come between. Then all distinction between pleasure and pain, love and hate, have vanished. A melancholy, keener than that felt by a man in his first experience of grief, overshadows the soul. It is the pain of the struggle to break the shell in which man has prisoned himself. Once broken, then there is no more pain; all ties are severed, all personal demands are silenced forever. The man has forced himself to face the great mystery, which is now a mystery no longer, for he has become part of it. It is essentially the mystery of the ages, and these have no longer any meaning for him to whom time and space and all other limitations are but passing experiences. It has become to him a reality, profound, indeed, because it is bottomless; wide, indeed, because it is limitless. He has touched on the greatness of life, which is sublime in all its impartiality and effortless generosity. He is friend and lover to all those living beings that come within his consciousness, not to the one or two chosen ones only—which is indeed only an enlarged

selfishness. While a man retains his humanity, it is certain that one or two chosen ones will give him more pleasure by contact, than all the rest of the beings in the Universe and all the heavenly host; but he has to remember and recognize what this preference is. It is not a selfish thing which has to be crushed out, if the love is the love that gives; freedom from attachments is not a meritorious condition in itself. The freedom needed is not from those who cling to you, but from those to whom you cling. The familiar phrase of the lover: "I cannot live without you" must be words which cannot be uttered, to the occultist. If he has but one anchor, the great tides will sweep him away into nothingness. But the natural preference which must exist in every man for a few persons is one form of the lessons of life. By contact with these other souls he has other channels by which to penetrate to the great mystery. For every soul touches it, even the darkest. Solitude is a great teacher, but society is even greater. It is so hard to find and take the highest part of those we love, that in the very difficulty of the search there is a serious education. We realize when making that effort, far more clearly what it is that creates the mystery in which we live, and makes us so ignorant. It is the swaying, vibrating, never-resting desires of the animal soul in man. The life of this part of man's nature is so vigorous and strongly developed from the ages during which he has dwelt in it, that it is almost impossible to still it so as to obtain contact with the noble spirit. This constant and confusing life, this ceaseless occupation with the trifles of the hour, this readiness in surface emotion, this quickness to be pleased, amused or distressed, is what baffles our sight and dulls our inner senses. Till we can use these, the mystery remains in its Sphinx-like silence.—(From *Lucifer*, Sept., 1887).

THE HERESY OF SEPARATENESS

Unity is an oft mentioned word and cannot be repeated enough. With it we hear of the heresy of separateness. Separateness of man is a teaching and thought that is entirely false. Now the dictionary gives this meaning to heresy: "—an opinion or doctrine at variance with fundamental truths commonly received as orthodox, especially if leading to division." Now that is exactly what this heresy of separateness does. It leads men to think that we are pieces of something separate to everything else. We are not! We are all one and the feeling of separateness is only an ignorant attitude of mind.

From the time we are little children, the idea of separateness is constantly pounded into us by our parents and teachers. We are born with separate vehicles, in the first place, and that probably starts the idea. We think the world is made up of a series of separate pieces. We lose our sense of unity that we had before we were born. Then, when we start school and go on through life, we are constantly taught that the idea of competitiveness and rivalry is the right thing and the only way to live. But that is wrong—very wrong, and is against Nature's laws. In eastern countries children have a better chance because in places where Christianity has not touched, children are still brought up with the idea of non-separateness. They realize, even as children, that all men and women, by their desires and actions, which seem separate, are all linked together, in their racial experience by the thread of Karma.

Here is what two Yogis have to say about man and the heresy of separateness: "Instead of looking upon himself

as an isolated being, man must learn to look upon himself as part of the Integral Whole." "The good of others is our own, since we are part of the integral whole, and therefore it is not logical to think of a mere relative good to others."

Good to one is good to all. Good to all is good to ourselves. One person cannot gain spiritually and those around him suffer. If one man manages to free himself, even a tiny bit, from the fetters of matter and selfishness, the whole of mankind is freed to that extent—and if one man entangles himself more securely in the mesh of matter, then the whole world has fallen that much.

We have a natural foundation for compassion. I have a chart where is shown the One Source—the Absolute Spirit. From it are the Logi, the Emanating Rays in some of their subdivision. The Ray of Pure Spirit subdivides and subdivides until finally there is just a Spark in the extremely tiny unit called "one man". That is indicated by yellow. Now this Spark, which is entirely unconscious, acquires a vehicle of consciousness called the Buddhic Principle. This Buddhic vehicle is illustrated with purple. The Buddhic Principle gives the Spark consciousness. That is the Monad of every atom in the evolving universe and that is the *Key to Unity* with everything in the Universe.

