

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Divine Wisdom

Brotherhood

Occult Science

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WHITE LOTUS DAY 1948

"The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead."

The Tempest iii. 1.

Madame H. P. Blavatsky died on May 8th, 1891 and each anniversary of her death is observed by all Theosophical students as a time of special remembrance of the great soul who brought Theosophy to the attention of the world.

What an amazing genius she was! In the sixteen short years between the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875 until her death in 1891 she wrote *Isis Unveiled, The Secret Doctrine, The Voice of the Silence, The Key to Theosophy*; she founded and edited two magazines, *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer* and wrote hundreds of articles for those magazines and for other journals.

She left to the world the priceless heritage of a body of teachings, teachings which she would be the first to insist were not hers, but were age-old truths which she had gathered from many sources, she merely supplying 'the string that ties them'. From every field of human thought she garnered materials to support the doctrine which she was presenting—religions, ancient and modern philosophies, sciences, mysticism, symbolism, alchemy, magic, yoga, the myths and legends of earlier ages—all these were drawn upon to lend convincing proof of the universality of the occult tradition and to break down the

narrowing limitations of orthodoxy and materialism.

But while H. P. B. took and used freely, she gave back more than she received. In her hands the material underwent a "sea-change". The study of comparative religion, for example, ceased to be the mere classification of former faiths and beliefs; the bone dry facts gathered by scholars and pundits were endowed with life and became living, fertile aspects of an undying tradition concerning the nature and goal of Man, the pilgrim of the cycle of necessity. The materials from other sources were similarly taken by her from the mental mausoleums in which they had been entombed and, in the presence of the dynamic and creative tradition which H. P. B. had brought, were in their turn made to live as parts of an integrating and life-giving doctrine.

This, I think, is the secret of the continuing power of Theosophy—the mistress which she served. Despite all the distortions which Theosophy has suffered at the hands of its devotees and enemies alike, it still holds undiminished and untouched within its secret heart, the power to bring life to the dead formalism of religion, philosophy and science—"it quickens what's dead".

There is no other system of thought that I know of that "works" in this way.

A student who has acquired a working knowledge of the Theosophical approach is more capable than others of appreciating, using constructively and building into a philosophy of correlated wholeness the old and new facts which are presented to our consciousness by the ever flowing stream of human activity.

White Lotus Day is an occasion when the life-giving power that flowed through the Messenger of Theosophy, H. P. Blavatsky, is brought to remembrance by all members and students and a time when our little lives can be rededicated to the Cause in which she served.

D. W. B.

"THE WRITINGS OF H. P. B."

The writings of H. P. Blavatsky and of Those who sent her are the foundation upon which the modern Theosophical Movement rests. Without that foundation there would be no Movement at all as far as its present-day form is concerned. The history of the Movement after the passing of H. P. B. shows very distinctly that whenever and wherever the teachings contained in her writings, and the writings of the Masters, have been disregarded, ignored, or set aside, that portion of the Movement, or that group of Theosophists, became confused, uncertain, and unsteady, giving rise to often fantastic beliefs and most unfortunate divagations.

The writings of H. P. Blavatsky and of her Teachers are as important today as they have ever been, and deserve close study by every student. They can at no time be replaced by commentaries written by other students, however wonderful people the latter may have been in the estimation of others. This is no reflection on the character and nature of the commentators, nor does it mean that we believe that commentaries should not be written. They most certainly should be, provided they adhere

to the original teachings commented upon, and avoid the psycho-mental delusions which are so easily fallen into. But no amount of commentaries will ever replace the original writings of H. P. B. and of her Teachers. Let us make this point amply clear.

We therefore take the liberty once again to urge our Brother-Theosophists of all affiliations to concentrate on the dissemination of H. P. Blavatsky's own words regarding both teachings and the ideals and principles of the Movement as a whole. The large majority of Theosophical Publications in the world do not feature H. P. B.'s writings, and hardly ever refer to her. There are of course exceptions to this, and very pleasing ones. But while such exceptions exist, the overall picture is not encouraging. We are reminded of a book-catalog issued by one of the National Theosophical Societies on the American Continent. It lists well over 300 titles. Of these only *two* are works of H. P. Blavatsky: *The Voice of the Silence*, and an edited and altered edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, which does not correspond either in text or pagination to the original product of 1888. Two pages are occupied by books on Spiritualism and Rosicrucianism. This is by no means an exceptional case. It can be met with in every Continent with some modifications.

Some people might imagine, perhaps, that H. P. B.'s works are not easily accessible. This would be wrong. They can be obtained in various parts of the world, and in various languages, although some editions may be temporarily out of print. For the benefit of students, we tabulate on a separate page the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, a list which seems to be very conspicuous by its total absence from the pages of many Theosophical Catalogs, or back covers of Theosophical magazines—with a few exceptions, we repeat.

