

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Divine Wisdom Brotherhood Occult Science

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ALBERT ERNEST STAFFORD SMYTHE
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THE CRUCIFIED ONE

Being a patient for some time recently at the Hospital of St. Joseph in Hamilton, where the newly enlarged and extensive institution testifies to the humanitarian aims and enterprising spirit of the local Roman Catholic body, I have had the opportunity thrust upon me to ponder over the ideas and inspiration suggested by the Crucifix, which has hung on the wall before me all through my stay.

There were no Crucifixes before the sixth century. In 553 A.D. the Church Bishop and Fathers decided no longer to teach the theories of reincarnation to the Christian Church. As a result, an entirely new set of teachings became established. Gradually the idea voiced by the Baltimore Cardinal in his book *The Faith of Our Fathers* that it is not sufficient for a man to be a Christian, but that he must be a Christ, was displaced by the so-called Evangelical idea that Jesus was the one perfect man and that his death on the cross was a means of salvation for all other men. The fundamental Christian teaching was stated by Jesus himself; that we must become perfect, even as our Father in Heaven is perfect. Paul elaborates this in Ephesians

St. Paul also notes the merciful character of reincarnation in his Epistle to Titus where he uses the Greek technical word for reincarnation, but the English translators misleadingly use the word "regeneration", just as they do in the case of Jesus who also uses the Greek word for reincarnation and it is again misleadingly translated 'regeneration'. No one who knows and values the ancient ideal would think for a moment of taking away the glory from the character of the Nazarene, but the devout mind must decide for itself whether one

man representing perfection is of more value to the universe than all men striving after perfection and having attained it, entering into communion with the Godhead so that God shall be all and in all, as Paul states.

I have been accused of blasphemy for expressing the view that Jesus expected all men to reach his own level but this is distinctly understood from the passage in the Apocalypse

Taking this view of the teaching we do not minimize the glory of the Saviour. One can perceive that the Crucifix does not merely represent the one perfect man but it stands as a token of an ideal to be attained as the crown and summit of all perfect men in the human family. The Crucifix therefore, does not represent the one perfect man of Nazareth but all the perfect men who have striven through the ages to reach the perfection of the Father in Heaven. Hence, poor, forlorn humanity can look to the cross, not as the symbol of a life 2,000 years ago, but of the striving, toiling, suffering and sacrificing men of all time, yesterday, to-day and for-ever. The pangs and miseries of generations of men are all symbolized in the Crucifixion, and looking upon it, poor, frail and feeble humanity may look up to it and after many failures, take heart and hope once more to press forward,—determined in spite of all difficulties to win the martyr's crown.

A. E. S. S.

(This last article was dictated by Mr. Smythe to Mrs. Townsend in St. Joseph's Hospital, but when Mrs. Townsend returned with the copy, Mr. Smythe was unable to read it. He had intended to shorten it and to fill in the two quotations, but this, of course, was impossible.)

1861 - A. E. S. S. - 1947

He fought the good fight, and is now on his way to the Isles of the Blessed. That he was a doughty warrior none can deny. For his ideals and principles he gave no quarter nor asked for any. To one of that kind there was bound to be bitter antagonism and his path was bestrewn with the debris of many a battle. Theosophy to him as originally stated was the pristine spring that carried the truth, and that he felt was to be kept pure and unsullied by every means in his power. For that reason Canada stands in an unique position due to his efforts to keep alive Theosophy as it emanated from the fount. For a quarter of a century as General Secretary he held the banner aloft and for twenty-seven years he edited *The Canadian Theosophist* which now stands as a monument to his zeal. Time will show when the dross has fallen away from all the controversies that have raged about him, that the edifice he was instrumental in building had its foundations in Truth and the great work he did in his long and noble life was well and truly performed. As one who knew him for many years as a great and cherished friend and one who has worked with him in office, I can testify as perhaps few can do as to the unswerving efforts and devotion to duty he made to the very last. During the

past few years owing to the decline of bodily health and strength he carried on with an indomitable will, resenting deeply the limitations of the flesh, in his strenuous efforts to keep abreast of the times. Not until utter feebleness and complete lack of strength to even carry on the ordinary routine of daily life did he give up, but unable to move, his scintillating mind was still undimmed and many were the times when he told me of what should be done and how he would do it if he were but able to carry on. I feel in paying this tribute to his memory the same inadequacy I felt when I attempted to fill the shoes of such a brilliant predecessor in office. We have lost a great man, a brilliant mind, an indefatigable worker, a great friend and his place will not easily be filled. In bidding him farewell I say au revoir, for I know we shall meet again in another incarnation. I know I am voicing the wishes of his many friends and admirers in wishing him God-Speed. We know his soul is in Nirvana, where he is welcomed by his loved ones and the great souls that are there, and that after his well deserved rest he will return again to earth to carry on the great work for the enlightenment of the world.