In man (I am just going to dwell on Man in this article)—in man, during the Third Round, the Solar Pitris, ignited the Spark, we might say, with some of their own Conscious Fire. It might be likened to one candle lighting many other tiny candles. So Man, in the Third Round, acquired another vehicle, that of Manas, which united the lower principles of animal man, which the

Elementals of the Earth tried to build. So, we have the complete unit of man; the Spark unconscious; the Buddhic vehicle that gives it consciousness; Manas, which gives it thinking power, or *self-consciousness*; Kama, giving the unit the desires and emotions and, of course, reasoning power, which in turn creates the sense of separateness. It is illustrated by red. The prana, or life force is illustrated by the green. The white indicates the ghostly, ethereal form of the Astral double and finally, the physical body is illustrated by orange; that physical body of which so many of us are so proud.

Now that shows how all of us are one, yet appear to be separate. I will try to show what happens when one of these units, or one man, dies. In a chart, using these colors to illustrate the various vehicles, I illustrate three men. Their vehicles are fundamentally alike but consciously they are somewhat different because one may have developed a little more or a little less than his neighbour. One may have worked harder than the other to free himself of matter, therefore they are on slightly different stages of evolution. When a man dies, his physical body disintegrates, either by cremation or burial. The pranic force flies back to its original source—Fohat. The astral double floats about on the Astral plane in a subconscious state, attracted here and there to similar vibrations, until the physical body disintegrates, at which time it disintegrates also. The Kama Rupa, that bundle of Skandhas, or attributes, that we have collected, is like water. It attains its own level on the Kama Rupa plane and goes through a process of purgatory, a cleansing process, unconscious impacts, which gradually wear themselves out. The Ego, the important part, draws up the finer spiritual attributes and mulls over its spiritual experiences, and after a certain period, by the experience of that

life, the Monad has just that much more *Self-consciousness*. Then it builds new vehicles and is born in the world of matter again.

The point that I am trying to get at is this. Life after life, the Ego goes through this process. Every human Ego does, and life after life we gain more spirituality—more *Self-consciousness*, until finally, at the end of this period of evolution, this Manvantara, each Ego has attained perfect *Self-consciousness*. Then we can work together as one large unit. As one perfect unit, the present humanity will be a god to take charge of the evolution of the next planet and chain of worlds after this planet, Earth, is dead.

So we see how important it is that we discard this illusion of separateness, as soon as we possibly can.

There are some failures, and before this Round is over there will be many more. By failures, I mean this. Human persons who will persistently fail to recognize truth. Persons who will persistently fail to perfect their vehicles in order to attain perfect Ego *Self-consciousness*. During our many earth lives, if we persistently feel separateness, teach separateness and encourage it, naturally our consciousness will shrink. It will become narrow because we are going against the law of Nature, which is to ever broaden our consciousness. If we live one earth life, and have lived it in such a selfish and narrow way that we have nothing to add to the consciousness of the Ego, and have everything to add to the Kamic principle, we will not be doing what we are supposed to be doing. If this goes on life after life, the Kamic principle will become larger and more powerful, and what will the Ego get? Nothing. If that goes on, there will come a time when the link between the Higher and Lower Selves becomes so weakened that it will break with the heavy, uneven load down below. The Manasic Principle goes to

its source, the Solar Pitris. The Bud-dhic vehicle disintegrates and the pure Spark flies back to the Absolute, we might say, and the Ego, the Individual, is no more. The work of evolution is left to be carried on by the remaining Egos.

This great bundle of impulses which is left, may go on "incarnating", i.e.: building a physical body, several times, but the result of this method of "incarnating" is very evil men and congenial idiots. The force left here will gradually weaken until there is nothing left. Now, where is the unit that was once an evolving Ego? Some of us may think that this sounds too much like the Christian teaching; that if we are not good people God will cast us into the eternal Hell. But when we consider it, we find it very reasonable. Perhaps that is where the idea of Eternal Heaven and Eternal Damnation originated.

However, this is the Truth of evolution, as I see it. We must follow Nature's law. We must ever go forward, expand our consciousness, ever coming nearer and nearer to Self-consciousness,—"At One with the Universe."