In closing, we wish to congratulate

our new contemporary *Nordisk Teosofi*, issued by the Theosophical Societies (Adyar) in Scandinavian countries and Finland, for opening the first number of this interesting periodical with H. P. Blavatsky's article on "Spiritual Progress", from *The Theosophist*, Vol. VI, May, 1885. This is a good start, and we hope that other articles from her pen will be published in this attractive looking periodical. The great importance of H. P. B.'s writings lies in the fact that they outline the true teachings of the Trans-Himalayan School of Esoteric or Occult Thought, for which no substitute can be found. The sooner the Theosophical Movement, as a whole, returns—wherever it has departed from it—to the realization of this fact, the better it will be both for the present and future generations. We hope to see a healthier tone in this respect before long. We appeal for a greater emphasis on H. P. B.'s writings in current Theosophical literature everywhere. We trust this appeal is not lost in the wilderness!

(An Editorial from a Supplement to "Theosophia", March-April, 1948.)

THE THREE TRUTHS

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.

THE SHEKINAH OF ISRAEL

"Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of The Law".

The Song of Solomon is one of the holiest portions of the Old Testament, for it represents in poetry the Union of the Father-GOD with the Mother or Love Aspect, His Complementary Opposite, His Completion and Perfection, the Shekinah of Israel. The word Shekinah is derived from the verb *shachan*, to dwell within. The Shekinah is the Inhabiting Glory, the Indwelling Light. Her chief symbol is all-permeating, Universal Illumination, seen clairvoyantly in olden days around the Ark of the Covenant.

A vision of the Shekinah is similar to the vision of the Holy Grail, in that it comes only to him who lives a pure and spiritual life. When Moses descended from Mt. Sinai after his great vision of God in His Fullness, during which he became powerfully clairvoyant and clairaudient, his face was seen to be illuminated by the Holy Light, all that remained of his contact with the Ineffable Glory. According to tradition the Light was seen of old to shine forth from between the shoulders and the fingers of the officiating Priest in the Temple at the moment when he spoke the words recorded in Numbers VI, "The Lord make His Face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you."

The exquisite perfumes which occasionally pervade a house or a person are thought by some occult students to be due to a temporary presence of the Shekinah, perhaps indicating that goodness spreads around an appropriate atmosphere, for many persons of fine character have been known to give out sweet odours—notably Walt Whitman, some of whose friends have testified to the fragrance shed abroad by his body.

There are two aspects of the Mother, the Higher and the Lower Shekinah—the Supernal Shekinah and that which

manifests in Matter. If we accept the teaching of the Levitical Doctrine (now-a-days being marvellously justified by the findings of modern science), that there is Divine Intelligence in every particle of matter, we see that the Shekinah is universally indwelling, permeating all things. She is Spirit, dwelling within both Man and Nature. She is Tebunah, Understanding, Intelligence, Insight, Intuition, illuminated by Love. She is the passive, negative aspect, the Darkness, the Sheltering Mother in Whom all things come to birth. And yet she is Light, the Inhabiting Glory.

The Supernal Mother never descends to the Material Plane, but puts forth into it a reflection of herself, an eidolon, called in the Kabbalah the Spouse, the Bride or the Queen, and sometimes the Daughter.

She manifests as Sound as well as Light. "Bas Qol", the Voice of the Daughter, is the Divine Music caused by the stars and planets as they plunge through space. Plato, who learned much from his study of the Kabbalah, called it "the Music of the Spheres".

In manifestation on the earth plane, Shekinah is still the Spouse of GOD, His Complementary Opposite, the feminine aspect of Nature and Man.

The Zohar, one of the most important portions of the Kabbalistic writings, tells us of Four Worlds of Being:—

- I. The World of Creation.
- II. The World of Emanation.
- III. The World of Formation.
- IV. The World of Manifestation in Matter.

In the Worlds of Creation and Emanation there is no difference between the Shekinah and GOD, for They are One, it is in the Worlds of Formation and Manifestation that separation occurs, and manifestation on the Material Plane becomes infinitely complex and varied.

G. H. S. Mead writes of

"GOD the Father—Causative
Essence.

"GOD the Mother—Formative
Essence".

But the Shekinah remains the Complementary Opposite of Deity (without Whom He could not manifest), no matter how lowly her manifestations, for in all material things there is Spirit enclosed and enchained.

The Emperor Hadrian said to a great Rabbi named Joshua, that he would like to see the Shekinah. Joshua told him to gaze upon the Sun. "I cannot," said the Emperor. "Then if you cannot look upon GOD'S servant the Sun, how can you expect to see the Shekinah?"

The Great Mother of Israel was adopted by the Roman Church together with many of her symbols and attributes and incorporated in the Virgin Mary.

Isis, the Egyptian equivalent of Shekinah, was sometimes portrayed black in colour to symbolize the Sheltering Mother in whose body all things came to growth in darkness and in mystery. In the Mystery Plays of the Middle Ages the woman who took the part of the Virgin was clad in black garments, and black images of the Virgin are still to be found in Churches in Central Europe, usually credited with supernatural powers of Healing. There is one such just over the borders between Saxony and Czecho-Slovakia. On a table near the image are laid out reproductions of different parts of the human body—legs, arms, eyes, ears, hands and so forth, as well as discarded crutches, bandages, etc. The statue itself is hung with valuable jewels offered by grateful invalids.

