

# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Divine Wisdom

Brotherhood

Occult Science

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## H. P. B.'S LAST MESSAGE TO AMERICAN THEOSOPHISTS

*(In the anniversary month of the birth of H.P.B. we are re-printing her ever-timely last message to the Boston Convention of members of the Theosophical Society in America. This message was dated April 15th, 1891).*

For the third time since my return to Europe in 1885, I am able to send to my brethren in Theosophy and fellow citizens of the United States a delegate from England to attend the annual Theosophical Convention and speak by word of mouth my greeting and warm congratulations. Suffering in body as I am continually, the only consolation that remains to me is to hear of the progress of the Holy Cause to which my health and strength have been given; but to which, now that these are going, I can offer only my passionate devotion and never-weakening good wishes for its success and welfare. The news therefore that comes from America, mail after mail, telling of new Branches and of well-considered and patiently worked-out plans for the advancement of Theosophy cheers and gladdens me with its evidences of growth, more than words can tell. Fellow Theosophists, I am proud of your noble work in the New World; Sisters and Brothers of America, I thank and I bless you for your unremitting labours for the common cause so dear to us all.

Let me remind you all once more that such work is now more than ever needed. The period which we have now reached in the cycle that will close between 1897-98 is, and will continue to be, one of great conflict and continued strain. If the T. S. can hold through it, good; if not, while Theosophy will remain unscathed, the Society will perish—perchance most ingloriously—and the World will suffer. I fervently hope that I may not see such a disaster in my present body. The critical nature of the stage on which we have entered is as well known to the forces that fight against us as to those that fight on our side. No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, of augmenting difficulties, of breathing suspicions, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and thrown into disarray. Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T. S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood. Now I have marked with pain a tendency among you, as among the Theosophists in Europe and India, to quarrel

over trifles, and to allow your very devotion to the cause of Theosophy to lead you into disunion. Believe me, that apart from such natural tendency, owing to the inherent imperfections of Human Nature, advantage is often taken by our ever-watchful enemies of your noblest qualities to betray and to mislead you. Sceptics will laugh at this statement, and even some of you may put small faith in the actual existence of the terrible forces of these mental, hence subjective and invisible, yet withal living and potent influences around all of us. But there they are, and I know of more than one among you who have felt them, and have actually been forced to acknowledge these extraneous mental pressures. On those of you who are unselfishly and sincerely devoted to the Cause, they will produce little, if any, impression. On some others, those who place their personal pride higher than their duty to the T. S., higher even than their pledge to their divine SELF, the effect is generally disastrous. Self-watchfulness is never more necessary than when a personal wish to lead, and wounded vanity, dress themselves in the peacock's feathers of devotion and altruistic work; but at the present crisis of the Society a lack of self-control and watchfulness may become fatal in every case. But these diabolical attempts of our powerful enemies—the irreconcilable foes of the truths now being given out and practically asserted—may be frustrated. If every Fellow in the Society were content to be an impersonal force for good, careless of praise or blame so long as he subserved the purposes of the Brotherhood, the progress made would astonish the World and place the Ark of the T. S. out of danger. Take for your motto in conduct during the coming year, "Peace with all who love Truth in sincerity," and the Convention of 1892 will bear eloquent witness to the strength that is born of unity.

Your position as the fore-runners of the sixth sub-race of the fifth root-race has its own special perils as well as its special advantages. Psychism, with all its allurements and all its dangers, is necessarily developing among you, and you must beware lest the Psychic outruns the Manasic and Spiritual development. Psychic capacities held perfectly under control, checked and directed by the Manasic principle, are valuable aids in development. But these capacities running riot, controlling instead of controlled, using instead of being used, lead the Student into the most dangerous delusions and the certainty of moral destruction. Watch therefore carefully this development, inevitable in your race and evolution-period so that it may finally work for good and not for evil; and receive, in advance, the sincere and potent blessings of Those whose goodwill will never fail you, if you do not fail yourselves.

Here in England I am glad to be able to report to you that steady and rapid progress is being made. Annie Besant will give you details of our work, and will tell you of the growing strength and influence of our Society; the reports which she bears from the European and British Sections speak for themselves in their record of activities. The English character, difficult to reach, but solid and tenacious when once aroused, adds to our Society a valuable factor, and there are being laid in England strong and firm foundations for the T. S. of the twentieth century. Here, as with you, attempts are being successfully made to bring to bear the influence of Hindu on English thought, and many of our Hindu brethren are now writing for *Lucifer* short and clear paper on Indian philosophies. As it is one of the tasks of the T. S. to draw together the East and West, so that each may supply the qualities lacking in the other and develop more fraternal feelings among nations so various, this literary inter-

course will, I hope, prove of the utmost service in Aryanising Western thought.