E. L. Thomson,
General Secretary.

THEOSOPHY

THEOSOPHY is not a creed; it is the grace of God in one's life; the power of God in one's work; the joy of God in one's play; the peace of God in one's rest; the wisdom of God in one's thought; the love of God in one's heart; the beauty of God in one's dealings with others.

A. E. S. S.

September, 1920.

ALBERT E. S. SMYTHE

On March 15, 1920, The Canadian Theosophist made its first appearance. Mr. Smythe was the Editor and in his front page article he quoted from a proclamation drawn up in 1895 which offered "fraternal good-will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all Theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation. To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greetings and freely offers its services. It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is, and will be, grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a scientific basis for ethics. And, lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the path to tread in this."

This ideal was maintained by Mr. Smythe during the following twenty-seven years of his work. To the original teachings of the Masters as given out by H. P. Blavatsky he was loyal throughout and he welcomed to the pages of the magazine articles from any source,

Theosophical or otherwise, which supported the broad catholicity of the above proclamation.

In his comments in that first article Mr. Smythe wrote, "The Self, which remains and returns again, knows that its millennial striving has due effect, and it is not troubled about immediate results. Petty minds seek an end. There is no end in the Eternal. Unfolding Life, forever new, forever free, is the immediate secret. The pulse of the Eternal never ceases to beat. The Divine Heart never ceases to transmute its mysteries into magical dreams of form and colour.

"Our differences are in our dreams, the illusions of our day-to-day conceit and ignorance and fear. When we pass beyond these and begin to understand the vast symbolisms of the Divine Life in the universe, we approach the secret of secrets in the central Invisible Heart that would make us all one in its Love and Wisdom."

In May of this year when we were discussing plans for the magazine work he repeated practically the same words to me. He said, "We must learn to become completely impersonal in this work" and went on to point out that while we can plan and work to a plan, it is the work and how we do it, which should be our concern; if this is done faithfully and to the best of our ability at the time, then the result is with the great Law and is not our personal concern.

Under his charge the magazine won its place in the Theosophical world and for twenty-seven years it was noted for its independence. It was outspokenly critical of all aberrations from the Theosophical way, particularly so if these wanderings were inspired by Theosophical leaders. But if he attacked, he also gave full space in the magazine to

those who were critical of his ideas and who sought to defend their own positions. Freedom of information and discussion were his watchwords.

And now he has passed from the scene of his labours not at 'seventy years before the night comes when no man can work' as he wrote in the above mentioned article, but at the ripe age of eighty-six. Through all those years there was in his heart and mind one primal impetus, one 'life-meditation' which asserted and re-asserted itself over all the chequered scenes, events and incidents of his life, and that was Theosophy, first, last and always.

D. W. B.

LAST DAYS

Mr. Smythe went into St. Joseph's Hospital, Hamilton, on September 14th 'for a couple of weeks' rest'. The hot humid days of August and September had been very trying on him in his weakened condition, but he fully expected soon to be back in his apartment. During his stay in the hospital he was working on his poems and hoped to have the manuscript ready for publication this Fall.

The tired body became weaker and weaker, and on Wednesday, October 1st, he passed into a coma, half-rallying when some Toronto friends came in to visit him in the evening. He did not regain consciousness afterwards and passed away quietly on the night of Thursday, Oct. 2nd.

The funeral service was held in Toronto on Monday, Oct. 6th, and cremation took place at the Necropolis. The large room in which the casket lay was half-filled with floral tributes from the Theosophical Societies, from other organizations with which he had been associated and from the many friends and business associates of his son, Major Conn Smythe. The chapel was over-crowded, many persons standing throughout the service. Lt.-Col. Thomson delivered an

impressive tribute to his memory following the funeral service which was read by Mr. Barr. The pallbearers were the two grandsons, Hugh and Stafford Smythe, Mr. David B. Thomas of Montreal Lodge, Mr. Percy Bretz, an old newspaper friend of Toronto, and Mr. G. I. Kinman and Mr. George McMurtie of Toronto Lodge.

A TRIBUTE

BY J. V. MCAREE

There has been no newspaperman in my time for whom I have had a greater respect than for Albert E. S. Smythe, whose death in his eighty-sixth year has been announced. I knew him first when he was on the old Toronto World, to which he contributed regularly some of the most thoughtful articles a Canadian newspaper ever carried. They were based on his beliefs in theosophy, and could hardly be said to make an appeal to the general reader. "They'll take it from you, but not from me," he once did me the honour of saying, so, perhaps, at bottom we had a good deal in common, though I was not conscious of it at the time. Like most of us in the newspaper work he had his periods of good and ill fortune. But he never complained. When he told me of some disappointment, some harsh blow of fate, he always smiled. Life, apparently, was turning out much as he had expected; and he had spiritual reserves of strength and buoyancy which made him imperturbable. Mr. Smythe was a lover of good literature and a champion of sound English, in which his pen was ever steeped. He was an influence for good; and we doubt if he ever lost a friend except to death. I am sure that much of the seed he sowed in his many years of activity fell on fertile soil, and that its quiet harvests will be reaped for many years to come.—(*Globe and Mail*, Toronto, Oct. 4th, 1947.)