The feminine aspect of God the Father has been largely eliminated from the Christian doctrine—so much the worse for the world. For it is pointed out in the Zohar that the world will never be free from poverty, misery and war until man and woman, masculine

and feminine rule the world in perfect equality.

The doctrine of the existence of the Shekinah does not conflict with the strictly monotheistic faith of the Israelites, to whom the Deity was Duality in Unity. The very last words spoken by a Jew in this world—or spoken for him if he is incapable of speech—are

“Hear ye, Israel, the Lord our GOD is One.”

In spite of the belief that the Higher Aspect of Shekinah never descends, she is said traditionally to have been present at important moments in the history of Israel—for example, on Mt. Sinai during the interview between GOD and Moses. In her Light Aspect she was present in the Pillar of Fire and in the Burning Bush. She is invoked in the Night Prayers of little children in Jewish homes—“On my four sides four Angels, above my head the Shekinah”. When Israel sins she departs from her, and “he who walks haughtily crowds out her feet.”

Tradition tells us that the Shekinah, when manifesting in form, had wings, and that when Moses died, he was symbolically laid to rest amid her feathers.

This reminds us of the passage in the 91st Psalm:—

“He shall cover thee with His feathers and under His Wings shalt thou trust.”

No human being leaves this world without a vision of the Shekinah, it is she who bestows the Living Spirit upon the newly risen to the Life of Heaven. Then the soul is given a new vestment, in the case of the “justified”, or righteous, it is a garment of Light, seen at the Ascension by the followers of the Lord Jesus, the sign of “Man made Perfect.”

The risen spirit, having crossed the River of Death, is received on the further shore by the Holy Mother, the Dweller in the Supernal and is given the Sacred Kiss, the Kiss of Infinite Love.

Olive Harcourt.

GENIUS

Among many problems hitherto unsolved in the Mystery of Mind, stands prominent the question of Genius. Whence, and what is genius, its *raison d'être*, the causes of its excessive rarity? Is it indeed “a gift of Heaven”? And if so, why such gifts to one, and dullness of intellect, or even idiocy, the doom of another? To regard the appearance of men and women of genius as a mere accident, a prize of blind chance, or, as dependent on physical causes alone, is only thinkable to a materialist.

To the inward intuition of man, it is a question whether it is genius—an abnormal aptitude of mind—that develops and grows; or, the physical brain, its vehicle, which becomes through some mysterious process fitter to receive and manifest from within outwardly the innate and divine nature of man's over-soul.

Esoteric philosophy teaches that the flame of genius is lit by no anthropomorphic hand, save that of one's own Spirit. It is the very nature of the Spiritual Entity itself, of our Ego, which keeps on weaving new life-woofs into the web of reincarnation on the loom of time, from the beginnings to the ends of the great Life-Cycle. The EGOS of a Newton, an Aeschylus, or a Shakespeare, are of the same essence as the Egos of a yokel, an ignoramus, a fool, or even an idiot; and the self-assertion of their informing genii depends on the physiological and material construction of the physical man. No Ego differs from another Ego, in its primordial or original essence and nature. That which makes one mortal a great man and another a vulgar, silly person is the quality and make-up of the physical shell or casing, and the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real, Inner man; and this aptness or inaptness is, in its turn, the result of Karma.

Occultism teaches that the presence in man of various creative powers—called genius in their collectivity—is due to no blind chance, to no innate qualities through hereditary tendencies—though that which is known as atavism may often intensify these faculties—but to an accumulation of individual antecedent experiences of the Ego in its preceding life, and lives. For, though omniscient in its essence and nature, it still requires experience through its personalities of the things of earth, earthy on the objective plane, in order to apply the fruition of that abstract omniscience to them. The cultivation of certain aptitudes throughout a long series of past incarnations must finally culminate in some one life, in a blooming forth as genius, in one or another direction.

Great Genius, therefore, if true and innate, and not merely an abnormal expansion of our human intellect—can never copy or condescend to imitate, but will ever be original, *sui generis* in its creative impulses and realizations. It is never eccentric, and will not give way to physical animal passions.

Thus between the true and the artificial genius, one born from the light of the immortal Ego, the other from the evanescent will-o'-the-wisp of the terrestrial or purely human intellect and the animal soul, there is a chasm, to be spanned only by him who aspires ever onward; who never loses sight, even when in the depths of matter, of that guiding star the Divine Soul and Mind, or what we call Buddhi-Manas. (Condensed from an article by H. P. B. *Lucifer* Nov. 15, 1889.)

E. P. W.

TO HIM THAT WAS CRUCIFIED

My spirit to yours dear brother,
 Do not mind because many sounding your name do not understand you,
 I do not sound your name, but I understand you,
 I specify you with joy O my comrade to salute you, and to salute those
 who are with you, before and since, and those to come also.
 That we all labour together transmitting the same charge and succession,
 We few equals indifferent of lands, indifferent of times,
 We, enclosers of all continents, all castes, allowers of all theologies,
 Compassionaters, perceivers, rapport of men,
 We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject not the disputers nor
 any thing that is asserted,
 We hear the bawling and din, we are reach'd at by divisions, jealousies,
 recriminations on every side,
 They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my comrade,
 Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down till we
 make our ineffaceable mark upon time and the diverse eras,
 Till we saturate time and eras; that the men and women of races, ages to come,
 may prove brethren and lovers as we are.