The mention of *Lucifer* reminds me that the now assured position of that magazine is very largely due to the help rendered at a critical moment by the American Fellows. As my one absolutely unfettered medium of communication with Theosophists all over the World, its continuance was of grave importance to the whole Society. In its pages, month by month, I give such public teaching as is possible on Theosophical doctrines and so carry on the most important of our Theosophical work. The magazine now just covers its expenses, and if Lodges and individual Fellows would help in increasing its circulation, it would become more widely useful than it is at the present time. Therefore, while thinking from the bottom of my heart all those who so generously helped to place the magazine on a solid foundation, I should be glad to see a larger increase in the number of regular subscribers, for I regard these as my pupils, among whom I shall find some who will show the capacity for receiving further instruction.

And now I have said all. I am not sufficiently strong to write a more lengthy message, and there is the less need for me to do so as my friend and trusted messenger Annie Besant, she who is my right arm here, will be able to explain to you my wishes more fully and better than I can write them. After all, every wish and thought I can utter are summed up in this one sentence, the never-dormant wish of my heart, "Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy!" Theosophy first, and Theosophy last; for its *practical* realization alone can save the Western world from that selfish and unbrotherly feeling that now divides race from race, one nation from the other; and from that hatred of class and social considerations that are the curse and disgrace of so-called Christian peoples. Theosophy alone can save

it from sinking entirely into that mere luxurious materialism in which it will decay and putrefy as civilizations have done. In your hands, brothers, is placed in trust the welfare of the coming century; and great as is the trust, so great is also the responsibility. My own span of life may not be long, and if any of you have learned aught from my teachings, or have gained by my help a glimpse of the True Light, I ask you, in return, to strengthen the Cause by the triumph of which that True Light, made still brighter and more glorious through your individual and collective efforts, will lighten the World, and thus to let me see, before I part with this worn-out body, the stability of the Society secured.

May the blessings of the past and present great Teachers rest upon you. From myself accept collectively the assurance of my true never-wavering fraternal feelings, and the sincere, heartfelt thanks for the work done by all the workers.

From their servant to the last,

H. P. BLAVATSKY..

## 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.

## PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

BY GEORGE E. CREED, M.Sc.

Theologians proclaim that the whole Bible is the inspired word of God and an infallible guide for Christian conduct.

Such teachings become quite difficult to accept however, when one reads in the Old Testament such statements as God's command to Saul: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts . . . now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" (I Samuel 15:3). And again, (in Jeremiah 18:14): "And I will dash them one against the other, even the fathers and the sons together, said the Lord; I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them."—hardly the words of a *benevolent* God.

In an effort to find a way out of the dilemma and to explain away the obvious contradiction, the theory of "progressive revelation" has been put forth. That is to say, inquirers are told that the Bible is a record of man's gradually changing and developing ideas concerning the nature of God.

If that be the true explanation, it is equivalent to stating that large portions of the Bible were not divinely inspired at all but were written by ignorant, cruel and semi-barbarous humans who did not understand the truth.

If the theologians are correct in what they claim, large portions of the Old Testament ought to be scrapped as quickly as possible. Or, assuming the theory of progressive revelation to be correct, the teaching of the Bible ought to be accompanied by a clear explanation that large portions of it must on no account be considered as being the word of God but only as a collection of man's crude ideas concerning God.

It is significant to note that in spite of the theologians' claims concerning progressive revelation, the Bible con-

tinues to be taught in our Sunday Schools and churches as being divinely inspired from cover to cover. It is only when our religious leaders are forced into a corner, so to speak, that they resort to the theory of progressive revelation. Then, when the pressure is removed, almost invariably they spring back to their original contention that the whole Bible is the inspired word of God.

What would we think of a medical college where the students were required to study from a textbook, two-thirds of which advocated such medieval medical practices as burning holes in the patient with red hot irons to let out the evil spirits, administering portions of powdered skulls as a remedy for fever, and so on? Then, towards the end of the book the best and most modern methods of treatment would be described, but with nothing to indicate that all the teachings in the book were not equally valid. Then, when thoughtful students objected to swallowing it all blindly, the professor would explain: "Well, you see, it is progressive revelation."

Actually, the Bible was not dictated for us by God, neither is it the work of semi-barbarous men. It is a collection of the teachings of men who lived in ancient times, men who attained to the most exalted wisdom in spiritual affairs and who have passed on their knowledge to us in the form of allegories, which serve as containers for sublime truth.

The error of the Christian church for the past sixteen centuries has been in mistaking these allegories for literal history and thus turning large portions of the Bible into fantastic nonsense.

When the true esoteric interpretation of the Bible is restored to its rightful place in our churches and Sunday Schools, there will be no need to resort to the theory of "progressive revelation"—that alibi for misunderstanding.

## GROUP SOULS ?

I have heard that animals have group-souls. Since when and on whose "authority"? Certainly not on H.P.B.'s when she wrote *The Secret Doctrine*. Group-soul is not mentioned there. Who *did* introduce this into our studies? Is it a member's personal fancy?

What does H.P.B. say in the *Secret Doctrine* about animals? We should consider her as the only authority, and why? For nearly one hundred years the Masters looked for a suitable person through which to introduce the Wisdom Teaching to the Western world. H.P.B., according to one of the Masters, was the only suitable person. Yet many other later writers in the Theosophical Society were alive then but they were deemed unsuitable. Therefore there is nothing left but to discard their theories and rely on H.P.B. and our own judgement.

