

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Divine Wisdom

Brotherhood

Occult Science

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ELECTION OF GRACE

Divine Grace and Divine Love are synonymous in the following remarks. In Jacob Boehme's "Election of Grace" the same view is held.

Grace brings to our mind poise, balance, equilibrium, beauty, control and peace. It is erroneous to think of Divine Grace as a hand-out by a capricious God.

We must seek Divine Grace if we hope to find it, and find it we must if we are to attain freedom.

"Eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" has entered into the consciousness of the human race so deeply, that we have been caught like a squirrel in a cage. We keep treading the wheel faster and faster believing that by keeping up the speed we shall in this way find release, whereas all we do is to accelerate the speed of the wheel, and exhaust our energy in the effort. This is not a happy outlook. It would be better and wiser if we paused for a moment and sought the key that would unlock the door of the cage. The one and only key is that of Divine Grace. It would be well then that we place less accent on Karma in terms of reward and punishment and lay more stress on Karmaless Karma, if we are to be free of the wheel.

We must elect Divine Grace in which we are to live, move, and have our being, and thus bring the potential Christ indwelling latent in each and every human heart, into a living, active Christ made manifest. Then we shall know what it is to live above the turmoil of eye for an eye and we shall know something of "the peace at the heart of the storm"— "The peace that passeth all understanding." In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna listens to Sri Krishna's words of wisdom given in answer to his many pertinent questions. Yet Arjuna is not satisfied; he pleads with Sri Krishna for further enlightenment, and it is only after this insistence on the part of Arjuna that Sri Krishna draws the veil aside and gives Arjuna the uttermost truth. It is only when we understand, heed, and live in accordance with the latter half of the Bhagavad Gita that we can attain freedom. Yes, Boehme was right, we must elect to live in Divine Grace.

Mr. Smythe defined Theosophy as "the grace of God in one's life; the power of God in one's work; the joy of God in one's play; the peace of God in one's thought; the love of God in one's heart; the beauty of God in one's dealings with others." When we live that Theosophy, seekers after truth will

sense and perceive our honesty, and will feel confident that here at long last is goodness, truth, and beauty.

"Eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" will hold us perpetually within the limitation of the revolving wheel. We must forgive and do all possible to bring about adjustment. How many disputes we could straighten out were it not for the urge of the lower ego to demand redress and even revenge. How we react to whatever problem that confronts us is what really matters.

Divine Grace alone can put an end to animosity, jealousy, hatred and war; there is no alternative.

We have our choice as to whether we elect to live and express Divine Love.

To say, "I have tried again and again," is but to admit our lack of complete faith and determination (will). Once convinced we must proceed forthright to live accordingly.

Divine Grace is free and without price. Let us save ourselves from getting too involved in the intricacies of Karma trying to follow from a surmised cause to effect; we may prove to be wrong in our reasoning, whereas we should live secure and radiant in the sunshine of Divine Grace, being no longer tethered to the past, but free to live in the Eternal now.

D. B. Thomas.

Florida.

IS DENUNCIATION A DUTY?

"Condemn no man in his absence; and when forced to reprove, do so to his face, but gently, and in words full of charity and compassion. For the human heart is like the Kusuli plant; it opens its cup to the sweet morning dew, and closes it before a heavy shower of rain."

—Buddhist Precept.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged."

Christian Aphorism.

Not a few of our most earnest Theosophists feel themselves, we are sorry to hear, between the horns of a dilemma. Small causes will at times produce great results. There are those who would jest under the cruellest operation, and remain cool while having a leg amputated, who would yet raise a storm and renounce their rightful place in the kingdom of Heaven if, to preserve it, they had to keep silent when somebody treads on their corns.

In the 13th number of LUCIFER (September, page 63) a paper on "The

Meaning of a Pledge" was published. Out of the seven articles (six only were given out) which constitute the entire Pledge, the 1st, 4th, 5th, and especially the 6th, require great moral strength of character, an iron will added to much unselfishness, quick readiness for renunciation and even self-sacrifice, to carry out such a covenant. Yet scores of Theosophists have cheerfully signed this solemn "Promise" to work for the good of Humanity forgetful of Self, without one word of protest—save on one point. Strange to say, it is rule the

third which in almost every case makes the applicant hesitate and show the white feather. *Ante tubam trepidat*: the best and kindest of them feels alarmed; and he is as overawed before the blast of the trumpet of that third clause, as though he dreaded for himself the fate of the walls of Jericho!

What is then this terrible pledge, to carry out which seems to be above the strength of the average mortal? Simply this:—

"I pledge myself never to listen without protest to any evil thing spoken of a brother Theosophist, and to abstain from condemning others."

To practise this golden rule seems quite easy. To listen without protest to evil said of *any one* is an action which has been despised ever since the remotest days of Paganism.

"To hear an open slander is a curse,
But not to find an answer is a
worse,"

says Ovid. For one thing, perhaps, as pointedly remarked by Juvenal, because:—

"Slander, that worst of poisons,
ever finds
An easy entrance to *ignoble minds*"

—and because *in antiquity*, few liked to pass for such—minds. But now! . . .