WALT WHITMAN.

May 31st, 1819—March 26th, 1892.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

This magazine is the official organ of the Society in Canada and frequently notices are printed in it requesting action on the part of Lodge secretaries, therefore it should not be necessary for the General Secretary to follow up with individual letters repeating the same request. Will secretaries please note for future guidance!

* * * *

I was greatly distressed to learn of the serious accident to Mr. Perkins the President of the American Section. He had just returned from an extended tour to India and was within half a mile of his home when he was struck by an automobile and very seriously injured. I understand he is progressing as favourably as can be expected. I have extended the sympathies of the Canadian Section to both him and Mrs. Perkins on this regrettable termination of their otherwise very successful trip to Adyar and Europe.

* * * *

Judging from what I hear and my own personal observations the visit of Mr. John Coats to our Eastern Lodges has been an unqualified success. Mr. Coats' personality coupled with the manner in which he treats the subject of his lectures captivated all who were fortunate enough to come in contact with him and the last lecture at the Toronto Lodge brought one of the largest audiences it has had in years. The consensus is that he be requested to pay a return visit as soon as possible. This I hope to be able to arrange.

* * * *

Ballots for the election of members of the General Executive have been sent to all paid-up members and it is hoped that they will return them without any delay in order to avoid a last minute rush and congestion as each envelope

has to be verified before going into the pool for the scrutineers.

E. L. T.

THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive was held at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, on Sunday May 2nd, with the following members present: Messrs. D. W. Barr, Don C. Hatt, George I. Kinman, D. B. Thomas and the General Secretary. The important business was as follows. The Financial Statement showed that the balance in the Bank was considerably better than this time a year ago brought about principally by the reduction in the size of the magazine and the increase of donations to same. The question of a cover for the publication was again read but after due deliberation it was decided to leave it over until the October meeting. Mr. Barr reported he had received very suitable articles for publication in the magazine from members of the Edmonton Lodge which afforded him much pleasure and hoped that members of other lodges would follow suit. The Executive also expressed its appreciation as it felt that this was a step in the right direction and heartily seconded Mr. Barr's sentiments. From all reports it appears that everything is in hand for the election of members for the General Executive at the end of June. Letters from Adyar in reference to the holding of a day each year to be known as United Nations Day was discussed. It was decided that the matter had the approval of the General Executive but that the carrying out of same should be left to individual lodges to take the matter up, arrange programmes and enlist the attendance of leading citizens to co-operate. The General Secretary intimated that when the material promised by the President concerning the work of the United Nations was received it would be sent to all lodges with

(Continued on Page 41)

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OFFICE NOTES

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

Toronto Lodge has received notice of the re-publication of *Through the Gates of Gold* by Mabel Collins; this is being brought out by the Theosophy Company (India) Ltd., of Bombay. It is expected that the new edition will be ready for distribution in the Fall. Several enquiries have been received for copies of this book, but for the past few years it

has been obtainable only in second-hand copies and these are very scarce. Theosophical students will welcome the new edition.

* * *

The editor must be getting a bit p-sy-chic or somethin'. During the past week I had thought several times about *Eirenicon*, the little publication of our friends of the Peace Lodge, Hyde, Cheshire, England. Several months have elapsed since the last copy came in and I wondered what had happened to it. The Feb.-March issue came in this morning. The first article is a tribute to two stalwarts of the Theosophical Movement, who passed away last year, John M. Watkins of London and Albert E. S. Smythe. *Eirenicon* will be issued quarterly from now on and the editor hopes that it will be expanded in size.

* * *

An error which we regret very much appeared in last month's review of the book of poems and essays *The Dream that Lives in the Dust* by Richard Heineman of Toledo. Mr. Heineman's first name was printed as "Richmond"; the editor and not the reviewer, Mr. H. L. Huxtable was responsible for this error.

* * *

Many favourable comments have been received on Professor Wood's splendid article *Masters and Men* in last month's issue. Professor and Mrs. Wood were in Chicago from April 24th to May 3rd, when they leave for their home in Montrose, California. The Chicago Lodges combined to arrange a full week's programme of lectures.

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THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE

(Continued from Page 39)

the request that they use it as the basis of their programmes. It was further proposed that the date selected for this special day by the lodges should be the 26th day of June as that was the date on which the United Nations was officially inaugurated at San Francisco. There being no further business the meeting adjourned to the second Sunday in July.

E. L. T.

"A.E.S.S. AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION."

Mr. Smythe I did not meet, but we had occasional letters from him, encouraging and appreciative of *Eirenicon*. He did not meet H.P.B. though he joined in her day and stood staunchly for Theosophy as she presented it, remaining in the Society and fighting everything he thought disloyal or damaging to its mission with a colourful forthrightness of style that was refreshing and exhilarating. We thought him less than fair to Mr. Leadbeater and sometimes over-denunciatory, and his valuable trenchancy would have been more effective if more restrained; but he was a powerful corrective in the T.S. and under his leadership the Canadian National Society proved, in the face of the severe disapproval of many prominent members, that it was still possible to hold and propound in the T. S. the original teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, unadulterated and undiluted. In forcing this reluctant recognition he did great service to the Society, compelling over-zealous protagonists of later developments to convert their lip-service to tolerance into operative acknowledgment of differing views—not because they wanted to, but because they could not stop him; for he was not a man to plead for freedom of speech; he demanded it and

took it and used it ably. He was a poet too and published a useful "conflation" of *The Bhagavad Gita*.