So, from the *Secret Doctrine* she gives us the opposite view to that of group-soul! She teaches that the monads of animals are identical to the monads of humans, though the human monad is more "progressed". The Monadic Essence is the same throughout the cycle but differ in the state of progression. "The tendency towards segregation into individual Monads is gradual, and in the higher animals comes almost to the point." S.D. i-178.

There is no "group-soul" but there is Monadic or Cosmic Essence and individual human Monads. The reason H. P. B. called the monads by different names, i.e.: mineral monad, animal monad, etc., is merely to indicate in what form of Prakriti the monad is manifesting in. The form clings to the Monad, not the Monad to the form. S.D. i-174 fn.

Let us discard this "group-soul" fantasy. It only lends confusion to our study of TRUTH.

E. T.

## PEACE, HARMONY AND UNION

With this issue *Eirenicon* enters upon its second 7-year cycle with a changed form and frequency. It will continue to work for UNION among Theosophists, without being particularly concerned about organizational fusion or federation.

A hallmark of a man or woman who is successfully working at the task of becoming a Theosophist is the ability to disagree strongly and forthrightly and yet collaborate in warm comradeship. Without approving all the ways and policies of The Theosophical Society (Covina) or The United Lodge of Theosophists, or The Theosophical Society (Adyar) for that matter, we advocate the following unifying practices:—

1. Wider interchange of magazines within the Movement.
2. Bookstalls to carry the best literature and propaganda booklets of the Movement, regardless of which Society or Lodge publishes them.
3. Formation of Lodges which belong to both the Adyar and Covina Societies, because containing sufficient members belonging to each; and also welcoming members of the U. L. T., so demonstrating in practice that we can differ and yet work as one body.
4. Publicize activities of Lodges in any district jointly—let enquirers go to all and choose whichever is most congenial.
5. Instead of a Directory of Adyar Society Lodges in the British Isles, let us have a Directory of all Lodges—U.L.T., Covina and Adyar.
6. Why should not the T.P.H. set an example by disseminating the literature of the entire Movement?
7. Arrange combined conferences on how to disseminate Theosophical ideas more effectively.

—From *Eirenicon*.

## WILL AND DESIRE

*"Kill out desire; but if thou killest it take heed lest from the dead it should again arise."*

The above quotation from the *Voice of the Silence* is familiar to all Theosophical students. The interpretation of its meaning varies with the understanding of the pupil, and has given rise to many discussions since it was given out to the members of the Society in 1889. However, in the second issue of the first volume of the magazine *Lucifer* dated October 15th, 1887, H.P.B. prints two short articles which should be as familiar as the above. The first is called *Will and Desire*.

"Will is the exclusive possession of man on this our plane of consciousness. It divides him from the brute in whom instinctive desire only is active.

"Desire, in its widest application, is the one creative force in the Universe. In this sense it is indistinguishable from Will; but we men never know desire under this form while we remain only men. Therefore Will and Desire are here considered as opposed.

"Thus Will is the offspring of the Divine, the God in man; Desire the motive power of the animal life.

"Most men live in and by desire, mistaking it for will. But he who would achieve must separate will from desire, and make his will the ruler; for desire is unstable and ever changing, while will is ready and constant.

"Both will and desire are absolute creators, forming the man himself and his surroundings. But will creates intelligently—desire blindly and unconsciously. The man, therefore, makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light.

"His task is twofold: to awaken the will, to strengthen it by use and con-

quest, to make it absolute ruler within his body; and, parallel with this, to purify desire.

"Knowledge and will are the tools for the accomplishment of this purification."

The second article on page 133 is:  
*Desire Made Pure*

"When desire is for the purely abstract—when it has lost all trace or tinge of "self"—then it has become pure.

"The first step towards this purity is to kill out the desire for the things of matter, since these can only be enjoyed by the separated personality.

"The second is to cease from desiring for oneself even such abstractions as power, knowledge, love, happiness, or fame; for they are but selfishness after all.

"Life itself teaches these lessons; for all such objects of desire are found Dead Sea fruit in the moment of attainment. This much we learn from experience. Intuitive perception seizes on the positive truth that satisfaction is attainable only in the infinite; the will makes that conviction an actual fact of consciousness, till at last all desire is centred on the Eternal."

E. P. W.

## AMONG THE LODGES

At the Annual Meeting of the members of the Edmonton Lodge the following Officers were elected for the 1948-1949 season: President, Mr. Emory Wood; Vice-President, Mr. Whitbread; Secretary, Mrs. V. J. Trupp; Treasurer, Miss W. Robinson; Librarian, Mrs. Chapman. The meeting was held on Wednesday evening, June 23, 1948 and plans were discussed to form a program for the following year.