If we retrograde, we go backwards, towards the animals, plants and stones and finally we are no longer human Egos. We have to start again in the next Manvantara and evolve through the lower kingdoms. Who wants to go through all that again? I am sure that I do not! No matter how far advanced we are, we have to watch that we do not backslide. We have to watch every day and every minute of every day, for no matter how far advanced we are, we can always fall.

H.P.B. declared that many of us who think we are going along fine, are not really doing anything at all but back-sliding. She says we must *lead the life* and asks how many really do; in fact, how many understand what leading the life really means? All we need is a simple perseverance and a singleness of

purpose. One says he leads the life because he is a strict vegetarian. She says elephants and cows are that,—or one thinks he is leading the life by a start at celibacy, after a stormy youth in the opposite direction; or because one studies the Bhagavad-Gita and "Yoga Philosophy" upside down.—But all that is not living the life. We need a true universal brotherhood. We must truly love and serve our fellow creatures and try every minute, to lose our sense of separateness. Without brotherhood we have nothing.

The heresy of separateness is really an important subject to think about, and to study. It should be our life work to guard against the insidious selfishness this illusion promotes.

Mrs. Ethel Trupp.

Sub. P.O. 23,
Edmonton, Alberta.

HIGHWAY TO TRUTH

O Weary Soul, you labour
Ceaselessly
On a backway road
To Truth
When you might as easily
Pave the highway
With gold.
Rest upon the stone
You chip away.
Sit upon it
And meditate.
When you wake again
Another life,
Be wise.
Use your labours
To advantage on the way.
You have learned
The art of paving
On the crooked roads,
Now are you ready to lay
In gold
The straight long highway
To the Truth.

V. I. S.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

My anticipated visit to Olcott materialized at long-last in a stay of one week at the Convention held in the beautiful headquarters of the American Section near Wheaton, Illinois. It was an inspiration meeting so many brother theosophists not only from all parts of the United States but as far afield as Europe, India, South Africa, Cuba and Mexico. I would like to put on record here the great interest and utmost friendliness displayed by that great gathering toward the Canadian General Secretary; one could not but feel that the pleasure and sincerity evinced was the flowering of a touching appeal for a better and more intimate understanding between the Sections north and south of the Line. It appeared to me that such a rapprochement should be taken advantage of by every means in our power; and judging from the frank and intimate talks I had not only with the delegates as a whole but with persons in authority this could be brought about with advantage not only to the Sections concerned but to the Cause as a whole. My address to the general assembly during the discussion "Universality through Uniqueness" aroused a chord of responsiveness that it would be idle for me to gloss over. The appreciation as expressed not only at the session but afterwards by practically everyone present was overwhelming, and I wish it were possible for me to express to each one there how deeply I felt their appreciation and goodwill. The buildings and grounds of this great centre were a revelation to me, and as I expressed myself at another talk "I felt that it could and probably would become the Spiritual Centre of Theosophy in the New World." The programme of the Convention was well arranged and excellently carried out, a marked feature being the smoothness

and punctuality of every event, which speaks well for those who were responsible for its organization. When I left a new influx of visitors was taking place for the Summer School which was about to begin. Looking back I feel that Conventions such as these are most beneficial to all concerned bringing together as they do people with their various views and outlooks, whereby they are enabled to discuss them at first hand with others and elucidate local and general problems to mutual advantage thus tending to the well-being of any organization. I especially feel after this momentous occasion that a very definite purpose has been gained by my having attended it in the capacity of General Secretary of our Society for not only have I sensed the great friendliness our neighbours to the South feel towards us but also by the glad-hand accompanied with the most unequivocal expressions of good-will and sincere hopes that a greater mutual understanding will take place between the American and Canadian Sections. It is my earnest endeavour to bring this about for I feel now as never before the urgency of living practical brotherhood for the furtherance not only of our Cause but for the world in general.

* * * *

So far I have not had many responses to my appeal for help in maintaining the magazine on its original basis. However I received some of a most interesting character and I am constrained to mention one who not only sent in a new subscriber but made the following trenchant observations;—"Now I am not in a very strong position myself, financially, but it would please me greatly to see the magazine back to normal. To that end I will contribute \$1 monthly as long as I am able; the first dollar being enclosed. If a

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Albert E. S. Smythe, 5 Rockwood Place, Hamilton, Ont.
 Dudley W. Barr, 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.
 Washington E. Wilks, 925 Georgia St. W., Vancouver, B.C.
 Don C. Hatt, Box 97, Adelaide St. P.O., Toronto 1.
 David B. Thomas, 64 Strathearn Ave., Montreal West, Que.
 George I. Kinman, 46 Rawlinson Ave., Toronto, Ont.
 Emory P. Wood, 12207 Stony Plain Road, Edmonton, Alta.