CANADIAN EDITOR
AND THEOSOPHIST,
FOUNDED SOCIETY

Hamilton, Oct. 2 (Staff).—Albert Ernest Stafford Smythe, prominent Canadian editor and founder of the Toronto Theosophical Society, died here tonight. He was in his 86th year.

Conny Smythe, managing director of the Maple Leaf Hockey Club, is a son.

Born at Gravehill, County Antrim, Ireland, and a graduate in science from Irish universities, Mr. Smythe came to Canada in 1889 after residing in Chicago for several years.

He brought theosophy to Canada, forming the Toronto Theosophical Society in 1891. For four years he edited the theosophical periodical, *The Lamp*.

He joined the editorial staff of the *Toronto World* in 1903 and went to *The Toronto Globe* in 1905.

Two years later he returned to the *World* and was chief editorial writer until 1920. In 1928 he was appointed editor of the *Hamilton Herald*, resigning from active journalism in 1934. For many years he was honorary editor of the *Canadian Theosophist*.

He worked for a short period for the *Toronto Star*. For ten years he wrote two columns in the *Toronto Sunday World* dealing with comparative religion, occultism, the esoteric basis of Christianity, the secret doctrine, and art, music, literature and drama from the occult point of view.

He published two books, "Poems, Grave and Gay," in 1891, and "The Garden of the Sun," in 1923.

In 1886 Mr. Smythe, who lectured extensively in Canada and the United States, was admitted to the Onondaga tribe of Indians in Syracuse by the name of O-ake-wah-de-he.

He was president of the Toronto Theosophical Society in 1891, 1893 and 1917 and general secretary of the Theosophical Society of Canada in 1920. He was president of the Toronto Press Club in 1907 and the Dickens Fellowship from 1920 to 1924. He was a vice-president of the English Dickens Fellowship from 1924 until his death.

Before coming to this country he served two years as a private in the 15th Company, Queen's Edinburgh Volunteer Brigade. During the First World War he became greatly interested in the hygienic welfare of the armed forces and was a member of the original advisory committee on venereal disease in the Toronto Military District. He was president of the Ontario Social Hygiene Council for three years.—(*The Globe and Mail, Toronto, Oct. 3, 1947.*)

MIDNIGHT

There comes a night breath bringing
The fragrance of the hay,
There comes a star-beam flinging
A blessing for the day.

There comes a thought of dying
To me who cannot die;
The whippoorwill is crying,
A fire-fly flickers by.

What storm of Fate's provoking
Sweeps from the depths remote,
In surging grief-tides choking
All nightlong at my throat?

Is it the summer's glory
That must be laid away,
Or dread of winter hoary
Above the church-yard clay?

Or in the heart-deep stirring
Some woe of other lives,
Whose harvest time recurring
Out of the chaos strives?

A. E. S. SMYTHE.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

By special request from many lodges for a Lecture Tour by Professor Ernest Wood, preparations are now well in hand and we hope to be in a position soon to publish an itinerary of his journey through Canada from coast to coast. At present it seems he will begin in Victoria, B.C., sometime early in December and close at Montreal after visiting practically all our lodges as well as those of the Federation on his way. Mr. H. S. Gibbs of Ottawa is now motoring to Vancouver (where he intends to stay) and whilst visiting me here in Toronto was good enough to volunteer to act as my emissary by visiting most of the lodges on his way West and arrange details with them, thus saving me a great deal of correspondence. I trust all concerned will take full advantage of this opportunity of discussing with him plans in connection with the projected tour.

* * * *

Due to my appeal in this magazine for help to the distressed persons in European countries, as well as to the numerous personal letters to members in Canada, it now appears that there has been an overlapping in our efforts on their behalf. I understand quite a few have received many parcels and others have received none. To obviate this I would suggest that lodges and individuals who have sent help be good enough to drop me a line giving names and addresses of those so helped; these I will collate and thus be in a position to advise those who are anxious to help in sending those further parcels which are so urgently needed by others who have received nothing.

* * * *

I have gratefully responded to those members, subscribers and others who have so thoughtfully sent in donations to our Magazine Fund. The reduction

in size has at last brought home to many the urgency of funds in view of the advancing prices in connection with the cost of production.

* * * *

It is with deep regret I announce the demise of yet another of our members, Mrs. Margaret O. Houston of Toronto, who passed away very suddenly on August 25th. Our sympathy is extended to Mr. Houston and the family in their sad loss.