Mrs. V. J. Trupp, Sec'y.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Many thoughtful members have already sent in their dues for the 1948-9. I would remind others that the Financial Year begins on July 1st, when all membership dues should be paid. It would facilitate the work at headquarters if those who have not yet paid take note of this and remit the small amount of \$2.50 to their respective Lodge Secretaries as close to this date as possible.

\* \* \* \*

It is with deep regret I report the death of two of our old members, both of Toronto. On Saturday, June 19th, Mr. Edward Norman passed away after a short illness. He was a well known member of the Toronto Lodge. And on Monday, June 21st, Mrs. Margaret Shone of the Toronto West End Lodge, who was, by the way, a scrutineer in the recent election, died very suddenly. Mrs. Shone joined the West End Lodge in 1921 and endeared herself to all whom she came into contact with, and was a true exponent of Theosophy as it should be lived. To the families of both we extend our deepest sympathy and condolences.

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On Sunday, June 27th, a pleasing interlude took place at the meeting of the Toronto Lodge when Mrs. A. Anderson, a member of the Calgary Lodge of the Canadian Federation visiting the city, took the opportunity of conveying greetings and best wishes from her lodge to that of Toronto. She stressed the co-ordination of all groups separated by no matter what differences of opinion, for as she aptly remarked we should in the true spirit of toleration be able to disagree on our interpretation of theosophical teachings but unite wholeheartedly in the first object of the Society and pull together for the furtherance of the Cause. She also re-

marked on the fine premises of the Lodge and the general atmosphere of friendliness pervading. We may add that the Society in Canada has always cultivated the aim of co-operation among the various Branches and we especially welcome these words of esteem and good wishes:

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Quite a number of bound volumes of *The Canadian Theosophist* have been sold at the reduced price of \$1 per volume (while they last) and I would recommend to our members and others that this is an opportunity of getting a real bargain for these books contain a mine of Theosophical information that is most instructive and fascinating to peruse.

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The latest report from the American Section indicates that Mr. Perkins, the president (in a wheel chair) is now back at Olcott and is well on his way to total recovery. We are happy to note this. From all reports the Convention to be held in Chicago from August 7th to the 10th, will be an outstanding occasion. Two distinguished visitors from India, Rukmini Devi and Mr. Sri Ram will attend, both of whom have invitations from Toronto to pay a visit later on in the year. The American Convention attracts a large number of delegates and visitors each year and is always a well worthwhile occasion to meet Theosophists from all over the world. Your General Secretary hopes to be there, but it depends on several factors as to whether he will be able to do so.

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The Annual Meeting of the General Executive will not be held until the second Sunday in July therefore the usual reports will not appear in the magazine until August.

E. L. T.

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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.

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The February number of *The Young Citizen* which is edited by Rukmini Devi at Adyar carried on its cover page the definition of Theosophy prepared by the late A. E. S. Smythe, "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 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."

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The Spring edition of *Occult Review*, published by Rider and Co., London, carried the news of the death of Mr. Harry Price, the psychic investigator whose work at Borley Rectory was described in the interesting article *The Occult Phenomena of Borley Rectory*, by Mrs. Rowell which appeared in last month's issue. At the time of his death a third book of his on the Borley hauntings was well under way.

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The *Occult Review* also notes that no one has yet claimed the standing award of £250 for proof of physical phenomena in mediumship. "Many point out that physical phenomena is daily being claimed by mediums. Why will they not come forward in the interests of science and the public at large and bear witness to its existence under fraud-proof conditions?"

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We are informed by an Austrian correspondent that Mr. F. Scheiffer, General-Secretary in Vienna, reports a notice from the Government of Czechoslovakia that five crates of Theosophical books found in a castle in that country, will be returned to the Lodge in Vienna.

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*The History of Magic* by Eliphas Levi, translated by A. E. Waite, D.Litt., has been re-published by Rider & Co. price 25 shillings.

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We are interested to note the increase in the number of magazines coming from Europe and the other indications of the revival of the work of Theosophical Lodges and Societies there. Please remember that these magazines are available for borrowing by our members. The Danish, Norwegian and Dutch magazines are on hand and also a number in the Spanish language.



We are grateful to the Editor of *The Speculative Mason* for the January and April numbers of this valuable quarterly. The article "A Psychological and Curative View of Colour" would, we are sure, be of interest to our readers and we hope to obtain permission to re-print it.

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We also acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the January issue of *Wisdom*, a monthly magazine of Upanishad Vihar, published at Madras, India. In an interesting article "The Meeting of Religions" the author, T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., quotes from the sacred writings of many faiths in support of his opening thought, "The spirit of Religion is one, though its expressions differ." Among the other articles were noted especially, "Realism in Sankara", by Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, and "Intuition in Advaita" by Professor G. R. Malkani. We will look forward to future issues of *Wisdom*.

## REVIEWS

*Philosophical Foundations of India* by Theos Bernard, M.A., LL.B., Ph.D., 167 pages, including nine pages of bibliography and forty pages of glossary, published by Rider and Company, price 21 shillings.