GENERAL SECRETARY

Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O., 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.
 To whom all payments should be made, and all official
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EDITORIAL BOARD, CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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OFFICE NOTES

Isolated students and those unable to have access to Theosophical literature should avail themselves of the Traveling Library conducted by the Toronto Theosophical Society. There are no charges except for postage on the volumes loaned. For particulars write to the Librarian, 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, Ont.

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The magazine was mailed in wrappers last month as owing to the shortage of paper it seems to be impossible to obtain envelopes at the present time. A year's supply was ordered last January but after months of delay the order was finally cancelled; the envelope company could not give any promise of delivery.

A young Canadian artist, Henry Eveleigh of Montreal, P.Q., was awarded the first prize of \$1500.00 for his design which was submitted in the United Nations' Poster of the Year contest. Mr. Eveleigh's design shows two sensitively drawn hands, one holding a small young tree whose leaves are formed of the flags of all nations; the other hand about to hollow a place in the ground for planting. Designs were submitted from artists in many lands; quite a number expressed the deep-rooted fear and insecurity which is so prevalent today—for example, the drawing which won the second prize showed a grisly skull lying on the ground with the caption, 'One world or none'. Hope for the growth of the ideal of a united world, freed from the curse of war is expressed in the Canadian artist's drawing.

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The General Secretary in his Notes and Comments last month mentioned the suggestion made that a Questions and Answers section be started in the magazine. All questions sent in will receive careful consideration from the students to whom they are submitted for answering. We will be very glad to receive from our readers any other suggestions for the magazine.

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"The Middle Way" (formerly 'Buddhism in England') is a magazine which is always warmly welcomed. The July-August issue in its attractive new cover contains many articles of interest among them being the 2nd series of the 'Tales of Tokuzan'—short stories somewhat similar in style to the Kohans of Zen Buddhism. The author's foreword ends thus: "If the message be not immediately apparent, I suggest he (the reader) should listen, as to music too far away to be heard. The ears may hear nothing in the silence, but no

silence keeps its secret from the hearing of the heart."



The Trustees of the Mahatma Letters Trust expect that a third edition of the Letters will be published by Rider & Co., London, before the end of this year, according to an announcement in the Middle Way.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 151)

hundred or so members could see their way clear to do something similar, possibly your difficulties would be over. Please let me know of anything I can do to help the cause at any time." That is what I call a truly helpful attitude and wherewithal most practical. Seldom have I received such a dynamic letter, a few more like that and we would be well away. This member realizes the situation and acts. My work would be made much easier and vastly more profitable if others were to do likewise. Verbum sap.



A word to presidents of lodges. As there is such a long distance between our two largest groups of lodges making the expenses of lecturers touring Canada utterly beyond our means I had several talks at the American Convention as to the feasibility of well-known lecturers touring the States breaking their itineraries and branching up to Canada either at our eastern or western end thus taking in our groups of lodges and including them in their programmes. From what I gathered it appears this could be done and that it would be comparatively inexpensive for us. The lodges interested must naturally be prepared to pay their way and signify their wishes and intentions. With this in mind I can now state that Mr. John Coats formerly General Secretary in England will be available soon

in the Eastern end; his wife, Mrs. Betsan Coats, a very excellent speaker, will be touring the Western States and would be available for our extreme Western lodges if they so desired. Miss Clara Codd, formerly General Secretary in South Africa will also be available I believe in both the East and the West. Beyond this notice nothing more will be given out on the subject unless the lodges themselves intimate to me their desire to do something in the matter; if and when they do I will be happy to co-ordinate their wishes with any available speaker. Those interested should not overlook Mr. H. J. Gibb's letter re Professor Ernest Wood, published in last month's issue.

E. L. T.

THE THREE TRUTHS

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent for lack 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 IMPOVERISHED EARTH

Thoughtful students of nature who have explored these parts of the world where ancient civilizations once triumphed, are appalled at the picture of utter desolation that meets the eye. The ruins of magnificent edifices of the past, indicate that at some time luxuriant vegetation must have flourished where now the soil is arid, and only plant and animal life of the most troublesome kinds survive. There are abundant references to this in ancient history; for instance, Winston's Encyclopedia states, regarding Assyria, "The numerous remains of ancient habitations show how thickly this region must have been peopled."