* * * *

As most of us are aware, Mr. Jinarajadasa our President, is on an extended tour in Europe and will be returning to Adyar by time this is in print. Recently I received a long letter from him written in Venice and the details he gives me of his tour is little short of marvellous. I use that word advisedly for the following reasons. He speaks of the many discomforts of post-war travelling, the amount of clothing to be taken for the various changes of climate, the preparation of speeches and talks all of which have to be laborously written in preparation for publication and for translation at lectures by interpreters to the various audiences, and to top all, the entire lack of a personal secretary. The discomforts of not having a cabin to himself on the voyage is highlighted by the fact that with his voluminous correspondence and important commission he was one of six in a cabin on a Home Transport carrying some thirteen hundred souls where as he described it 'pandemonium reigned generally'. To this may be added the fact that he is personally not very strong and the strain of all the preparatory tuning-up for the great work he was concerned with must have been a very heavy strain on him. The innumerable meetings in the many countries he visited where people were turned away for want of space and the countless functions he had to attend caused me to use

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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.

I am indebted to Mr. N. W. J. Haydon for Issue No. 1, Vol. 1 of *The American Philosopher*, a sixty-four page quarterly published at Rutland, Vermont, subscription \$4.00 per annum. This is a splendid magazine devoted to the

Ancient Wisdom and to Universal Brotherhood. The articles are well written and although the word 'Theosophy' does not appear throughout, Theosophical students will rejoice to find the old and profound truths restated in a clear direct style which will appeal to modern readers. The articles in the first issue include 'The Divine Law of Music', 'The Human Aura', 'Superior Man', 'The Science of Yoga', and the first portion of a fine article 'The Measure of Man'. The editor is well versed in Theosophical thought, and this magazine would be a very useful one for members of the Theosophical Society to place in the hands of thinking persons who are interested in the Theosophical approach but who fight shy of organizations, societies and labels. Salutations and best wishes to *The American Philosopher!*

It is noteworthy that a review which the editor of *East-West* designates as 'among the most intelligent of those which have appeared so far' of the recent book by Paramhansa Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, appeared in *Novoye Russkoe Slovo*, the largest Russian newspaper in America. The reviewer was Helen Rubissow, the author of *The Art of Russia*.

Lest we forget that a cyclic law of cause and effect does operate in the affairs of men, I quote hereunder from an earlier issue of the *Canadian Theosophist* respecting a period within the memory of all readers when in one year, 2,400,000 persons died of starvation. At that time there was an abundance of food but little 'money'; today there is an abundance of 'money' but the world food supplies are running short. "In that same year, Denmark slaughtered cattle at the rate of five thousand a week because there was no market for their dairy products. English milk was

poured down the drains because there was not demand for it to maintain the price levels. A fine of five pounds an acre was fixed for every new acre of potatoes sowed, to discourage English farmers from increasing the potato crop. In the same year one million carloads of wheat were destroyed; 267,000 carloads of coffee were destroyed, five hundred thousand tons of meat were destroyed. In Argentine alone the carcasses of 60,000 sheep were burned. In that same year Canada had more than a million unemployed. The United States had twelve million unemployed".

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Krishnamurti Writings, Inc., of Ojai, California, announce the publication of a new book by Krishnamurti containing the reports of sixteen talks given at Ojai in 1945-46. Price \$2.00.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

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the word marvellous, for in spite of all the distractions not to mention the lack of essential food to which he is accustomed, he found time to answer my letter and to give me in minute detail so many of the high-lights of a most fascinating odyssey and many intimate items which being private I cannot disclose. And over and above all this he closes optimistically of his returning to India to take up the reins again and discusses problems for the future, which constrains me to give you this side light on the remarkable man we have as our president, a man for whom I cannot but feel the highest regard, both for his integrity of purpose and magnificent efforts on behalf of Theosophy.

* * * *

On September 21st I visited Detroit to speak to the American Lodge there and had a wonderful reception. In spite of the bad storm there was a splendid

audience in their really beautiful auditorium. I was particularly pleased to see members of the Covina and Federation lodges present. My subject was "Theosophy—A Way of Life" and it turned out to be most opportune as the lodge activities were opened at this meeting, and I was able to demonstrate how by living a truly theosophical life we are enabled to tie it in with the great happenings in the world to-day. I was tremendously impressed with the atmosphere of energy and enthusiasm displayed. The president, Mr. Walter Rupp is an ideal person for that position and seemed indefatigable in his efforts to make his lodge a real pulsating centre in his community. Both he and the Detroit Lodge particularly requested me to convey their greetings and best wishes to the Canadian National Society and evinced the liveliest interest in the hopes that both Sections would work together and co-operate in the interests of Theosophy.