Dr. Barnard is to be congratulated on the success of his effort to present in very concise form the essential features of the six classical schools of Indian philosophy and also of Kasmir Saivism. The author makes no attempt to prove or disprove the findings of any system but rather to present the system of each school. Volumes upon volumes have been written in support of the views of the followers of each school and Dr. Barnard points out that his problem was one of deciding what should be included. "Together they form a graduated interpretation of the Ultimate Reality. In no way are they contradictory or antagonistic to one another, for

they all lead to the same practical end, knowledge of the Absolute and Liberation of the Soul."

"Kasmir Saivism," writes Dr. Barnard, "is a philosophical system based on the Sivautra, which is one of the texts of that vast body of Indian literature called the Tantras. There is probably no traditional literature that has suffered such widespread criticism, from Western and Eastern scholars alike, as the Tantras, due mainly to their esoteric character which made it impossible for scholars to obtain adequate information of their true content." There are many references to Tantra in the Secret Doctrine and in the 3rd volume, H.P.B. warns that the indiscriminate reading of Tantra works by a tyro in occultism will lead to the practice of most unmitigated Black Magic.

The extensive glossary of Sanscrit words will be of much service to students.

D. W. B.

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*Youth Speaks Its Mind* by Blodwen Davies, 232 pages, published by The Ryerson Press, Toronto; price \$2.50.

The Canadian Youth Commission, consisting of fifty representative citizens, was organized five years ago to study the family, educational, religious, employment and other problems of young Canadians between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four. Ten lengthy reports were issued based upon the findings of the Commission after much carefully planned and extensive research work had been done. "Nowhere but in Canada has youth been drawn so fully into such a partnership. In every Province forums and conferences and round tables were organized, groups of young people prepared briefs . . . and a flood of discussion began to arise. . . As time passed, the flow of material into the hands of the Commission increased and a huge accumulation of data finally came to rest in the hands of

those charged with formulating the reports." Miss Davies was then asked by the Commission to endeavour to condense the basic findings of the ten reports into a short book which would bring this important work more directly to public attention.

In this task Miss Davies has succeeded admirably well. *Youth Speaks Its Mind* is not only factual and practical, it is also inspirational; there are many suggestions respecting possible action which could be taken and many comments indicative of the attitude of approach which will be of interest to all who are concerned in the science and art of practical brotherhood. "When our compassion, our sense of responsibility are aroused we demand facts as the tools to fashion change." Miss Davies mentions that Lady Victoria Welby the 'mother' of semantics, once wrote that the power to ask a question was even more significant than the ability to answer it. "The asking of the new question, the ability to speculate, to create a problem, in the scientific sense, points to the pioneering mind feeling out the area of a new choice of alternatives." Later the author quotes "An adept is the rare efflorescence of a generation of enquirers." Here are a few other quotations from the opening chapter: ". . . there is all the way through (the ten reports) this one shining steel thread of continuity—the value and dignity and responsibility of the individual person"; "the picture of the ideal democratic person, spiritually and intellectually free, physically well and complete, socially useful and responsible. . . Democracy cannot be conferred upon him by proclamation, it is a discipline . . ."

Chapter One is introductory, Chapters Two to Eight deal with the matters presented in the ten reports and the last chapter summarizes the hopes, suggestions and ideals arising out of the re-

ports. The significant facts of the statistical information are presented not as dry figures, but as essential and revealing features of the author's story of this unique investigation; 200,000 young Canadians become enfranchised every year, one million new voters in the life of every parliament; during the war \$25,000 apiece was spent on the education of young men for combat duty—in the depression years we could only afford soup kitchens and breadlines and in 1942, the average yearly revenue for the education of youth in the public schools was \$72.06 per pupil; three-quarters of the young people of Canada are out of school, 42% because they were unable to continue longer. The declining birth-rate, the emigration of youth, the increased longevity of our citizens have resulted in the ageing of Canada's population; it is estimated that in 1961 only 21% of the population will be in the age group of 15-24.

Chapter Seven 'The Lodestone of the Spirit' deals with Youth and Religion. Dogmas, doctrines, religious controversies, church ordinances do not interest the average young Canadian. If the church organizations are to perform any vital work with youth, "it must be realized there are religious instincts and desires in our young people which do not find full expression through church ordinances today." The views of young people belonging to the various religious organizations and also of those belonging to none, are summarized in this chapter.

Blake's phrase, the 'Bow of Burning Gold' is used as the title of the final Chapter and most appropriately so, for the whole effort of the work of the Commission and of Miss Davies' book is to find ways and means to build his 'New Jerusalem', to help to make the spiritual brotherhood of all men a practical reality on earth.

D. W. B.

## CHELAS

Notwithstanding the many articles which have appeared in this magazine upon the above subject, much misunderstanding and many false views seem still to prevail.

What are Chelas, and what are their powers? Have they faults, and in what particular are they different from people who are not Chelas? Is every word uttered by a Chela to be taken as gospel truth?

These questions arise because many persons have entertained very absurd views for a time about Chelas, and when it was found that those views should be changed, the reaction has been in several cases quite violent.