Here in America soil erosion and deterioration is everywhere apparent to even the most casual observer, and the tragedy of it all is, that less than two hundred years ago nearly all of it was virgin soil, covered with primeval forest. Sterility is manifestly produced artificially by human beings, who through greed and stupidity upset the balance in nature. Most of them seem to harbour the delusion that because plant and animal life is so abundant it is inexhaustible. Few nations have had the wisdom or foresight to realize that they were committing slow suicide. The Chinese have obviously displayed greater sagacity in this respect than most nations, and the Theosophical Glossary states that the Yi-King is an ancient work written by generations of sages, and according to the Secret Doctrine 11-391 the discovery of agriculture is attributed in the Yi-King to "instruction given to men by celestial geni". The Doctrine also states in different places that the human race in all parts of the world was taught agriculture by great adepts such as Isis-Osiris in Egypt, Ceres in Greece and Sicily, the Israelites by the Kabiri and the Nabatheans or Babylon-

ians by Qu-Tamy. These are generic names, not of individual adepts, but they represent whole dynasties of sages by those names. The Secret Doctrine 1-703 says, "The Kabiri were the instructors of mankind in agriculture, because they were the Regents over the seasons and Cosmic cycles. Hence it was they who regulated as Planetary Spirits or Angels (Messengers) the *mysteries* of the art of agriculture. The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture "is a repetition of the tenets of the Secret Doctrine" (S.D. 11-476) and was translated by Dr. Chwolsohn from manuscripts found in the library of Leyden University in 1859. The original title of the work was The Book on the Cultivation of the Soil, the Improvement of Grains, Trees and Fruits, and the Prevention of the Deterioration of the Same, and at the conclusion of the work Dr. Chwolsohn cannot praise too highly the profound wisdom that they contain. Evidently in many parts of the world this wisdom has been lost.

When Professor King of the University of Wisconsin made extensive investigations in China, Korea and Japan, he found in Shantung a farmer who had twelve in his family and who kept one donkey, one cow and two pigs on two and one half acres. That is a density of population equal to 3072 people, 256 donkeys, 256 cattle and 512 swine per square mile . . . on another holding of one and two-thirds acres a farmer was supporting a family of ten, one donkey and one pig which shows a still greater maintenance per square mile. How have the Chinese been able to support such an immense population for so many thousands of years without impoverishing the soil, as it has been impoverished in so many other parts of the world? That is a question that has provided food for thought for several sincere thinkers and students of agriculture such as Dr. Steiner, Sir Albert Howard, Lady Balfour, Dr. Pfeiffer, J.

I. Rodale and others who have written books and essays about organic gardening and farming. Permit me to quote a paragraph from Dr. Pfeiffer's book on that subject:—

"The intensive Chinese cultivation of the soil rests on a humus and compost economy carried on with almost religious zeal. Everything that can be turned into soil is composted; plants, all sorts of refuse, the muck of streams, plain dirt, are all set up in layers, kept watered, and in a short time turned into humus earth. All work in China is manual labour. This conserves the soil and permits an inner aeration and mixing. Mixed cultures of as many as six different kinds of plants in various states of growth utilize the mutual action of plant groups upon one another. To enlarge the surface area, everything is planted in between and upon ridges. Mineral fertilizing is still unknown there—fortunately for the Chinese. Scientists who have visited such regions and studied them from the background of their technical knowledge say that a crop failure in this soil is a rare phenomenon."

Professor King observed how careful the Chinese farmers were to avoid injuring any of the earthworms in the soil and over one hundred years ago Charles Darwin began his research program concerning these animals. His investigations continued throughout the remainder of his life and if anyone wishes to get some idea of the prodigious capacity for taking pains, the keen powers of observation, the patience and perseverance of this great scientist he or she should read the treatise that he wrote in the twilight of his life, entitled, "The formation of vegetable mould through the action of worms with observation of their habits." States Darwin—"The plough is one of the most ancient and valuable of man's inventions, but long before it existed, the land was in fact plowed and still con-

tinues to be plowed by earthworms. It may be doubted whether there are many other animals, which have played so important a part in the history of the world, as have these lowly organized creatures". On the same subject the great English naturalist Gilbert White said: "Without earthworms the earth would become cold, hardbound, sterile." Darwin found that in many parts of England a weight of more than ten tons of dry earth annually passes through their bodies and is brought to the surface on each acre of land. There are many varieties of earthworms, and Dr. Oliver and Dr. Barnett both inspired by the work of Darwin, themselves spent years in research work, cross breeding and hybridizing. They have finally produced a domesticated worm that combines many of the best qualities possessed by several varieties as they are found in their natural state.