* * * *

The year 1947 commemorates the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of that great world figure, Dr. Annie Besant, and the Theosophical Society has inaugurated "The Besant Adyar World (Commemorative) Fund" for the permanent establishment and security of Adyar as a "Flaming Centre" of Theosophical study and work. In accordance with the above a letter from the President and a pamphlet "Besant Centenary 1947" has been forwarded to all members. It is hoped that individuals and lodges will send in donations for this very necessary purpose. At the last Executive Meeting it was suggested that lodges make special collections and forward them to the General Secretary who will be glad to collate same and forward on to Adyar. As October was the month of Annie Besant's birth it is hoped that those who intend subscribing to this Fund do so without undue delay.

E. L. T.

WHAT OUR SOCIETY NEEDS MOST

The first object of our Society is the formation of a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood. This is a practical object and at the same time a fact in nature. It has been long regarded by the greater number of men as an Utopian ideal, one that might be held up, talked about, desired, but impossible of attainment. And it was no wonder that people so regarded it, because the ordinary religious view of God, nature, and man placed everything on a selfish basis, offered personal distinction in heaven to the impossible the realization of this beautiful dream. But when the Theosophical philosophy shows that there is a unity among beings, not only in their better natures, but also on the physical plane, our first object becomes most practical. For if all men are brothers in fact, that is, joined one to another by tie which no one can break, then the formation of the nucleus for the future brotherhood is something that has to do with all the affairs of man, affects civilizations, and leads to the physical as well as moral betterment of each member of the great family.

This first object means philanthropy. Each Theosophist should therefore not only continue his private or public acts of charity, but also strive to so understand Theosophical philosophy as to be able to expound it in a practical and easily understood manner, so that he may be a wider philanthropist by ministering to the needs of the inner man. This inner man is a thinking being who feeds upon a right or a wrong philosophy. If he is given that one which is wrong, then, becoming warped and diseased, he leads his instrument, the outer man, into bewilderment and sorrow.

Now as Theosophical theories were and are still quite strange, fascinating, and peculiar when contrasted with the usual doctrines of men and things, very

many members have occupied themselves with much metaphysical speculation or with diving into the occult and the wonderful, forgetting that the higher philanthropy calls for a spreading among men of a right basis for ethics, for thought, for action. So we often find Theosophists among themselves debating complicated doctrines that have no present application to practical life, and at the same time other members and some enquirers breathing a sigh of relief when anyone directs the enquiries into such a channel as shall cause all the doctrines to be extended to daily life and there applied.

What we most need is such a Theosophical education as will give us the ability to expound Theosophy in a way to be understood by the ordinary person. This practical, clear exposition is entirely possible. That it is of the highest importance there can be no doubt whatever. It relates to and affects ethics, every-day life, every thought, and consequently every act. The most learned, astute, and successful church, the Roman Catholic, proceeds on this basis. Should we refrain from a good practise because a bigot takes the same method? The priests of Rome do not explain, nor attempt to explain or expound, the highly metaphysical and obscure, though important, basis of their various doctrines. They touch the people in their daily life, a knowledge of their own system in all its details enabling them to put deep doctrine into every man's language, although the learning of the preacher may be temporarily concealed. With them the appeal is to fear; with us it is to reason and experience. So we have a natural advantage which ought not to be overlooked.

High scholarship and a knowledge of metaphysics are good things to have, but the mass of the people are neither

scholars nor metaphysicians. If our doctrines are of any such use as to command the efforts of sages in helping on to their promulgation, then it must be that those sages—our Masters—desire the doctrines to be placed before as many of the mass as we can reach. This our Theosophical scholars and metaphysicians can do by a little effort. It is indeed a little difficult, because slightly disagreeable, for a member who is naturally metaphysical to come down to the ordinary level of human minds in general, but it can be done. And when one does do this, the reward is great from the evident relief and satisfaction of the enquirer.

It is pre-eminently our duty to be thus practical in exposition as often as possible. Intellectual study only of our Theosophy will not speedily better the world. It must, of course, have effect through immortal ideas once more set in motion, but while we are waiting for those ideas to bear fruit among men a revolution may break out and sweep us away. We should do as Buddha taught his disciples, preach, practise, promulgate, and illustrate our doctrines. He spoke to the meanest of men with effect, although having a deeper doctrine for greater and more learned minds. Let us, then, acquire the art of practical exposition of ethics based on our theories and enforced by the fact of Universal Brotherhood. — (From *The Path* for September, 1892.)

MEETING OF THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE

The quarterly meeting of the General Executive took place at 52 Isabella St., Toronto, on Sunday, October 5th, 1947. Members present: Messrs. Dudley Barr, George Kinman, D. B. Thomas and the General Secretary. The Chairman spoke feelingly of the sad loss of Mr. Albert E. S. Smythe who for so many years had attended these meetings and who had

given a long life to the furtherance of Theosophy. It was moved that a letter of sympathy be sent to Major Conn Smythe and the family on their bereavement. The Chairman then reported on his visit to the American Convention. The Financial Report showed a pleasing increase and at Mr. Thomas' instigation a committee was formed to investigate ways and means to still further the finances of the Society. Other routine business was discussed and the next meeting arranged for the first Sunday in February, 1948.