T. H. R.

(In Eirenicon, Feb.-March, 1948.)

CORRECTION

The Editor
Canadian Theosophist,
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Sir:

re "The Election"

I notice in the April 15th issue of the *Canadian Theosophist*, in connection with the above matter, that it is stated in the fifth paragraph that the undersigned has served previously on the General Executive.

This is a mistake and I would like to have it corrected. It is hard to understand how an error of this kind could arise, as of course your official records will show.

Fraternally,
Alexander Watt.

(Our apologies to Mr. Watt. He was a candidate but did not become a member of the General Executive. Editor.)

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WAKE UP, THEOSOPHISTS !

The individual member might say that being a theosophist is proof that "woke up" he has. What is called for, though, is the realization that the Society as a body is falling down on the job.

To "form a nucleus of universal brotherhood" is only part of the job. To remain as a 'nucleus' whose sole activity is the emission of tame lectures on comparative religion hardly justifies any 'satisfying feeling that our duty has been done'.

We, above all, should know that nothing stands still; that everything must either grow or shrink; strengthen or weaken; increase or die. More than any, we should be aware that what does not do what it was created to do must eventually lose power to do anything. Is that law not the answer to why, after sixty odd years, we still are a comparatively insignificant, uninfluential group? . . . Was it to be such that we were formed? . . .

The word 'nucleus' implies growth, increase, activity. Where brotherhood is being, or can be, promoted, we should be there. Wherever it is threatened, too, we should be, loud in warning and protest.

Small though we are numerically, is there another body so equipped as ourselves to be the moral mentor of the rest? . . . Dealing, as we are at least supposed to do, not in 'isms' or expediciencies but in the eternal moral laws that govern all other laws, we ought to be, not as a right, but as a Duty, the expressor of the social conscience. We should have voice in every council; political, economic or social. Anything important enough for conference is important enough to need Theosophy; something aloof from dogma, taking no 'side', backing no 'party', not exercising or seeking to exercise compulsion; but

warning, advising, guiding — and proving.

Indeed, as muddled businesses call in accountants, as disputants go to lawyers, men should be able to come to a Theosophic body—a group free from superstition, dogma and tradition and fully aware of the awful result to itself, and humanity, if it misuse its powers or its confidence—and they should be able to get from that body a simple but clear, proved statement of a trouble's real causes, or of the effects of a proposed action. Not, in that last case especially, the immediate effect only, but the effects beyond, and beyond again, right to where the action cycles back on the actors.

For if Theosophy is anything it is that which can give ultimate explanation—which, please, is not the same as explaining the Ultimate! As science is systematized knowledge, Theosophy ought to be, in one of its facets, systematized science; for the moral-law-knowledge factor is the only one able to give science what it presently lacks: Cohesion.

But the movement is a long way from that status. What should be the most influential movement of the times sits pondering the relative merits of fairy tales while the 'planes and bombs which will cancel the human spirit's achievements and set it back a thousand years go roaring overhead.

It is not enough to reply that these planes and bombs are themselves the works of that same spirit; not enough to echo Omar: "He's a good fellow, and all will be well!" not enough to shrug and tell ourselves that karmic forces will adjust it all 'someday'. That is merely 'passing the buck' to those forces which complimented us by handing the 'buck' to ourselves in the first place.

Over the world the lights are going out one by one. And the first act of each new dictator is to ban all movements such as ours which maintains, or

ought to maintain, the value of the individual. Apparently these men know our value to the individual better than we do. And where there are no dictatorships, we stand by, voiceless, while men continue to produce those conditions from which dictatorships and police-states are derived.

It may not be too late yet. But the time calls for us to get busy; to throw aside intellectual abstractions and get down to earth; turning all the light we have of moral law upon the conditions of today that those of tomorrow may be better and that greater light than ever may come down to us. Nothing less is our duty. So, Theosophists, wake up! . . .

H. Marquis.

INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS REGIMENTATION

We are living in a world today where in every country one department after another in the economic field is being administered by controls imposed by Government authority. There is little doubt that this is the only method which will give to all, to the poor as well as the rich, an equality in opportunity to purchase goods and use national services. Little by little, national control has to become subservient to a world control by some department of the United Nations. This system of living might well be called "regimentation" where each of us as a soldier in a regiment has to move simultaneously and in line or in squads. This spirit of regimentation is slowly appearing in the political field, particularly in countries tending to a totalitarian regime. The most outstanding example of totalitarianism was in Germany where one party, the Nazis, decreed what should be the political gospel of national life which must be accepted by all, with the penalty that those who refused to accept would be sent to concentration camps. It is this same totalitarian gospel which characterizes the Soviet Republic today. It is

the same spirit of totalitarianism which is the outstanding gospel in politics in India. The National Congress has no place in Indian politics for other parties. Anyone who refuses to accept the creed of the Congress is practically labelled disloyal to the highest national interests. Once again we have regimentation in political thinking.