Edison said that he did not know what electricity was, but that isn't so much to be wondered at, in view of the fact that we have not been using it so very long, but we have been using soil an incredibly long time, and yet the experts seem to be at a loss to tell us exactly what soil is, and how plants grow. They nearly all agree, however, that it is composed of soluble and insoluble mineral matter, the top layer of which is incorporated with organic matter in various stages of decomposition. The value of the organic matter or humus in it, say the organic gardeners depends less upon its chemical constituents than upon the life that it contains: earthworms and bacteria in particular form the connecting link between the raw mineral matter, and plant growth.

For nearly a century, agriculture has been dominated by the chemist who can achieve spectacular results by stimulating plant growth at the expense of the tilth of the soil, and the health of the plant, but he has introduced a new

problem—pest control, which he combats with poisonous sprays. What the chemist fails to see is that you can no more appreciate the value of humus by ascertaining its chemical constituents, than you can find out the batting average of a baseball player by cremating him and making an analysis of the ashes. Commercial fertilizers supply elements that are essential to plant life, but they unfortunately increase the acidity of the soil, thereby destroying its life, *i.e.* earthworms, fungi, actinomycetes, bacteria and protozoa. Commercials are not by any means however so destructive as poisonous sprays and insecticides. The object of treating the soil with humus, manufactured by the different methods of composting, advocated by scientists mentioned in the foregoing is to so increase the life and health of the soil, that the plant will become more and more disease resistant and will not attract to it the thousand and one varieties of pests that thrive on sick vegetation.

Dr. E. J. Norman.

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“AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI”

“Autobiography of a Yogi” by Paramhansa Yogananda, with a preface by Evans-Wentz, M.A., D.Litt., D.Sc., published by The Philosophical Society, New York, 498 pages, illustrated, price \$3.50.

A copy of this book was received recently. It is an unusual and an important book and merits a lengthy review, and this will appear in a later issue. Yogananda early in his youth, found his guru, a teacher of Kriya Yoga, and was received into the guru-disciple relationship which has been and still is, one of the sources of India's perennial manifestations of spiritual greatness. He came to the United States in 1921 and, except for a brief visit to India in 1935-36, has remained in America ever since teaching his doctrines and disciplines. Yogananda writes sincerely and directly out of his own actual experiences in finding and following the ancient path that leads to self-realization.

In this brief advance note, attention is drawn to the significance of the appearance of the book at the present time. Mrs. Williams' “Priestess” was published in the latter part of 1946 and in that book the Theosophical position was attacked through an onslaught made against the personality of H.P.B. The Mahatmas were mere fabrications of H.P.B.'s and she forged the Letters; psychic phenomena, which demonstrated the existence of subtle forms of matter and the possibility of human manipulation of this finer substance, were dismissed as being either sleight of hand tricks or frauds perpetrated with the aid of confederates.

The “Autobiography” published a few months later, speaks with an assurance deriving from experiences undergone by a man living in this century. Against its background of intense devotion and deep emotion, it also tells of signs, won-

ders and miracles, of Masters, mayavic rupas and of many psychic phenomena. These are accepted as being not at all extraordinary, but as normal to the stage of unfoldment of the Teacher and the disciple.

The Williams' book was a flop; the "Autobiography" will, very likely, become a best seller in mystical and occult circles. Dr. Evans-Wentz writes, "the book has an importance both timely and timeless. Yogananda's unusual life document is certainly one of the most revealing of the Hindu mind and heart and of the spiritual wealth of India ever to be published in the West."

VIEWING ABOVE

There is a "Unity of all in Nature, in its ultimate Essence," many bodies but one soul. — S. D. I-276.

The possibility of seeing beyond the physical reaches is not only a problem in concentration but a test in credibility of faith. Without these characteristics there can be no extension of subtle senses into new evolutionary fields. With this, a dawning reality, comes the first rudiments of self-consciousness in this field, of the higher planes and while still conscious on the physical plane, the realization of which is recorded by the perishable brain. Our material—physical brain has functioned so long and found its partial answers with varying degrees of accuracy, or at least those which have had to suffice, that to contemplate a surer, more accurate authority is in actuality like the discovery of another world.