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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THOUGHT AND VISION

(Concluded from Page 176)

Mind is not creative, but critical and its prominent quality is mechanical. To quote from Ranjee Savani, "Intellect is fundamentally concerned in bringing coherence and consistency within a 'given' that *qua* intellect, it is not called upon to transcend as Bergson would say it is a special tool created by the *elan vital* which underlies the entire evolutionary process. This tool is an index, not of Truth, but of utility; in its processes it limits and distorts the larger intuition of reality which flows through the vital impulse out of which consciousness itself appears to emerge."

Vision

What is that 'larger intuition of reality' of which Bergson writes? Because the word 'intuition' is used for so many things, hunches, quick insight, psychic perceptions, unresolved feelings of relationships and so on, let us drop that word and substitute 'Vision'.

But here we shall find that we are attempting to put into familiar words of the mind that which we admitted at the beginning was always destroyed by mind. "Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of Heaven" asked Jesus and whereunto shall the Vision of Reality be likened?

Unlike the careful brick-by-brick building process of reason, Vision comes suddenly upon the soul. 'Suddenly the word of the Lord came upon me', 'suddenly I saw a great light' . . . and in that 'suddenly' all the careful processes of the mind are superceded. Suddenly the magic spell which reason has woven vanishes into thin air; suddenly, reason, so sure of its own cleverness and power, is cast down from its height. The light of reason alone is displaced with a new awareness, an awareness in which 'mind and heart intermingle in exquisite pliability in the swift pursuit of Truth'. As Plotinus points out, 'A supreme and

final battle awaits the soul'. Why a battle? If the process were one of constantly refining the intellect, the becoming aware of higher and higher abstractions, a battle would not arise. That conflict is the inner war against the lower reflected self, the pseudo-subjective self, which appears as the real Self because of its intimate association with mind, 'the inner organ with which we continually identify ourselves'. In that battle against the forever rational, one steps off the solid cliff of reason to walk securely upon nothingness. The mind says 'that is absurd', but visionaries have replied, 'it is absurd, therefore it is true'. Whitman wrote, "Darest thou now O Soul, walk out with me toward the Unknown Region, where neither ground is for the feet, nor any path to follow?"

Inspiration

Neitzche tells of his experience with Vision in these words; "The conception of revelation, in the sense that suddenly, with indescribable certainty and refinement, Something became visible, audible. Something which overwhelms one and overturns one in the depths of one's being . . . this alone can describe the condition. One hears, one does not seek; one takes, one does not ask who is giving; like a flash of lightning a thought occurs to one with necessity, in its form without hesitation . . . An ecstasy, the colossal strain of which periodically relieves itself in a flood of tears and which makes one's steps now rush madly, now move slowly; a state of being outside oneself, this is my experience of inspiration."

Socrates, the brilliant intellectualist, the asker of many questions, the defender of reason, had another side to his nature, that of the Visionary. We hear of him caught into one of his trances, standing motionless and silent for as long as twenty-four hours, listening to the inner voice that came to him out of the silence. Later on he might com-

municate something of the vision to his disciples, through the medium of his well-trained mind; but now while the Vision lasts, the mind is not permitted to slay the Reality. There is a wisdom which comes from the farther side of silence; there is a power that comes from restraint; there is a clarity that comes from the isolation of vision. Reason, with its logic, its equations, its particulars and generals, cannot create such things.

Finally let us look again to Plotinus, the last of the great Greeks. Plotinus upheld reason, but later he wrote "but then indeed we must believe that we have seen, when light dawns suddenly upon the soul . . . Then the soul leaves *all knowledge* and as though carried on the same wave of the spirit and lifted by its swell, she suddenly sees without knowing how."

"In that experience", he wrote, "the seer becomes attuned to a unified harmony, being conscious of no opposition toward others or in himself; no longer, no desire, no conception, no thought . . . nay, so to speak, no self. Rapt and inspired he hangs there, well-poised in solitary calm, without a quiver in his own essence, settling nowhere, not wheeling about, brooding motionless, until he himself becomes a pause. Not even about Beauty cares he, having soared far beyond it—even beyond the choric graciousness of the virtues."

The Inner Sanctuary

"He is like unto a man who has penetrated into the innermost sanctuary, thus having left behind him in the outer temple, the statuesque images of the gods which greet him again only when he comes out after interior vision and intercourse with the very Being of the Divine . . . it is an ecstasy, a simplifying attunement, a self-surrender, a yearning for intimate touch, a lull, a longing for at-one-ment."