In fact, the duty of defending a fellow-man stung by a poisonous tongue during his absence, and to abstain, in general, "from condemning others" is the very life and soul of practical theosophy, for such action is the handmaiden who conducts one into the narrow Path of the "higher life," that life which leads to the goal we all crave to attain. Mercy, Charity and Hope are the three goddesses who preside over that "life". To "abstain" from condemning our fellow beings is the tacit assertion of the presence in us of the three divine Sisters; to condemn on "hearsay" shows their absence. "Listen

not to a tale bearer or slanderer", says Socrates. "For, as he discovereth of the secrets of others, so he will thine in turn." Nor is it difficult to avoid slander-mongers. Where there is no demand, supply will very soon cease. "When people refrain from *evil-hearing*, then evil speakers will refrain from evil-talking," says a proverb. To condemn is to glorify oneself over the man one condemns. Pharisees of every nation have been constantly doing it since the evolution of intolerant religions. Shall we do as they?

We may be told, perhaps, that we ourselves are the first to break the ethical law we are upholding. That our theosophical periodicals are full of "denunciations," and Lucifer lowers his torch to throw light on every evil, to the best of his ability. We reply—this is quite another thing. We denounce indignantly systems and organizations, evils, social and religious—*cant* above all: we abstain from denouncing persons. The latter are the children of their century, the victims of their environment and of the Spirit of the Age. To condemn and dishonour a man instead of pitying and trying to help him, because, being born in a community of lepers he is a leper himself, is like cursing a room because it is dark, instead of quietly lighting a candle to disperse the gloom. "Ill deeds are doubled with an evil word"; nor can a general evil be avoided or removed by doing evil oneself and choosing a scapegoat for the atonement of the sins of a whole community. Hence, we denounce these communities not their units; we point out the rottenness of our boasted civilization, indicate the pernicious systems of education which lead to it, and show the fatal effects of these on the masses. Nor are we more partial to ourselves. Ready to lay down our life any day for THEOSOPHY—that great cause of the Universal Brotherhood for which we live and breathe—and willing

to shield, if need be, every true theosophist with our own body, we yet denounce as openly and as virulently the distortion of the original lines upon which the Theosophical Society was primarily built, and the gradual loosening and undermining of the original system by the sophistry of many of its highest officers. We bear our Karma for our lack of humility during the early days of the Theosophical Society; for our favourite aphorism: "See, how these Christians love each other" has now to be paraphrased daily, and almost hourly, into: "Behold, how our Theosophists love each other." And we tremble at the thought that, unless many of our ways and customs, in the Theosophical Society at large, are amended or done away with, Lucifer will one day have to expose many a blot on our own scutcheon—*e.g.* worship of Self, uncharitableness, and sacrificing to one's personal vanity the welfare of other Theosophists—more "fiercely" than it has ever denounced the various shams and abuses of power in state Churches and Modern Society.

Nevertheless, there are theosophists, who forgetting the beam in their own eye, seriously believe it their duty to denounce every mote they perceive in the eye of their neighbour. Thus, one of our most estimable, hard-working, and noble-minded members writes, with regard to the said 3rd clause:—

"The 'Pledge' binds the taker never to speak evil of anyone. But I believe that there are occasions when severe denunciation is a duty to truth. There are cases of treachery, falsehood, rascality in private life which should be denounced by those who are certain of them; and there are cases in public life of venality and debasement which good citizens are bound to lash unsparingly. Theosophic culture would not be a boon to the world if it enforced unmanliness, weakness, flabbi-

ness of moral texture."

We are sincerely sorry to find a most worthy brother holding such mistaken views. First of all, poor is that theosophic culture which fails to transform simply a "good citizen" of his own native country into a "good citizen" of the world. A true theosophist must be a cosmopolitan in his heart. He must embrace mankind, the whole of humanity in his philanthropic feelings. It is higher and far nobler to be one of those who love their fellow men, without distinction of race, creed, caste or colour, than to be merely a good patriot, or still less, a partisan. To mete one measure for all, is holier and more divine than to help one's country in its private ambition of aggrandizement, strife or bloody wars in the name of GREEDINESS and SELFISHNESS. "Severe denunciation is a duty to truth." It is: on condition, however, that one should denounce and fight against the *root* of evil and not expend one's fury by knocking down the irresponsible blossoms of its plant. The wise horticulturist uproots the parasitic herbs, and will hardly lose time in using his garden shear to cut off the heads of the poisonous weed. If a theosophist happen to be a public officer, a judge or magistrate, a barrister or even a preacher, it is then, of course his duty to his country, his conscience and those who put their trust in him, to "denounce severely" every case of "treachery, falsehood and rascality" *even* in private life; but — *nota bene* — only if he is appealed to and called to exercise his legal authority, not otherwise. This is neither "speaking evil" nor "condemning," but truly working for humanity; seeking to preserve society, which is a portion of it, from being imposed upon, and protecting the property of the citizens entrusted to their care as public officers, from being recklessly taken away. But even then the theosophist may assert himself in the magistrate,

and show his mercy by repeating after Shakespeare's severe judge: "I show it most of all when I show justice."

But what has a "working" member of the Theosophical Society independent of any public function or office, and who is neither judge, public prosecutor nor preacher, to do with the misdeeds of his neighbours? If a member of the T.S. is found guilty of one of the above enumerated or some still worse crime, and if another member becomes possessed of irrefutable evidence to that effect, it may become his painful duty to bring the same under the notice of the Council of his Branch. Our Society has to be protected, as also its numerous members. This, again, would only be simple justice. A natural and truthful statement of facts cannot be regarded as "evil speaking" or as a condemnation of one's brother. Between this, however, and deliberate back-biting there is a wide chasm. Clause 3 concerns only those who being in no way responsible for their neighbour's actions or walk in life, will yet judge and condemn them on every opportunity. And in such case it becomes—"slander" and "evil speaking".