Those who grasp the truth of there being other realms of consciousness can be modest and sincere in their exploring, treating the unfolding with reverence and as of a high spiritual order. Others sensing a release from physical world perplexities, or who are reaching for affluence and self-indulgence, will strive ardently but with a materialistic outlook for this elixir which is offered

them, by their biased judgment, the power and security they have coveted inwardly in the physical-material world. He who is willing to grow beautifully will search for truth, be altruistic in his deeper knowledge, realizing this higher potential will not be his immediately and had best not be forced for selfish ends. His activities will be those of amelioration of physical stresses. He will study individuals for what he can give them. He will not seek others for their contribution to his material welfare. While the soul who wishes for personal security and selfish attainment will concentrate upon secret formulæ and will have insidious practices in mind so that the exercise of the potentials within may force an unfolding and give the coveted clairvoyance which may be used as an aid to physical-material comfort, he is showing a short-time view and is being led out upon a world where only selflessness can bring happiness and freedom from eventual suffering. But with the exploitation incurred by self-seeking using the power and knowledge of the subtle worlds, the veil along the lines of opening conscious life is held tight. This being so, we can assure ourselves that we are not likely to attain unto any great height by our own efforts, and that indiscriminate delving into these fields in ignorance of primary requisites to guarantee sanity is very often recognized in others by their nervous and mental breakdown. To anticipate the potential with all its high hazards but fearlessly and in high trust altruistically is to press on toward their eventual attainment and is to conform with judicious evolutionary law and the basic unity factor of life. To concede that these laws are known and are being administered for our sane unfolding is to show willingness to follow our older brethren who know the way and are anxious to assist us to higher

levels along the unselfish and sacrificial road. All other short-cuts bring us back to a painful starting point. When we truly agree to listen and practice, following our inner urge to be altruistic where we had been selfish, we encounter our period of retributive suffering, physical and material. We can judge the degree of our wilful transgression in part by our present material world circumstances. We have to set our heart stoutly toward high faith or we will not face our difficulties and make a fast atonement, such as we might wish to. If we have not yet mustered up courage to take our Karma more quickly, we have not shown faith sufficient as yet to be intrusted with subtle knowledge. He who sacrificially reaches out for action, anticipating the soul releasing experiences which are his by destiny of his previous acts, and engages these with resignation to altruistic principle, truly can be trusted with the secrets of the Sages.

We commence our stirrings in this direction in imagination. There are times when we feel enlightenment dawning. Some small, new experience is felt and noted. It is only fleeting, but others follow and all are constant indications of knowingly acquiring consciousness of reaches beyond the physical-material, a viewing of the above. These continuing ecstasies have the effect of confirming our trust and faith in the supernatural world's existence. They continually make our thinking one pointed and possessive of our thoughts at every opportunity. We have to hold patience, avoid inflation at these stirrings and be continually alert to any vagary of the mind such as may introduce conceit and so result in the true light being cut off. Those who rise to great heights have for long periods, virtually been bathing their subtler and higher senses in sensations we are just now privileged to experience, and to conjecture upon as to their immensity.

How painfully tragic when a young soul grasps eagerly and clutches selfishly to some primary fact of experience and assumes the elixir of life is its own. Yet in all probability we all have a maximum capacity by virtue of the brain, body and environment we are in at present. Yet, with some evaluation of this possibility we can step ahead, if with no other virtue than humility, combined with a strengthening of faith to the clearing of egoism for a future period.

B. J. Whitbread.

10953 88th Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta.

THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS

The Secret Doctrine with all its wealth of detailed information concerning religions, philosophies, sciences, ancient and modern systems of thought, cosmogenesis, anthropogenesis, etc., etc., is based upon three fundamental propositions which are presented in the proem of the book. These three concepts can be supported by reason and logic, but to those who with swift intuition seize upon the essence of these three propositions, their self-evident truth is so compelling that no process of reasoning is required to justify their acceptance.

The first Proposition is:

"An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless Principle on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought—in the words of Mandukya—'unthinkable and unspeakable'."

This One Absolute Reality is 'devoid of all attributes and is essentially without any relation to manifested finite being'. While the nature of that Reality cannot be pictured in the mind nor expressed in words, it is symbolized in the

religions of mankind by the various forms of Gods which men create in their minds as focal forms of the Formless One. These Gods have many names and various powers and qualities are ascribed to them; but whether the deity is imaged as detached, aloof, omniscient, above all human desires, or whether it is conceived of as a more human god, who on occasions is carried away by his passions and excesses, each is a symbol created out of the desire of human beings to portray in some form, primitive or otherwise, that pervading Reality which we can sense, but which we cannot know through thought.