What is happening may be described by a simile. We are all expected to be bottles of a particular shape, square or hexagonal, which can be packed with no waste space. The bees have discovered that the hexagonal conformation of their cells packs closest with no waste of any space. But if we were all to be round bottles, obviously as such bottles are packed together, there is space between them and so space wasted.

Following the same general spirit of regimentation in administration, the next step is to facilitate such administration by individuals thinking all alike. The individual has no liberty now in any totalitarian regime for his own individual expression unique to himself. He must "fall into line" with whatever is decreed for him. Seen from on high, the struggle today is between the individual and the group.

How shall the individual while accepting the group formation in the economic field, retain his individual mode of thought and feeling and so preserve his individual emotional, mental and spiritual liberty?

This is the most vital problem to be pondered over by all who desire to serve their fellowmen to the highest point of their capacity. It is not my desire to outline remedies but rather to call attention to the great danger which confronts the individual in life today. It is for the individual himself to work out his solution. Were I to suggest my solution, I should be laying down the methods of my type of regimentation for all.

C. Jinarajadasa.

(From *The Young Citizen*, March, 1948.)

THE ADYAR LIBRARY

Dear Friends:

The Adyar Library completed sixty years of its life on the 28th of December 1946; and it is proposed to celebrate its Diamond Jubilee in a fitting manner as a part of the celebrations of the Centenary of Dr. Annie Besant which takes place in the first week of October, 1947.

The Adyar Library is one of the oldest cultural institutions in India; and of all libraries of less than 75,000 accessions, it is perhaps one of the most diversified in language and subjects, being the central library of the world-wide Theosophical Society. In the words of Colonel Olcott, the founder of the Adyar Library, on the occasion of its opening: "The Adyar Library was founded with a definite purpose behind it, a specific line of utility marked out for it from the beginning. . . . a means of helping to effect the object for which the Society was founded . . . Its object is to help to revive Oriental literature; to re-establish the true dignity of the Pandit, Mobed, Bhikkhu, and Moulvi; to win the regard of the educated man, especially that of the rising generation, for the sages of old, their teachings, their wisdom, their noble example; to assist, as far as may be, in bringing about a more intimate relation, a better mutual appreciation, between the literary workers of the two hemispheres . . . Strife comes of mutual misunderstanding and prejudice, as unity results from the discovery of basic truth. Our Society is an agency of peace and enlightenment, and in founding this Library, it is but carrying out its policy of universal good-will." The Library has been equipped for fulfilling this purpose; all its activities have been directed towards the realization of this object.

The Library contains one of the best collections of Oriental Manuscripts, mainly Sanskrit. In the matter of

printed books, its collection in very valuable in the fields of religion, philosophy, art, history and early scientific works, and it has many rare works dating as far back as 1488. There are books in all the principal languages of the world, as well as linguistic works in little-known languages and scripts. Its Tibetan Ta'jur and Ka'jur, the Chinese, Japanese and Siamese editions of the Buddhist Tripitaka, the palm-leaf set of the Pali Tripitaka in Sinhalese script, the collection of printed books in Sanskrit, Avesta, Pali and other Oriental languages, and its collection of periodicals are among the special features of the Library. From a thousand to two thousand visitors come every month from all over India and abroad to see its treasures of art and literature.

In its Adyar Library Series, the Library has already published many important works in Sanskrit and some in Prakrit, Tibetan and Chinese. The Series includes also books in English, either as translations or as interpretations of ancient thought. The Library has further published a catalogue of printed books and of manuscripts. Descriptive catalogues of its manuscripts in Sanskrit and Pali (in Sinhalese script) are being published at present. The Library is also running a research journal which too reaches the various scholars and academic institutions of the world.

The Library has always offered special facilities to students and scholars and also to academic institutions for the free use of its literary treasures, and many students, scholars and academic institutions have availed themselves of the opportunity. It is in exchange relation with nearly all the academic institutions in the various countries of the world in the matter of its publications and reports.

(Continued on Page 48)

THE EXILE OF THE SOUL

BY ROY MITCHELL

(Continued from Page 32, Vol. XXIX.)

IV. The Philosophical Problem.

We have seen how, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, psychology, attracted by the glittering beginnings of scientific research, deserted the field of philosophy for that of positive science and came thereby under limitations that have made it almost unworkable. The other branches of philosophy could not so readily change to a materialistic basis and they have remained more or less in their original field of subjective research, but they too have been affected by the scientific fashion. They have assumed the name of "the philosophical sciences". They define their province as the co-ordination and synthesis of the results of scientific research. That is, they have been persuaded that the interior or subjective method is no longer good enough, because reality lies outside us. They become, therefore, the servants of external reality. The modern philosopher proudly calls himself the "critic of the sciences," and, as inevitably happens when a man devotes himself exclusively to the criticism of the product of others, he ceases to produce in his own right.