This is how we understand the clause in question; nor do we believe that by enforcing it "theosophic culture" enforces "unmanliness, weakness or flabbiness of moral texture," but the reverse. True courage has naught to do, we trust, with denunciation; and there is little manliness in criticizing and condemning one's fellow men behind their backs, whether for wrongs done to others or injury to ourselves. Shall we regard the unparalleled virtues inculcated by Gautama the Buddha, or the Jesus of the Gospels as "unmanliness"? Then the ethics preached by the former, that *moral code* which Professor Max Müller, Burnouf and even Barthelémy St. Hilaire have unanimously pro-

nounced *the most perfect which the world has ever known*, must be no better than meaningless words, and the Sermon on the Mount had better never have been written at all. Does our correspondent regard the teaching of non-resistance to evil, kindness to all creatures, and the sacrifice of one's own self for the good of others as weakness or unmanliness? Are the commands, "Judge not that ye be not judged," and, "Put back thy sword, for they who take the sword shall perish with the sword," to be viewed as "flabbiness of moral texture" or as *the voice of Karma*?

But our correspondent is not alone in his way of thinking. Many are the men and women, good, charitable, self-sacrificing and trustworthy in every other respect, and who accept unhesitatingly every other clause of the "Pledge", who feel uneasy and almost tremble before this special article. But why? The answer is easy: simply *because they fear an unconscious* (to them), *almost unavoidable* PERJURY.

The moral of the fable and its conclusion are suggestive. It is a direct blow in the face of Christian education and our civilized modern society in all its circles and in every *Christian* land. So deep has this moral cancer—the habit of speaking uncharitably of our neighbour and brother at every opportunity—eaten into the heart of all the classes of Society, from the lowest to the very highest, that it has led the best of its members to feel diffident of their tongues! They *dare not trust themselves* to abstain from condemning others—from mere force of habit. This is quite an ominous "sign of the times."

Indeed, most of us, of whatever nationality, are born and brought up in a thick atmosphere of gossip, uncharitable criticism and wholesale condemnation. Our education in this direction begins in the nursery where the head nurse hates the governess, the latter

hates the mistress, and the servants, regardless of the presence of "baby" and the children, grumble incessantly against the masters, find fault with each other, and pass impudent remarks on every visitor. The same training follows us in the class room, whether at home or at a public school. It reaches its apex of ethical development during the years of our education and practical religious instruction. We are soaked through and through with the conviction that, though ourselves "born in sin and total depravity," *our* religion is the only one to save us from eternal damnation, while the rest of mankind is predestined from the depths of eternity to inextinguishable hell fires. We are taught that slander of every other people's Gods and religion is a sign of reverence for our own idols, and is a meritorious action. The "Lord God", himself, the "*personal* Absolute," is impressed upon our young plastic minds as ever backbiting and condemning those he created, as cursing the stiff-necked Jew and *tempting* the Gentile.

For years the mind of young Protestants are periodically enriched with the choicest curses from the *Commination* service in their prayer books, of the "denouncing of God's anger and judgments against sinners," besides eternal condemnation for most creatures; and from his birth the young Roman Catholic constantly hears threats of curse and excommunication by his Church. It is in the Bible and Church of England prayer books that boys and girls of all classes learn of the existence of vices, the mention of which, in the works of Zola, falls under the ban of law as immoral and depraving, but to the enumeration and the *cursing* of which in the Churches, young and old are made to say "Amen," after the minister of the meek and humble Jesus. The latter says, Swear *not*, curse *not*, condemn *not*, but "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do

good to them that hate and persecute you." But the canon of the church and the clergymen tell them; Not at all. There are crimes and vices "for which ye affirm with your own mouths the curse of God to be due." (*Vide* "Commination Service."). What wonder that later in life, Christians piously try to emulate "God" and the priest, since their ears are still ringing with, "*Cursed be he* that removeth his neighbour's landmark," and, "*Cursed be he*" who does this, that or the other, even "*he that putteth his trust in man*" (!), and with "God's" judgment and condemnations. They judge and condemn right and left, indulging in wholesale slander and "comminating" on their own account. Do they forget that in the last curse—the *anathema* against adulterers and drunkards, idolators and extortionists—"the UNMERCIFUL and SLANDERERS" are included? And that by having joined in the solemn "amen" after this last *Christian* thunderbolt, *they have affirmed* "*with their own mouths the curse of God to be due* on their own sinful heads?"

But this seems to trouble our society slanderers very little. For no sooner are the religiously brought up children of church-going people off their school benches, than they are taken in hand by those who preceded them. Coached for their final examination in that school for scandal, called the world, by older and more experienced tongues, to pass Master of Arts in the science of cant and commination, a respectable member of society has but to join a religious congregation; to become a churchwarden or lady patroness.