Reason and intellect draw back from

the threshold of Vision. Vision, reflected in the mind, can lend its creative power to the non-creative intellect; it can become a creative god in manifestation, but reason itself does not create visions. Reason and intellect may build the altar and lay the fuel (and without this preparation, vision cannot touch earth) but Vision is the fire from heaven which strikes upon the fuel and burns upon the altar. It comes from on high, not from below. Perhaps Hermes Trismegistus had that Vision in mind when he said, "These things are not taught, my son, but when the god wills they are remembered."

Vision, though ever new, is never unfamiliar. It is the deep innermost of our Self calling to the deep innermost of the All Self, and the two merging by virtue of sameness.

"That which sees must be of the same kind, and like unto that which is seen . . . For never hath an eye seen the sun which was not first like the sun, nor hath a soul seen Beauty unless it were itself first Beautiful."

D. W. B.

PRIMITIVE WISDOM

Most theosophical students are aware that the wisdom, philosophical doctrines and ethics, that have been promulgated by the Theosophical Society, in the western world since 1875, came to us through the munificence of certain eastern adepts; and both Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott acknowledged these brothers as their teachers. In a letter to A. P. Sinnett, one of these brothers wrote:—"Think profoundly and you will find that save death—which is no evil but a necessary law, and accidents which will always find their reward in a future life—the *origin* of every evil whether small or great is in human action, in man whose intelligence makes him the one free agent in Nature. It is not nature that creates diseases,

but man. The latter's mission and destiny in the economy of nature is to die his natural death brought by old age: save accident, neither a savage nor a wild (free) animal die of disease. Food, sexual relations, drink, are all natural necessities of life; yet excess in them brings on disease, misery, suffering, mental and physical, and the latter are transmitted as the greatest evils to future generations, the progeny of the culprits."

Because applied science has made such tremendous strides during the last century, most of us are lulled into a false sense of security regarding the superior state of health of civilized people; but the more thoughtful ones are not so deluded, and many famous men have expressed their opinions to that effect. Dr. Alexis Carrel in "Man the Unknown" write;—"Medicine is far from having decreased human suffering as much as it endeavours to make us believe. Indeed the number of deaths from infectious diseases has greatly diminished. But we must still die in a much larger proportion from degenerative diseases Modern man is delicate. Eleven hundred thousand persons have to attend the medical needs of 120,000,000 other persons Obviously disease is still a heavy economic burden. Its importance in modern life is incalculable." Dr. Parran, surgeon general of the United States in an annual report to the Public Health Service stated that "Every day one out of every twenty people is too sick to go to work or school or attend his customary activities. The average youngster is sick in bed seven days of the year, the average oldster 35 days." Dr. Victor Heiser in "You're the Doctor" wrote;—"Working hard when you are young and earning a competence on which you can retire and enjoy yourself sometime after you are fifty will bring you little happiness if you are not well enough to enjoy those years. Most of the diseases

which we associate with this period are the direct result of improper diet in youth."

Space does not permit further quotations, but it is a matter of common knowledge among scientists and explorers who have made even a cursory inspection of primitive people, that they have exceptionally good teeth; and the skeletal remains of pre-Columbian aborigines supplies us with concrete proof that this is not mere conjecture. There is also abundant evidence to show that here in America among civilized populations, in the majority of cases teeth begin to decay almost as soon as they erupt.

This glaring contrast between the teeth and bony structure of primitive and civilized people, years ago struck Dr. Weston Price, a dentist of Cleveland, so forcibly that he began his scientific investigations of this problem, and since then has published documentary reports of his research work from nearly all parts of the world. Dr. Price began his studies with the primary object of finding out the cause of tooth decay; but the contrast between the general health of primitive and civilized groups was so obvious that he was constrained to report what information he obtained in that way as well.

At Anchorage, Alaska, Dr. Price became well acquainted with Dr. Josef Romig, a skillful surgeon who had been practising among the Indians and Eskimos, both primitive and modern for thirty-six years. During that time Dr. Romig stated that among the truly primitive aborigines he had never encountered a single case of malignant disease, and had never found it necessary to operate for diseases of the gall bladder, kidneys, stomach or appendix; but that he had been obliged to do so very frequently for those natives who had lost the primitive wisdom that their forefathers had retained for thousands of years, and were indulging in the

foods of modern civilization such as refined flour and sugar, jams, jellies, pastry, candy, etc. Dr. Romig also stated that modernized Indians and Eskimos became very susceptible to tuberculosis, which became progressively worse as long as they persisted in following the modern way of life. However, he had for some years made it a practise to advise these people to return to their primitive way of life, and when they did so many of them made a complete recovery.

When at Kenya, Africa, Dr. Price consulted Dr. Anderson, who was in charge of the government hospital there, and Dr. Anderson assured him that the primitive people there never suffer from appendicitis, gall bladder trouble, cystitis or duodenal ulcer, and that malignancy was very rare among them.