The word Chela simply means a disciple; but it has become crystallized in the literature of Theosophy, and has, in different minds, as many different definitions as the word "God" itself. Some persons have gone so far as to say that when a man is a Chela he is at once put on a plane when each word that he may unfortunately utter is taken down as ex cathedra, and he is not allowed the poor privilege of talking like an ordinary person. If it be found out that any such utterance was on his own account and responsibility, he is charged with having misled his hearers.

Now this wrong idea must be corrected once for all. There are Chelas and Chelas, just as there are Mahatmas and Mahatmas. There are Mahatmas in fact who are themselves the Chelas of those who are higher yet. But no one, for an instant, would confound a Chela who has just begun his troublous journey with that greater Chela who is a Mahatma.

In fact, the Chela is an unfortunate man who has entered upon "a path not manifest," and Krishna says that "that is the most difficult path."

Instead of being the constant mouth-piece of his Guru, he finds himself left

more alone in the world than those who are not Chelas, and his path is surrounded by dangers which would appal many an aspirant, were they depicted in natural colours, so that instead of accepting his Guru and passing an entrance examination with a view to becoming Bachelor of the Art of Occultism under his master's constant and friendly guidance, he really forces his way into a guarded enclosure, and has from that moment to fight and conquer—or die. Instead of accepting he has to be worthy of acceptance. Nor must he offer himself. One of the Mahatmas has, within the year, written—"Never thrust yourself upon us for Chelaship; wait until it descends upon you."

And having been accepted as a Chela, it is not true that he is merely the instrument of his Guru. He speaks as ordinary men then as before, and it is only when the master sends by means of the Chela's Magnetism an actual written letter, that the lookers-on can say that through him a communication came.

It may happen with them, as it does with any author occasionally, that they evolve true or beautiful utterances, but it must not be therefore concluded that during that utterance the Guru was speaking through the Chela. If there was the germ of a good thought in the mind, the Guru's influence, like the gentle rain upon the seed, may have caused it to spring into sudden life and abnormally blossom, but that is not the master's voice. The cases in fact are rare in which the masters speak through a Chela.

The powers of Chelas vary with their progress, and every one should know that if a Chela has any "powers", he is not permitted to use them save in rare and exceptional cases, and never may he boast of their possession. So it must follow that those who are only beginners have no more or greater power than an ordinary man. Indeed, the goal set before the Chela is not the acquisi-

tion of psychological power; his chief task is to divest himself of that ever-mastering sense of personality which is the thick veil that hides from sight our immortal part—the real man. So long as he allows this feeling to remain, just so long will he be fixed at the very door of Occultism, unable to proceed further.

Sentimentality then, is not the equipment for a Chela. His work is hard, his road stony, the end far away. With sentimentality merely he will not advance at all. Is he waiting for the master to bid him show his courage by precipitating himself from a precipice, or by braving the cold Himalayan steeps? False hope; they will not call him thus. And so, as he is not to clothe himself in sentiment, the public must not, when they wish to consider him, throw a false veil of sentimentality over all his actions and words.

Let us therefore, henceforth, see a little more discrimination used in looking at Chelas.

—H. P. Blavatsky, in *The Theosophist*,  
October, 1884.

## CORRESPONDENCE

“YOURS TILL DEATH—  
AND AFTER”

*The Editor, Canadian Theosophist*:—

In your fine editorial on “White Lotus Day”, you refer three times to the “death” of H. P. B., It seems to me it is about time we of her Theosophical Society stopped emphasizing “death” in referring to our Co-Founder.

Instead of displaying the iron curtain of our mental imperception on her present existence, let us refer to her *passing*, which does not connote any cessation of further service.

Mr. Judge, in his book “Vernal Blooms” states that the words quoted above were “frequently used” by H.P.B. in signing her letters to him and, as you point out, she lives for us in her writings; in them our minds contact

hers and, equally, their influence affects more than our thinking.

Let us keep ever before us the certainty that “there is no death” so well supported in Florence Marryat’s notable compilation.

It is bad enough that, in this case, absence does NOT make the heart grow fonder, even though our respect and admiration grow with knowledge of her work. Her personality has vanished, but it was never as important as her message. Fraternally,

N. W. J. Haydon.

Sorry to have caused even the slightest quiver of objection in the heart of our revered friend Mr. Haydon.

“Death” is the word commonly used to indicate the final separation of the body and the informing principle. Theosophists never think of death as being the extinction of the individuality. “Passing” may make this more clear, but raises the question of what or who passes on or passes over—surely not the personality as the world knew it. I have no objection to “passing”. but I have not used the word very often since seeing Noel Coward’s play, *This Happy Breed*. Two tickets are indicated for the next showing.—Editor.

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## THE EXILE OF THE SOUL

BY ROY MITCHELL

*(Continued from Page 63, Vol. XXIX.)*

## V. THE MYSTICAL PROBLEM

The fatal defect of the Brahmin explanation of the data of cosmic consciousness is identical with the defect of the Christian explanation of the ecstasies of the saints as an advance knowledge of the hereafter. Both religions assume that those who have a touch of cosmic consciousness are of great mental and spiritual stature.