Who shall dare deny that in our age, modern society in its general aspect has become a vast arena for such moral murders, performed between two cups of five o'clock tea and amid merry jests and laughter? Society is now more

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NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

It is with deep regret I announce the demise of Mrs. Gertrude Waterfield who passed away on January 3rd. Mrs. Waterfield was a native of Leicester, England, but came to Canada many years ago and joined the Toronto Lodge in March 1931. Mrs. R. Illingworth of Toronto Lodge, who was a close friend of Mrs. Waterfield wrote to me; "Theosophy was to her *the* guiding light; many times she remarked that she just lived for that visit to the T.S. on Sundays to find rest and companionship and food for thought for the week to follow or until the next time a visit to the Sunday lecture could be undertaken."

* * * *

I also announce the sudden death on January 30th of Mr. John L. Purdy, an old member of Toronto Lodge. Mr. Purdy took an active part in the affairs of the Lodge and was treasurer of the Building Fund during the busy and anxious period when Toronto Lodge was constructing its present headquarters at 52 Isabella St. Mr. Purdy was also on one occasion, a candidate for the position of General Secretary of the Canadian Society. Our sincere sympathy is sent to Mr. Purdy's sons and daughters and to other members of the family.

* * * *

Although belated, a New Year message from our brothers in Greece should be passed on. "To all Canadian Theosophists we send best wishes for 1950. May the new year be a year of real peace, of friendship and world-wide understanding" and closes with a poignant cry, "Peace, Peace, no more wars, this is the cry coming to you from martyred Greece". It is accompanied by a beautiful card with a photograph of the

Parthenon on the Acropolis Athens. I am sure all of us will echo this fervent desire for a more peaceful world.

* * * *

According to a decision at the last Executive Meeting a letter was sent to each lodge requesting a report on the feelings of its members regarding a change in the Annual Dues to meet the exigencies of the monetary situation. So far it seems the members desire a status-quo but with a proviso that the lodges raise a certain amount voluntarily thus enabling those who can afford more to do so without making it difficult for those who are not so well off. This seems a good proposition and one that would meet the case.

* * * *

There are still some forty members in arrears for last year and it is now necessary for me to take them off the Mailing List. I regret having to do this but they have had more than six months' grace and it is impossible to keep on sending the magazine gratis. Those putting themselves in good-standing will have all back numbers sent them immediately. And by the same token this applies to subscribers to the magazine. Our section is a small one but if the members and subscribers were to pay their obligations promptly there would be no necessity to make these appeals.

* * * *

The name of Mrs. Margaret P. Davis was inadvertently omitted from the list of new members given last month. Mrs. Davis joined in December through the Toronto Lodge. A cordial welcome is extended to Mrs. Davis and also to Mr. Albert J. Chessar, another new member of Toronto Lodge, who joined in January.

E. L. T.

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THE ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Nominations for the office of General Secretary and seven members of the General Executive should be made by the Lodges within the next month and should be sent in before the first of April. Will all Secretaries of Lodges kindly see that this matter is brought before their respective Lodges and when nominations have been made, send them at once to the General Secretary? Nominations should be made through a Lodge and the consent of the parties nominated should be obtained.

Nominations should be sent in a separate letter to the General Secretary, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ontario.

E. L. T.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

The Quarterly meeting of the General Executive took place on Sunday, January 8th and was attended by the following members: Miss M. Hindsley, Messrs. Barr, Haydon and the General Secretary. After the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved, the Financial Statement showing a balance of \$1039 was seconded by Mr. Haydon and carried.

The Editor on reporting for the magazine stated that the cost of a special cover for the Commemoration Year 1950 would be prohibitive unless donations were received to cover the cost; as an alternative he suggested that the November issue would be the only one to have a special cover. In regard to the policy of the magazine in general, especially concerning controversial matters, Mr. Barr outlined his views and said he would embody them in a report which will be sent to all members of the Executive.

A suggestion from Mr. Emory Wood that in view of the cost of the magazine and the general increase in prices that the dues be increased to \$5 per annum was discussed. It was decided that the Secretaries of the Lodges be circularized and reports obtained as to the feelings of the members on the subject.

In regard to the Portraits of the Masters, the General Secretary stated the situation up to date and stressed that we were waiting for results from India before any further action. However, a resolution from Dr. Wilks on the subject was introduced, seconded by Mr. Haydon and discussed. Finally it was put to a vote and rejected, the consensus of opinion being that the resolution was largely a repetition of the resolution passed at the October meeting; and that the intent of Dr. Wilks' proposal could be more adequately dealt with by the General Secretary (a member of the General Council) introducing a motion

in that Council to the following effect—"That the Mahatma pictures which are the property of the Society be removed from the custody of the Esoteric School and be placed in a location in the Society's headquarters where they may be seen by all members who desire to do so". This to be acted upon only if Mr. Sri Ram's motion is withdrawn or defeated. The General Secretary then stated that he would call a special meeting of the Executive if Mr. Sri Ram's original resolution is passed, in order to deal with the situation. The next ordinary meeting was arranged for Sunday, March 5th, and this meeting then adjourned.

MONTREAL LODGE

The annual meeting of the Montreal Lodge was held on January 10th with a good attendance of members. After reviewing the activities of the past year, the following officers were elected for the year 1950:

President, Mrs. A. Ovenden.
 Vice-President, Mr. G. W. A. Matsell.
 Secretary, Mrs. H. Lorimer.
 Treasurer, Mr. Peter Sinclair.
 Asst. Treasurer, Miss M. R. Desrochers.
 Librarian, Mrs. C. Matthews.