To quote again from the Proem, "But once that we pass in thought from this (to us) Absolute Negation, duality supervenes in the contrast of Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object Hence it will be apparent that the contrast of these two aspects of the Absolute is essential to the existence of the Manifested Universe. Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual Consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle (*upadhi*) of matter that consciousness wells up as 'I am I', a physical basis being necessary to focus a Ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity."

The second Proposition is:

"The Eternity of the Universe in toto as a boundless plane; periodically 'the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing' called the 'manifesting stars' and 'the sparks of Eternity'.

"This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has recorded in all departments of nature. An alteration such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without excep-

tion, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we are one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe."

Under this law of periodicity everything comes into being, grows and decays; it is the process of manifestation for atoms, men, planets, universes. Under this law, human reincarnations take place and a man passes many times through the stages of birth into a physical body, growth and experience in that body, and finally withdrawal therefrom until the moving cycles bring him back again to earth. Karma, the great law of compensation, creates, under this law, the pattern of human lives based upon previous actions, and in each new incarnation presents new and old fields of experience.

The third Proposition is:

"The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Oversoul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the cycle of incarnation (or 'Necessity') in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal sixth principle—or the Over-Soul—has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddhi). This pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts to man save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

What a vision this brings of the unity of all the little and greater lives in the universe, each on its own rung of the ladder of unfoldment and each moving forward by virtue of the Cosmic Ideation inherent within it. When the stage of man is reached, the then self-conscious entity can become conscious of the Universal Self, if by effort and self-discipline he frees himself from the lower attractions and seeks his Soul which is identical with the Over-Soul.

SECRET DOCTRINE TERMS

MULAPRAKRITI. This is the first Sanskrit word in the text of the Secret Doctrine; it appears in the 2nd paragraph of the notes on sloka 1 of the Stanzas. In this word is contained a clue to the physics and metaphysics of the Secret Doctrine and recent scientific discoveries in the interchangeability of energy and mass, have all tended to confirm one of the basic ideas implicit in this word.

Mulaprakriti is said to be 'unmanifested, primordial Substance'; 'the noumenon of undifferentiated Cosmic Matter'; it is 'coeternal and even one with Space in its abstract sense'; it is 'the basis of the Upadhi or vehicle of every phenomenon, whether physical, psychic or mental'. It is the root substance of all material forms.

The word is composed of two shorter words, 'mula' which means 'root', 'beginning' or 'basis'; and 'prakriti' which means nature in general. Prakriti is another compound word, the preposition 'pra' meaning 'forth', 'from', and the 'kri' portion meaning 'to do', 'to make', 'to act'. The word 'karma' (action) is formed from the verb-root 'kri'.

The Sanskrit 'kri' is therefore similar in meaning to the Greek 'ergon' ('make', 'do', 'act') from which we get our word 'energy'. In western science energy and matter were considered to be separate

and distinct until quite recently when research in nuclear physics indicated that mass is being constantly transformed into energy. The interchangeability of energy and mass is now expressed in the famous equation of Einstein's, " $E = M \times C^2$ " "Energy is equal to the mass multiplied by the speed of light squared."

The unity of energy and mass is implicit in the word 'Mulaprakriti' and an expanded definition of the word might read as follows: "The subtle, root-noumenon of primordial energy-mass which is the basis of and from which comes forth all that appears in the realm of forms as either energy or matter."

"One has to be thoroughly impressed with an idea, which I have in vain endeavoured to impart to Theosophists at large, namely, the great axiomatic truth that the only eternal and living Reality is that which the Hindus call Paramatma and Parabrahman. This is the one ever-existing Root Essence, immutable and unknowable to our physical senses, but manifest and clearly perceptible to our spiritual natures. Once imbued with that basic idea and the further conception that if It is omnipresent, universal and eternal, like abstract Space itself, we must have emanated from It and we must, some day, return into It, and all the rest becomes easy Real life is in the spiritual consciousness of that life, *in a conscious existence in Spirit, not matter*; and real death is the limited perception of life, the impossibility of sensing conscious or even individual existence outside of form, or at least, of some form of Matter."—S.D. III, 512.