Until the year 1850 rickets, tooth decay, deformities of the dental arches and face, and other deficiency diseases were unknown in Iceland. Stefansson presented the University of Harvard with ninety-six skulls which he exhumed from cemeteries in that country dating from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, and not a sign of any of these defects could be found in them by the experts there.

Dr. Percy Howe and Dr. George Wood Clapp, some years ago, brought monkeys from the Himalaya mountains that were normal in every way and performed a series of experiments with them. Those that were given food that they were accustomed to eating in their natural environment remained normal; but those that were fed on what the average child gets in this part of the world developed the same defects and deformities that any observant person can see on a busy street or a crowded street-car.

Major-General Sir Robert McCarrison, who has done exhaustive research in this field in India, fed rats on the

same food that he found the people in many different parts of that country subsisting. When the growing rats were fed the food in vogue where the health of the people was bad, the physique of the rats was bad; but those fed on the same foods eaten by the Hunzas and Sikhs (the healthiest in India) the physical well-being of the rats was good. McCarrison is only too willing to admit that there are other factors to be considered in the matter of health; but other things being equal, good or bad diet meant good or bad health for the rats.

The skulls and skeletons collected by anthropologists and archæologists that are to be found in museums in many parts of the world clearly indicate that never in the history of the world has caries of the bones and teeth been so prevalent as at present; and coincidentally, never has the consumption of refined, devitalized, demineralized, synthetic foods been so great. According to a recent newspaper report the teeth of the young people of Great Britain are so deplorable that if recruits for the army were required to be dentally perfect, there just wouldn't be any army.

"But who wants to live like a monkey, an Eskimo or a native of Australia?" is the usual reply when these scientific truths are mentioned. The complacency disclosed by this question surely reveals the fact that we are long on civilization, but short on intelligence. The inability to put any of the information obtained by the men mentioned in the foregoing into practical application at least to some extent reveals that we are woefully lacking in wisdom, in spite of our great scientific achievements, our compulsory education, etc. Madame Blavatsky found to her sorrow that the "crown of the innovator is a crown of thorns" and that most people will accept any kind of nonsense as long as it comes from orthodox sources; in matters of health however Nature's laws must be obeyed

not orthodoxy. The pioneers in this field of endeavour have experienced the same apathy on the part of the public, and ironically enough, quite frequently those who are the most sinfully indifferent are those who are in the greatest need of this knowledge.

Only a few of the salient features of the subject can be dealt with in a treatise of this length, but if the reader is sufficiently interested to investigate, there is a considerable amount of literature available for example by those authors mentioned in the preceeding. A careful study of the Mahatma Letters implies that the Elder Brothers of Humanity walk sure-footedly in these matters. Fools will of course deride, but before doing so it is to be hoped that theosophical students will first investigate.

Dr. E. J. Norman.

"THE ACTIVE LIFE"

"The Active Life, What it is and What it is Not" by Marco Pallas, author of "Peaks and Lamas".

Here is a small booklet of forty pages or so, which all Theosophists would do well to ponder. The writer feels that most of the things which people are doing today are worthless as true Action.

Mere activity is not enough in itself for mankind today; it must be done as a means to an end—a conscious end, which was decreed for man from the beginning.

This still remains what it has always been, viz.—to reveal and demonstrate the glory of his concealed divinity. Any action which has not this inner principle as the motivating impulse he thinks is now a waste of time, and will only add to the confusion of our present chaos.

This inner Principle can only be contacted clearly by means of the Contemplative Life; and so the Active Life is unsanctioned and may be even unsanctified, divorced from its guide and controller. To him, contemplation and action are simply the inner and outer aspects of right activity; the first belonging to universal principles, which we must know or all our action is useless or worse; the second has respect to the world of relationships, the world of becoming, and this world is concerned with the inter-reaction of the being and the rest of the universe around it.

He scores the life of pleasure as tending to lack of action and, as the third possible life, is unworthy of man's purpose.

Any act in its symbolical aspect (and really it has no other, he says) is able to serve a purpose far exceeding the possibilities of the act considered as an end in itself. No component of the universe, whether a being or a happening, forms a watertight compartment; it is the possibility of communication which alone enables beings to aspire to that knowledge which otherwise would be forever closed to them. The authentic Tradition illustrates this.

The author sums up by stating what an act should be. It must be necessary, skilfully ordered for its purpose. It must exclude irrelevancy. Lastly, and this is the most important aspect, it must, "throughout the whole cycle of its manifestation, be referred to its Principle, through a full use of its symbolical or ritual possibilities."

Near the end he quotes the Islamic formula for Action. "It must be all that it should be, and nothing else besides". Outside its purpose, the pursuit of any activity "is but agitation, an aimless strewing by the wayside".

A little book to remember.

M. H.