The members' meeting was given over to the study of "The Key to Theosophy" by H.P.B. and "The Seven Rays" by Ernest Wood and much profitable discussion resulted.

The lodge was enriched by six new members and one application for membership during the year.

Mrs. H. Lorimer,
 Secretary.

COVER OF THE MAGAZINE

Readers will note from the report of the last Executive meeting that we had hoped to have an attractive cover on the magazine for the 75th Anniversary year of the Society—a cover that would not be merely decorative, but would carry

important matter; for example, the front inside to contain the objects of the Society and a statement of the ideals and purposes of the Movement; the back covers to carry a list of the various Theosophical organizations in all countries, a list of Theosophical books for sale, the standing advertisements, etc.

The cost would be about \$25.00 per issue—or \$300.00 per year. This could be raised if 150 of our readers sent in one new subscription each—or if 75 sent in two subscriptions, \$4.00—or if 12 sent in \$25.00—or three sent in \$100.00. If our paid subscriptions were one thousand, we would have no more financial worries and the magazine size could be increased. New subscriptions are needed—but of course we do not reject donations; if any one has an itching pen, and a six cent stamp and an impulse to send \$500.00, our gratitude would render us

Ah me, it may be a dream, but "we are such stuff as dreams are made of".

TORONTO LODGE

New Year's Day "Open House" at Toronto Lodge was held on Sunday, January 1st, from 5 to 7 p.m. with many members and friends attending. Greetings were received from a number of "far away" wellwishers and these were very much appreciated. Miss Madeline Hindsley, President, Mr. and Mrs. G. I. Kinman, and Mrs. W. G. Hyland, Chairman of the Social Activity Committee, received the guests in the Lotus Room. Mrs. J. W. Gaunt, Mrs. N. Fergusson and Miss K. M. Lazier poured tea at the long table bright with its centrepiece of flowering red poinsettias and gay red candles in silver candelabra. Mrs. D. W. Barr, Mrs. R. Illingworth, Miss Laura Gaunt, Miss Margaret Barton, Miss Andrée Smith and Miss I. V. Angus were the tea assistants. The evening programme in the main hall

was a "lecture-reading" of Henry Van Dyke's "The Other Wise Man" illustrated with "filmslides". Mr. Cedric Weaver was the reader and the incidental music was arranged by Mr. Edward Glauser. The script for the reading and the filmslides were loaned to Toronto Lodge by Mr. E. Norman Pearson of Detroit, who visited Toronto in November to give a Sunday evening lecture on "Fate, Fortune and Free Will".

Mrs. A. Ovenden, newly elected President of Montreal Lodge, attended the Sunday evening meeting of Toronto Lodge on Jan. 15, accompanied by Mrs. O. Weaver and Mr. Cedric Weaver. An "impromptu reception" was held in the Lotus Room upstairs, after the lecture when Miss Madeline Hindsley introduced the members and friends to Mrs. Ovenden. Greetings and good wishes from Montreal Lodge were extended to Toronto Lodge by Mrs. Ovenden who said how pleased she was to be able to visit the Lodge. Mr. Dudley Barr replied to Mrs. Ovenden's remarks and said there always seemed to be a very strong link of friendship between the two lodges and asked her to carry back good wishes from Toronto Lodge.

Mrs. G. I. Kinman,
Corresponding Secretary,
Toronto Lodge.

IS DENUNCIATION A DUTY?

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than ever a kind of international shambles wherein, under the waving banners of drawing-room and church Christianity and the cultured tittle-tattle of the world, each becomes in turn as soon as his back is turned, the sacrificial victim, the sin-offering for atonement, whose singed flesh smells savoury in the nostrils of Mrs. Grundy. Let us pray, brethren, and render thanks to the God of Abraham and of Isaac that we no longer live in the days of cruel

Nero. And oh! let us feel grateful that we no longer live in danger of being ushered into the arena of the Colosseum, to die there a comparatively quick death under the claws of the hungry wild beasts! It is the boast of Christianity that our ways and customs have been wonderfully softened under the beneficent shadow of the Cross. Yet we have but to step into a modern drawing-room to find a symbolical representation, true to life, of the same wild beasts feasting on, and gloating over, the mangled carcasses of their best friends. Look at those graceful and as ferocious great cats, who with sweet smiles and an innocent eye sharpen their rose-coloured claws preparatory to playing at mouse and cat. Woe to the poor mouse fastened upon by those proud Society *felidae*! The mouse will be made to bleed for years before being permitted to bleed to death. The victims will have to undergo unheard-of moral martyrdom, to learn through papers and *friends* that they have been guilty at one or another time of life of each and all the vices and crimes enumerated in the Commination Service, until, to avoid further persecution, the said mice themselves turn into ferocious society cats, and make other mice tremble in their turn. Which of the two arenas is preferable, my brethren—that of the old pagan or that of Christian lands?

Addison had not words of contempt sufficiently strong to rebuke this Society gossip of the worldly Cains of both sexes.

"How frequently," he exclaims, "is the honesty and integrity of a man disposed of by a smile or a shrug? How many good and generous actions have been sunk into oblivion by a distrustful look, or stamped with the imputation of proceeding from bad motives, by a mysterious and seasonable whisper. Look . . . how large a por-

tion of chastity is sent out of the world by distant hints—nodded away, and cruelly winked into suspicion by the envy of those who are past all temptation of it themselves. How often does the reputation of a helpless creature bleed by a report—which the party who is at the pains to propagate it beholds with much pity and fellow-feeling—that she is heartily sorry for it—hopes in God it is not true!”