The philosopher's position would be superb if he could sit in state and have the scientist bring results to him for criticism. But a scientist does not quite see the necessity for a philosopher at all. The scientist is quite confident he can do his own criticizing. And so, within the rules of his enquiry, he can. At last with no business coming in, the philosopher goes looking for business and ends up in the orbit of a scientist who has his eye fixed to the end of a microscope. When a few philosophers, all in quest of business, have gathered, they find nothing to talk about but whether the

microscope-man can believe his eye. The idealistic monists contend that what he sees is all in his mind. The materialistic monists ask "What is he himself but the sort of thing he sees under the microscope?" The reality is in the object. The seer is an illusion arising out of the motion of the parts of the object. The critical realists, who as we have seen before have a high position—Kant's—if they wish to take it, content themselves with a compromise and try to steer a peaceable middle course.

Am I flippant about it? Here is a modern philosopher stating it in more dignified terms. It is Professor A. S. Pringle-Pattison speaking:

"Subject-object, knowledge, or, more widely, self-consciousness, and its implicates—this unity in duality—is the ultimate aspect which duality presents. It has generally been considered, therefore, as constituting in a special sense the problem of philosophy. Philosophy may be said to be the explication of what is involved in this relation."

This is the present state of the art of Pythagoras and Plato, of Kapila, of Sankaracharya, of Nagarjuna, of Aryasangha, of Plotinus, of Kant, and all the line of the lovers of wisdom. It has been said, not once but many times, these recent years, that formal philosophy has reached the most arid, un-serviceable and generally contemptible era in its history.

Professor Pringle-Pattison's definition of the crux of modern philosophy is the sterile modern form of what once was the great fertile problem of epistemology, the theory of knowledge. The ancient philosopher asked, "How does knowledge come into the world?" The immediate and inferior answer is, "Through the senses." Such an answer

will not stand the test of the commonest experience. We are all conscious of knowledge not traceable to what we have seen or heard. Apart from visions in dreams, which might be recollections of something we have seen but have forgotten, we have tendencies; aptitudes, capacities which are themselves a sublimated form of knowledge. If playing the piano after long training is an earned aptitude, the capacity to play the piano without any training in this life can only be an earned aptitude. Precocious genius is a kind of knowledge not traceable to known experience. So the philosopher, articulated to the scientist, who is in his turn articulated to the doctrine of the exclusive reality of an outside world, falls back on the idea of heredity and says some ancestor earned the aptitude. These knowledge-powers, he says, are transmitted from generation to generation. This is the Plan of the Universe.

It may be true, but at the best it is an inefficient Plan, and in nowise to be compared to the other processes of nature. For one thing, too many of the wisest of mankind do not transmit at all, and when they do so it is with the poorest results. Almost all of mankind transmit at a time when they would seem to have the least worth transmitting. The valuable experience of all of them is at its greatest worth long after they have ceased transmitting. Too many make no use of what has been transmitted, and too many destroy it with counteractive energies. Added to which the scientist is now satisfied that acquired characteristics cannot be transmitted anyway. What escaped these abysses of inadvertence is called heredity. This seems to be the Plan. A more incompetent one could scarcely have been conceived. A Greek or Hindu philosopher would be ashamed to entertain it even for a moment. It neglects the one factor of which the philosopher—or anybody else for that matter—can

be sure, the factor of soul. But this man of ours, having become a critic of the revelations of microscopes can only admit what microscopes reveal, and they are not equipped to reveal souls.

For a statement of the problem in terms of souls, therefore, we must take the whole inquiry to the older philosophers. Plato is nearest to hand and easiest for my reader to examine for himself. It comes up in the *Phaedo*. There, in the last talk between Socrates and the Thebans, Simmias and Cebes, Socrates raises the whole question of knowledge. Whence comes it?

Socrates wastes little time on the possibility of attaining pure knowledge through the senses. Even seeing and hearing, the best of the senses, are not accurate or exact. What then of the inferior senses of smell, taste and touch? Certainly the body is of little assistance. On the contrary it contaminates truth. It keeps man busy finding sustenance for it. Its diseases hinder the pursuit of truth; it begets passions, desires, fancies and foolishness, and so constantly does it break in on study that the Ego finds it almost impossible during life to think at all.

But man, Socrates argues, has interior standards of truth, and the perceptions of this world fall short of them. Two objects, for example are almost equal. They just fall short of a perfect, abstract equality which man can entertain although he has never seen perfect equality on this earth. So it is, Socrates argues, with every other external fact we contemplate. We measure it against an abstract perfection which cannot have arisen out of earth experience. We look at a triangle. It is not a perfect triangle. How do we know? We have never on earth seen a perfect triangle. Neither have we ever seen perfectly parallel lines but we persist in thinking of them. So also with a point which we cannot ever have known on earth, and a line, and all the posited ideas of

geometry. We have abstract perfect criteria for goodness, truth, beauty, love, justice.

None the less these perfections we cannot quite bring to earth. They are vague and fragmentary, now in our effort to realize them, stronger; and since obviously they are not of this human state, in which such perfections are nowhere evident outside of us, there is only one possible explanation of them. They are recollections. They are the earned aptitudes of a half-remembered past. Of what past?