The facts show that they are not. While many who experience the higher vision are, like Jesus and Buddha, beings of transcendent spirituality, and some, like Bacon, are giants of intellect, many of the recorded cases are of very simple, often ignorant and frequently anything but blameless people. The experience is nothing if not sporadic and obeys a law of its own nature. The Christian finding no rule for it attributes the whole thing to the pleasure of God. The Brahmin, whose theory of gradual advance would require that before going on with a realm above mind, a man should have exhausted the development of mind, has no adequate explanation to offer.

This curious illumination strikes like lightning. While it does favour the saint, it does not neglect the sinner. It comes very often to the sick, to the drunkard and the epileptic. Remarkable cases of conversion (literally, together-turning) as in the cases of Raymond Lully, John Bunyan and others, show that it can come even to men plunged in vice.

The learned, the ignorant, the devoted, the austere, the sodden, the well, the sick, the vicious, the nearly mad—these are not categories of leadership. Half of them give the lie to the other half. Nor did Jesus seem to expect that lead-

ers would be the readiest to receive his message of liberation. He tended to pass over acknowledged leaders and to devote himself to those who by reason of misery and suffering on earth were best able to understand a doctrine of transcending earth and entering into a Kingdom of Heaven that he declared awaited them. Gautama did not confine himself to leaders among men. He found great men as did Jesus but his doctrine was as readily applicable to the vicious as to the austere. The *Dhammapada* shows him going to young men mired in their vices and bidding them turn. When they did they became Arhats.

That the manifestation in man of a power above the level of mind is the experience of men and women whose intellectual powers are not equal to the task of explaining it, is evidenced by the fact that mystics themselves differ widely in their explanations.

Mystics with an inclination for orthodox Christianity, for example, say the illumination flows into the soul by a supernatural channel. For the Roman Catholic Church the Church itself is such a channel. So are the sacraments. For mystics of Protestant sects, the Bible is a magical channel.

Quietistic cults like the Friends and the followers of the Abbe Fenelon and Madame Guyon ascribe the results to direct Divine intervention. They say that, in answer to aspiration, God himself acts immediately upon the mind of the devotee. Jacob Boehme held this theory of his own remarkable experiences. He declared that in his vision he saw God. H. P. Blavatsky remarks drily that what he saw was his Divine Ego, as all aspirants eventually see it.

More valid than either of these is the

Platonist theory maintained by the most philosophical of the mystics. They say that the illumination comes by faith or intuition resident in the higher consciousness of the soul itself, and that there can be direct attainment of truth by virtue of the fact that man possesses from a previous world-period an inheritance of wisdom which he now neglects, but which he may at any time recover. A momentary return of it may be experienced under special conditions.

Obviously the cosmic consciousness is not, then, a *latent* thing, in the sense that it is still to be developed. It is a *dormant* thing in the sense that it has been developed and lost temporarily. It is not a potentiality to be realized in a distant future. It is an ever-present knowledge which the vast majority of men cannot use because it is overlaid by mental and emotional confusions. When such a power can be aroused by aspiration, the following of intuitions, or by austerity, it is sufficiently explained as an intimation of a new power. When, however, it comes direct out of intense suffering, out of turning from vice, or out of disturbed physical conditions, we need a wider formula than either the Brahmin or Christian one. We need a formula that will reconcile the contradictions. The old occult formula, the only one that will serve the unbiased inquirer, is that cosmic consciousness is an old, hard-earned power, lost and in these cases for a brief time recovered. The Christian formula for it, as the words were originally understood, is that in the parable of the prodigal, "This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

The implication in the highest mystical and occult schools—indeed the explicit statement many times repeated—is that we thinking souls are all prodigals, alienated from a divine unified consciousness which the *New Testament* calls *ho theos*, the god. That conscious-

ness we have as a dim, flickering, inward light.

This aspect of it as a unified whole is important for purposes of the present study. The universal characteristic of all true experiences of cosmic consciousness is an immeasurably quickened sense of unity with the rest of mankind. This is variously described. Sometimes it is a flooding of the nature of the subject with a great love. Sometimes it presents itself as a sense of peace resultant on the passing away of the sense of separateness. It has also been described as an attainment of the centre of a wheel where stillness prevails and the stress of earth life, even of mental life, vanishes. It is the place of stillness that the Chinese called *Tao*, and the Buddhists call *Alaya*. "Alas, alas, that all men should possess *Alaya*," says *The Voice of the Silence*, "and that possessing it *Alaya* should so little avail them."

All these descriptions bear out the old idea that the world above mind is the Oneness towards which At-one-ment tends, and that we only lose our way in a too far removed and unserviceable notion when we talk of being merged in Ultimate Deity. The Unity to which we are now returning is the rest of our race—the divine exiles here on earth.