From Addison we pass to Sterne's treatment of the same subject. He seems to continue this picture by saying:

“So fruitful is slander in variety of expedients to satiate as well as to disguise itself, that if those smoother weapons cut so sore, what shall we say of open and unblushing scandal, subjected to no caution, tied down to no restraints? If the one like an arrow shot in the dark, does, nevertheless, so much secret mischief, this, like pestilence, which rages at noon-day, sweeps all before it, levelling without distinction the good and the bad; a thousand fall beside it, and ten thousand on its right hand; they fall, so rent and torn in this tender part of them, so unmercifully butchered, as sometimes never to recover either the wounds or the anguish of heart which they have occasioned.”

Such are the results of slander, and from the standpoint of Karma, many such cases amount to more than murder in hot blood. Therefore, those who want to lead “the higher life” among the “working Fellows,” of the Theosophical Society, must bind themselves by this solemn pledge, or, remain *droning* members. It is not to the latter that these pages are addressed, nor would they feel interested in that question, nor is it an advice offered to the F.'s T.S. at large. For the “Pledge” under discussion is taken only by those Fellows who

begin to be referred in our circles of “Lodges” as the “working” members of the T.S. All others, that is to say those Fellows who prefer to remain ornamental, and belong to the “mutual admiration” groups; or those who, having joined out of mere curiosity, have, without severing their connections with the Society, quietly dropped off; or those, again, who have preserved only a skin deep interest (if any), a luke-warm sympathy for the movement—and such constitute the majority in England—need burden themselves with no such pledge. Having been for years the “Greek Chorus” in the busy drama enacted, now known as the Theosophical Society, they prefer remaining as they are. The “chorus”, considering its numbers, has only, as in the past, to look on at what takes place in the action of the *dramatis personae* and it is only required to express occasionally its sentiments by repeating the closing gems from the monologues of the actors, or remain silent—at their option. “Philosophers of a day,” as Carlyle calls them, they neither desire, nor are they desired “to apply”. Therefore, even were these lines to meet their eye, they are respectfully begged to remember that what is said does not refer to either of the above enumerated classes of Fellows. Most of them have joined the Society as they would have bought a guinea book. Attracted by the novelty of the binding, they opened it; and, after glancing over contents and title, motto and dedication, they have put it away on a back shelf, and thought of it no more. They have a right to the volume, by virtue of their purchase, but would refer to it no more than they would to an antiquated piece of furniture relegated to the lumber-room, because the seat of it is not comfortable enough, or is out of proportion with their moral and intellectual size. A hundred to one these members will not even see Lucifer, for it has now

become a matter of theosophical statistics, that *more than two thirds* of its subscribers are non-theosophists. Nor are the elder brothers of Lucifer—the Madras “Theosophist,” The New York “Path,” the French “Lotus,” nor even the marvellously cheap and international “T.P.S.” (of 7 Duke Street, Adelphi), any luckier than we are. Like all prophets, they are not without honour, save in their own countries, and their voices in the fields of Theosophy are truly “the voice of one crying in the wilderness.” This is no exaggeration. Among the respective subscribers of those various Theosophical periodicals, the members of the T.S., *whose organs they are*, and for whose sole benefit they were started (their editors, managers and the whole staff of constant contributors working gratis, and paying furthermore out of their own generally meagre pockets, printers, publishers and occasional contributors), are on the average 15 per cent. This is also a sign of the times, and shows the difference between the “working” and the “resting” theosophists.

We must not close without once more addressing the former. Who of these will undertake to maintain that clause 3 is not a fundamental principle of the code of ethics which ought to guide every theosophist aspiring to *become one in reality*? For such a large body of men and women, composed of the most heterogeneous nationalities, characters, creeds and ways of thinking, furnishing for this very reason such easy pretexts for disputes and strife, ought not this clause to become part and parcel of the obligation of each member—working or ornamental—who joins the Theosophical movement? We think so, and leave it to the future consideration of the representatives of the General Council, who meet at the next anniversary at Adyar. In a Society with pretensions to an exalted system

of ethics—the essence of all previous ethical codes—which confesses openly its aspirations to emulate and put to shame by its practical example and ways of living the followers of every religion, such a pledge constitutes the *sine qua non* of the success of that Society. In a gathering where “near the noisome nettle blooms the rose,” and where fierce thorns are more plentiful than sweet blossoms, a pledge of such a nature is *the sole salvation*. No ethics as a science of mutual duties—whether social, religious or philosophical—from *man to man*, can be called complete or consistent unless such a rule is enforced. Not only this, but if we would not have our Society become *de facto* and *de jure* a gigantic sham parading under its banner of “Universal Brotherhood”—we ought to follow every time the breaking of this *law of laws*, by the expulsion of the slanderer. No honest man, still less a theosophist, can disregard these lines of Horace:—

“He that shall rail against his absent friends,
Or hears them scandalized, and not defends;
Tells tales, and brings his friend in disesteem;
That man’s a knave—be sure beware of him.”

—H. P. Blavatsky, *Lucifer*, Dec. 15, 1888.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
Canadian Theosophist.