The scientist recognizes interior recollections that have no counterparts in this life. He says they are inherited and has erected about them a doctrine of racial memory, but that will not explain their perfection. His race is evolving. Its ancient memories cannot be of things more perfect than anything in its present state. If so the race is degenerating.

There is also a school of pietists who deny the interior ideas as memories, preferring to think of them as divine intimations of the future. Socrates has a quick answer for these!

"If a man, when he has heard or seen or in any other way perceived a thing, knows not only that thing, but also has perception of some other thing, the knowledge of which is not the same but different, are we not right in saying that he *recollects* the thing of which he has the perception? . . . As when one sees Simmias, one often remembers Cebes."

What other solutions are there? That we got the perfections in this life? Obviously not. That we got them at the instant of birth and lost them in the same instant? This is ridiculous. Did we get them in a previous life on this earth? There could be nothing more perfect in a previous human life than in this one. Whence then?

From a state that preceded the human one, when, before we were human

beings, we were in a state higher than the one in which we now find ourselves. Our present earth life and the earth lives preceding it are to be thought of, not as our proper place in a scheme of soul evolution at all. If so we are degenerating. The old philosophers called our present state a temporary obscurity and the result of some offence of ours against divine law. It is an obscurity that has brought about a condition of amnesia. Thus only can we explain the high memory that is evoked by the imperfect perceptions of this earth life.

The problem is the central one in Plato. In Socrates' discussion with Meno, the whole dialogue turns on this theory of knowledge. If Meno knows the whole of anything he need not ask about it. If, on the other hand, he knows nothing about it, he can neither ask nor learn. The only possible condition under which he can know enough to ask, and little enough to profit by being told, is that he possess a fragmentary recollection of it. This fragment is his fragment of crystal. The instruction enables him to restore it to its original completeness. One man cannot teach another unless by virtue of the fact that the other has a partial recollection of the truth to be taught.

Socrates, in Meno's presence, demonstrates the truth of his doctrine, when he calls in a slave-boy and, first, by letting the boy discover his own ignorance, then by asking him questions to elicit his memory, leads him through the geometrical problem of the duplication of the square.

This is the central doctrine in the greatest of the lovers of wisdom. It is Empedocles' doctrine of the fall into the dark meadow of Ate. It is Plotinus' doctrine of the restoration of the Divine Intelligence and the return to the One. It is the basis of the Taraka Raja Yoga system which proceeds by an exercise of reminiscence identical with Plato's dialectic or "choosing through." It is

the basis of the many mnemonic systems occultists have used as an aid to meditation, those curious arrangements of questions and the philosophical categories placed on revolving discs such as the one Raymond Lully invented and Giordano Bruno used. It is the basis of the lamasery wheels of which the exoteric "praying wheels" are the distorted form, the discs of the Tibetan mystics called *chakravartins* or wheel-turners. It is the explanation also of the effort of the older philosophers to arrange knowledge in categories. It is the only valid theory of meditation itself as the process of stilling the body and steadying the mind in order to elicit from the archetypal memory what the Ego has known but has forgotten.

This is the only fertile mode in philosophy. The narrow treadmill of subject-object must always be sterile, must always contradict itself, must always fail of what it undertakes to do. We can only know the higher truth of a thing by rising into a higher plane of being.

What then must we do? Await the slow crawl of the evolution of the soul until we evolve those higher powers? Maybe we can try to hasten evolution. We had better save ourselves so vain an effort. We would be trying to hasten that which cannot by its very nature be hastened.

It is not a problem of evolution that faces the soul, and still less a problem of hastening evolution. It is a problem of *resumption*, of recovery of atrophied powers long since evolved and now forgotten.

This is the testimony of the sages and seers. They do not offer it as a guess. They offer it as a demonstrable fact which every man, by virtue of his dormant divinity, may know for himself by examining his intuitional memory.

Clearly it is not a current problem in academic philosophy. Philosophers of our time have forsaken intuitional mem-

ory and devoted themselves to the inferior reports of the senses. And, as we have seen, fertile philosophy has tended these recent years to pass over to the mathematicians for whom the senses matter less and the intuitions more.

For the purposes of this series, the problem of the theory of knowledge offers us another picture of the Ego, bewildered and stripped in a strange world which he sees through senses which are not his own, in a body that limits the use of the mind. He is the possessor of a high reality which he neglects for an illusory appearance he has lost the power to interpret.

(To Be Continued.)

THE ADYAR LIBRARY

(Continued from Page 44)

It is our desire to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the Library in a manner befitting its status in the world, and we request you to extend your co-operation for making it a success. *We send you this cordial invitation to participate in the function either by personal presence or by deputing a delegate. A message for the occasion will also be very much appreciated by us, and members who have been connected with the Library at any time are invited to write their reminiscences of the Adyar Library.*

Cordially yours,

G. Srinivasa Murti,
Hon. Director.
C. Kunhan Raja,
Hon. Curator.

(We are very happy to re-print this interesting and informative letter to all members of the Society which appeared in the August 1947 issue of *The Theosophist*. The Adyar Library is performing a truly Theosophical function. Its officers and workers are entitled to our gratitude and congratulations; the Library merits the help and financial support of all members.)—Editor.