This seems to be the reason why persons who have had a touch of cosmic consciousness show a prevailing impulse for the rest of their lives to make mankind the object of their devotion, to see God as it were in their brothers' faces. All true humanism has arisen primarily out of this mystical vision and has taken its stand against the worship of a personal God. The older humanists called the Divine Communion, in whose body we are all atoms, Osiris, and symbolized the present partition of mankind into scattered and confused souls as the dismemberment of Osiris, the fragments of whose body must again be assembled. It is to the assembling of the fragments

that the Masters are pledged.

Damascius says of this resurrection of the dismembered Osiris, or return to the higher consciousness, that it "should be a mingling with the God, an all-perfect at-one-ment, a return upwards of our souls to the divine".

So we have again, in another problem of modern science which is compelling the attention of students, a picture of the soul of man which can transcend mind under conditions so contradictory as to preclude the idea that the soul is slowly evolving into the transcendent state. We must decide whether we will take our stand with the Church mystics and the Quietists and say it is the fantastic gift of a personal God, or with H. P. Blavatsky and the occultists who say it is the renewal, brief or enduring, of an ancient power of entering a common consciousness we have forgotten.

*(To Be Continued)*

## A REAL WHITE LOTUS MEETING

There were 45 present at the White Lotus Day meeting in remembrance of H. P. Blavatsky on May 8th, 1948, in the No. 2 Committee Room of the Milton Hall, Manchester, convened by the Manchester Lodge (Covina), the Peace Lodge (Adyar) and the Buddhist Society. Those attending included representatives from the following Lodges: Bacup (Adyar), Blackburn (Adyar), Blackpool (Adyar), Bolton (Adyar), Corresponding Fellows (Covina), Leigh (Adyar), Liverpool (Covina), London (Covina), Manchester City (Adyar) and Stockport (Adyar).

Readings were given by Mr. N. D. Hughes (Buddhist Society), Miss R. Norcott (Manchester City Lodge, Adyar) and Mr. P. Stoddard (President, Manchester Lodge, Covina). Tributes and remarks were contributed by Mr.

A. B. Johnson (Manchester Lodge, Covina), Miss D. Ashton (Manchester City Lodge, Adyar), Mr. E. A. Holmes, (Secretary, Manchester Lodge, Covina), Mr. L. Edwards (President, Peace Lodge) and Mr. H. Kay (Manchester Lodge, Covina). Greetings and good wishes were received from Mrs. D. Groves (General Secretary, Adyar T.S. in England), Mrs. E. Benjamin (National President, Covina English Section), Mr. J. W. Hamilton-Jones, Mr. F. Willis (Past President, Manchester Lodge, Covina), Mr. Dan Turner (Stockport Lodge, Adyar), Mrs. J. Eden (Blackpool Lodge, Adyar), the Secretary of Chester Lodge (Adyar), the Couthport Lodge (Adyar) and the Wirral Lodge (Adyar), Mr. T. H. Redfern (Secretary, Peace Lodge) presided.

Books and pamphlets by H. P. Blavatsky, published by the Covina and Adyar Societies and the United Lodge of Theosophists were on sale.

All present thoroughly enjoyed the warm and friendly atmosphere and many commented on the successful collaboration and said they were looking forward to more meetings of this kind.

—From *Eirenicon*.

## WE ARE IMMORTAL

It is stated in Book ii, ch. viii of Vishnu Purana: "By immortality is meant existence to the end of the Kalpa" and esoteric philosophy says: "They perish not but are reabsorbed."—S.D. i-36.

Man is immortal. Not as individuals evolving through the great illusion of many earth lives, but immortal as a part of the whole. We should look upon ourselves as only a fraction of a **great** evolving Consciousness. We perceive, understand and live in a harmonious unity with mankind. We are as One with the Universe. We are immortal!

E. T.

## EXCHANGE MAGAZINES

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following exchange magazines since March:

The Theosophist (Adyar).  
 Theosophy (United Lodge).  
 The Theosophical Forum (Covina).  
 Theosophia (Los Angeles).  
 The American Theosophist.  
 The Young Theosophist.  
 The Young Citizen.  
 Theosophy in Ireland.  
 The Bombay Theosophical Bulletin.  
 Bulletin of the United Lodge of Theosophists (London).  
 The Pilgrim Way.  
 The Theosophical Movement (Bombay).  
 The Sun (Belgaum).  
 The Golden Lotus.  
 Theosophy in Australia.  
 The Indian Theosophist.  
 The Occult Review.  
 Theosophical News and Notes.  
 New India.  
 Peace Lodge Papers.  
 Life (India).  
 The Link (South Africa).  
 The Aryan Path.  
 The Path (Australia).  
 O Teosofista (Brazil).  
 Revista Teosofica Cubana.  
 Norsk Teosofisk Tidsskrift.  
 Theosofia (Holland).  
 Theosophia (Denmark).  
 Bulletin of the Mexican Theosophical Society.  
 Dharma (Mexico).  
 Osiris (Portugal).  
 The Speculative Mason.  
 Wisdom (Madras).

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