Dear Sir:—

Lest our friends at Adyar, India, and elsewhere in the world of Theosophy, should think that we all agree with the many letters submitted to you in support of the action of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Section in the matter of the proposed transfer of the

custody of certain pictures of two Masters from the Society to the Esoteric School, I venture to offer other ideas on the subject. As a member of the Canadian Section, which title I use to indicate the existence of two Canadian Theosophical bodies, The Canadian Section and the Canadian Federation, both recognized at International headquarters, I would draw your attention that the matter of the pictures has never been submitted to any of the Lodges for consideration.

It is not a vitally important subject at all. The facts are, and the record shows this to be true, that our General Council at Adyar, merely sent this matter to national societies to vote upon. No decision was made at Adyar at all. Surely the proposal was quite in order, and if in the opinion of Executive Committees in each national section, and this after due consultation with their Lodges and Members, such a proposal should be rejected, then this done, the matter would be ended.

But the letter of Emory P. Wood, a Canadian Executive member from Edmonton, Alta., sent to our International President, C. Jinarajadasa, in my opinion is most unfortunate. It stirs up all the old and ancient antagonisms of 25 years ago. It offers nothing constructive to help us. Wood wants resignations. He states that the matter of the pictures as "only a straw in the wind". What delightful nonsense! He wants "the house cleaned and put in order" and so on. Yet the truth is that neither our good friends W. E. Wilks, of Vancouver, B.C., or E. P. Wood, of Edmonton, Alta., these days, have any great number of Theosophists to represent on the Canadian Section Executive Council. Western Canada has been for many years in support of Federation Lodges who in turn are able to find a simple basis of inter-lodge co-operation with those of their common membership who

participate in the activities of the Esoteric School. If my words are untrue, a simple printing of the membership statistics of both Section and Federation Lodges in Western Canada will serve to disprove them.

I have found the Toronto Lodge of our Society to be made up of a very devoted group of Theosophists. The Sunday morning study group meeting to read the Secret Doctrine is perhaps the most striking activity it has. I have also visited Lodges in three countries over a period of some 28 years.

In the U.S.A., and in Great Britain, a unified society exists. Better still in these Lodges closely affiliated to the Adyar International Headquarters, amity and brotherliness exists and toleration is strictly maintained. One can choose to support the Esoteric Section by one's attendance, or keep away. I never heard, until I came to Toronto, any suggestion at any time that the Esoteric School, the Liberal Catholic Church, the Co-Masonry Movement, the Theosophical Order of Service, the Knights of the Round Table, or any of the many sided activities of Theosophists in many parts of the world, were other than something that those who gave support to them found useful. In South America for instance, the traditionally Roman Catholic background of the people has yielded substantially to Theosophy through the work of the Liberal Catholic Church. One must not bury one's head like an ostrich in the sand, and then loudly declare that we cannot see anything beyond our "parish pump".

In its earliest years the Theosophical Society had an Esoteric Section. Our good Founders, H. P. B., and W. Q. J., were both Members. Olcott was not. As the Society has grown in strength in all parts of the world, the experience has been that those Lodges that practice toleration, and also have esoteric sec-

tions, have become the most promising. Where a definite antagonism towards the Esoteric Section has been fostered the results have been a falling off in support. The Canadian Section has lost membership over a period of some 20 years.

The American, British, and Indian Sections are all unified. It is true that other Theosophical Societies are in the U.S.A., but in their attitude of non-co-operation with Adyar they have also failed to co-operate amongst themselves. There are three such groups. In Canada no further reason exists, in my opinion, for the two Canadian groups to exist as separate bodies. Once the general membership of the Canadian Section and the Canadian Federation realize that they have much in common, and that those who caused them to be severed are no longer here, then progress might be possible toward unity. To obtain this we need less stirring up of fancied troubles and more candid exploration of the road to unity.

Our good friend, E. L. T., the General Secretary, has expressed surprise that the matter of the Pictures has not been commented on in other Theosophical papers. Surely he must know that where a real desire to foster growth exists all such explosive matter would not be so liberally displayed as in our own Canadian Theosophist. The matter can best be handled by the Lodges. There is one striking thought however, coming out of the whole discussion. It seems that our good friends on the Executive Council of the Canadian Section value highly the Pictures of the Masters. This should be a source of appreciation to us all. Perhaps the Society should keep the pictures after all. Its most rationalistic section, the Canadian Section, has sounded the alarm.

Frederick E. Tyler, F.T.S.,
Toronto Lodge.

The Editor,
Canadian Theosophist.

It was indeed heartening to read your letter as well as those of Emory P. Wood and Washington E. Wilks in the December issue of the Canadian Theosophist.

I had somewhat despaired of the Canadian Theosophical Society, it had become so inarticulate as far as the pages of the C. T. were concerned.

I am hopeful now that the forthright, outspoken manner of the aforesaid letters will find favourable response through the membership. I wish to congratulate the Editorial Committee for having these letters published, they have rendered noble service, worthy of Theosophy.

By 'outspoken' I mean intelligent statements of facts, stated in terms that will appeal to searchers after truth. The clenched fist that rends the veil, must hold the healing balm, to heal and succor the brothers in darkness, blinded by superstition, glamour of ritual and the blissful inflation of the lower ego.

I congratulate you on your excellent editorials.

Yours fraternally,
D. B. Thomas.

R. R. 1,
Dade City,
Florida.

The Editor,
Canadian Theosophist.

Re Transfer of Pictures

Referring to your article in the December issue of the Canadian Theosophist, in my opinion this "episode" was drawing to a harmonious solution with Mr. Sri Ram's courteous, explanatory and obvious sincere reply, but Emory P. Wood's letter raises an entirely different question. He accuses the Esoteric Section of the Adyar Theosophical Society publicly of being moved by "evil

genius in its design and unworthy of being our representatives."

May I ask the Executive of the Canadian Theosophical Society, why on the one hand it has continued for the past 25 years through the medium of the Canadian Theosophist to accuse Adyar of disseminating a Pseudo Theosophy and on the other hand allowed the Adyar Esoteric Section to function right in the Canadian Lodges? Especially after the Masters declared in their letters, that the Esoteric Section was a failure. Furthermore why does the Canadian Society offer its platforms to speakers from Adyar, if those speakers are 'species of dry rot which have ruined the efforts of the Society', to quote Mr. Wood. Many of the newer members stand bewildered before this state of affairs and subscribers probably say "what is this all about, let's get out of this."

After hearing for instance, Mr. Jinrajadasa, who despite his advanced age and illness made an effort to speak to us on this continent of the true aims of the Adyar Society, that is, brotherhood and not psychic pursuits and after having listened to Sri Ram's splendid address on the same line, one wonders, if the above-mentioned accusations do not refer to some past period in the Adyar Society's history, instead to its present attitude? And how can Mr. Emory P. Wood and others blame Adyar for the failure of Theosophy in Canada and the U.S.A.? What prevented the Successor Theosophical Movements on THIS continent to spread the ORIGINAL teaching far and wide and to have genuine Theosophists in all high places of education, as well as government? Surely this is not the fault of the Adyar Society. Neither Mr. W. E. Wilks in Vancouver, nor Emory P. Wood in Edmonton were able to arouse the enthusiasm for theosophy in their respective cities. Apart from the

usual lack of intelligent leadership in some of the lodges and the realization that the Society does not constitute a body of religious teachers, but an association of investigators and inquirers, the Society, in my opinion, has fallen down on the very first and binding object of its platform, that of exercising brotherhood. To make it clear, whereas other religio-philosophical and idealistic organizations like the Quakers, Unitarians, The Womens International League for Peace and Freedom, the Salvation Army, etc., have always worked ACTIVELY in their respective fields for Universal Brotherhood and made their voices heard in national and international affairs with protests and resolutions, we Theosophists, who coined the Motto "without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste and colour", have fallen down in this respect. More often than not we have wasted our time in the study of neo-theosophical books, and pseudo-scientific explorations, "sitting" for Yoga and other often dangerous pastimes, instead of raising our voice in protest against this or that crime against humanity, permitted or pursued by local, national or international authority. Our organization in Canada is sixty years old, but I am sure nobody in the Canadian Parliament knows who these Theosophists are and what they represent. On the other hand for instance the "Women's International League for Peace and Freedom" was referred to in a debate in the Hansard as "the most intelligent and cultured body of women in Canada". Why, because they sent their protests and resolutions to Ottawa whenever they found a sore spot and inhuman laws.

Theosophy has never entered the public field of becoming KNOWN as an organization WORKING for BROTHERHOOD and missed a great chance to support its claim by quoting our doc-

trines with their spiritual scientific explanations. Today other organizations work actively for brotherhood and are recognized and admired the world over and atomic science and para-psychology are "investigating the laws of nature and the latent powers in man". Universities are taking up the study of comparative religion, announce such lectures as epoch making, but the name Theosophical Society is never heard.

In conclusion, if we cannot work with Adyar and if we feel the time has come to raise our banner and fight against the degrading materialism and dangerous practices on THIS continent, then let us immediately start and work towards a "United Theosophical Societies of America" in 1950, select our President and to start with, demand that our respective governments through the United Nations BAN the ATOMIC BOMB as a weapon of war. Other non-political organizations work actively in this respect, and protest against continuous war propaganda and try to disseminate our religious philosophy. The publication THE NEW OUTLOOK is an example, which got more subscribers within two years, than the rest of theosophical publications in America it seems.

Another good thing would be to consider new comers. An informative "booklet" is urgently needed, stating the difference between the original teaching, the status of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky as H.P.B., and the deviation from this teaching in the various Theosophical Successor Movements both in the U.S.A. and Adyar. Students should be urged to acquaint themselves well with these facts before joining half a dozen other movements and ending in confusion. The origin and *short* history of the following movements should be outlined and the point stressed that NO COPYRIGHT existed for the SECRET DOCTRINE: Max Heindel Rosicru-

cians, Amorc Rosicrucians, Arcane School of Alice Bailey, the Antrophosphical Teaching of Rudolf Steiner. Many student have lost "precious time" in "browsing around" and remain ignorant as to the true history.

A Student.

2711 Maplewood Ave., Apt. 12,
Montreal, Dec. 31, 1949.

[Correspondents are reminded that the original protest of the Canadian Society was made because of the implied contravention of the principle of freedom of belief within the Society—the pictures were to be transferred from the Society because the Society permitted freedom of belief in the Masters. H.P.B. wrote: "Belief in the Masters was never made an article of faith in the T.S." (see *The Original Programme of the Theosophical Society*, T. P. S. 1931). The main reason for the protest has been disregarded by our correspondents; let us confine ourselves to the point at issue.]

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.
