

# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Divine Wisdom

Brotherhood

Occult Science

---

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement in this Magazine, unless made in an official document

---

VOL. XXX., No. 3

TORONTO, MAY 15th, 1949

Price 20 Cents.

---

## WHITE LOTUS DAY, 1949

### "THE MASK OF TRANSIENCY"

*“. . . . and every glint  
Posture and jest and thought and tint  
Freed from the mask of transiency,  
Triumphant in eternity.”*

In one of his poems, Rupert Brooke, whose short-lived genius flamed like a meteor with a brilliance that paled the stars of his generation, described one of those not rare, but often untold of, moments of awareness when the commonplace and the ordinary are suddenly transfigured and are seen 'freed from the mask of transiency' as fragments of a larger immortality. Rosetti in his *Sudden Light* voices a similar thought: "But just when at that swallow's soar

Your neck turned so,  
Some veil did fall — I knew it all of  
yore."

Recently when re-reading some of Rupert Brooke's poems, I came upon the phrase, 'the mask of transiency' and I thought of H. P. Blavatsky, the messenger who re-stated and re-affirmed the Ancient Wisdom and in whose memory members of the various Theosophical Societies united on May 8th of this year in commemorating the fifty-eighth anniversary of her departure from this field of activity. H. P. B. is still the heart and soul of the Theosophical Movement, and although the various

Theosophical Societies go their separate ways, nevertheless, the Movement is reborn every White Lotus Day and many earnest students, regardless of race, creed, sex, caste, colour or organizational affiliations, remember on that day the sacred ideal of forming a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of humanity, the primary object of the Movement, and re-affirm their dedication to that ideal.

Who *was* H.P.B.? We can only answer with other questions — Who knows? What or who was behind the mask of her personality? She has been called a cheat, a charlatan, an adventurer, an opportunist, and biographies have been written based upon the assumption that she was all these and nothing more. Among the early members of the Society it was recognized that she was in close touch with the Masters, that she was the spring from which the hidden waters might be drawn, and that her own occult knowledge was profound; but many were disturbed by the turbulence of her personality, seemingly so out of place with the conventional ideas of what the outer life of a spiritual teacher should be. Mr. Sinnett raised this point and was told in reply:

"I am painfully aware of the fact that the habitual incoherence of her statements—especially when excited—and her strange ways, make her in your opinion a very undesirable transmitter of our messages. Nevertheless, kind Brothers, once that you have learned the truth; once told that this unbalanced mind, the seeming incongruity of her speeches and ideas, her nervous excitement, all that in short, which is so calculated to upset the feelings of sober minded people, whose notions of reserve and manners are shocked by such strange outbursts of what they regard as her temper, and which so revolt you—once that *you know* that nothing of it is due to any fault of hers, you may perchance, be led to regard her in quite a different light. Notwithstanding that the time is not quite ripe to let you entirely into the secret; and that you are hardly yet prepared to understand the great Mystery even if told of it, owing to the great injustice and wrong done, I am empowered to allow you a glimpse behind the veil. This state of hers is intimately connected with her occult training in Tibet, and due to her being sent out alone into the world to gradually prepare the way for others. After nearly a century of fruitless search, our chiefs had to avail themselves of the only opportunity to send out a *European body* upon European soil to serve as a connecting link between that country and our own. You do not understand? Of course not. Please then, remember, what she tried to explain, and what you gathered tolerably well from her, namely, the fact of the *seven* principles in the *complete* human being. Now, no

man or woman, unless he be an initiate of the 'fifth circle', can leave the precincts of *Bod-Las* and return back into the world in his integral whole—if I may use the expression. *One*, at least, of his seven satellites has to remain behind for two reasons; the first to form the necessary connecting link, the wire of transmission—the second as the safest warranter that certain things will never be divulged. She is no exception to the rule . . . ."—*Mahatma Letters*.

While the explanation raises many other questions, the Letter makes clear H.P.B.'s position in this life; she was the one who was sent out 'alone' to prepare the way; she was chosen after 'nearly a century of fruitless search'; she was the 'connecting link' between the modern world and the world of the Masters. In another place she is referred to as 'our brother whom you know as H.P.B.' The indications point to the fact that H.P.B. was not a mere tool or medium but an advanced soul who laid aside temporarily the status which she—or he—had attained in order to serve humanity.

We do not know 'the great Mystery' of H.P.B., but we do know enough to honour and respect her, to appreciate her great gift to the world, to recognize that the message she brought has all the elements of validity and has the magical power of evoking the gods now hidden by the masks of human personalities. Some day we shall know more, and then, to use another of Rupert Brooke's phrases, we shall "See, no longer blinded by our eyes".

D. W. B.

*Where do we find in history that 'Messenger', grand or humble, an Initiate or a Neophyte, who, when he was made the bearer of some hitherto concealed truth or truths, was not crucified and rent to shreds by the 'dogs' of envy, malice and ignorance? Such is the terrible Occult Law; and he who does not feel in himself the heart of a lion to scorn the savage barking, and the soul of a dove to forgive the poor ignorant fools, let him give up the Sacred Science.*

—S. D. III, 90.

## LITERARY JOTTINGS

*On Criticism, Authorities,  
and Other Matters*

BY AN UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER

Theosophists and editors of Theosophical periodicals are constantly warned, by the prudent and the faint-hearted, to beware of giving offence to "authorities," whether scientific or social. Public Opinion, they urge, is the most dangerous of all foes. Criticism of it is fatal, we are told. Criticism can hardly hope to make the person or subject so discussed amend or become amended. Yet it gives offence to the many, and makes Theosophists hateful. "Judge not, if thou wilt not be judged," is the habitual warning.

It is precisely because Theosophists would themselves be judged and court impartial criticism, that they begin by rendering that service to their fellow-men. Mutual criticism is a most healthy policy, and helps to establish final and definite rules in life—practical, not merely theoretical. We have had enough of theories. The *Bible* is full of wholesome advice, yet few are the Christians who have ever applied any of its ethical injunctions to their daily lives. If one criticism is hurtful so is another; so also is every innovation, or even the presentation of some old thing under a new aspect, as both have necessarily to clash with the views of this or another "authority". I maintain, on the contrary, that criticism is the great benefactor of thought in general; and still more so of those men who never think for themselves but rely in everything upon acknowledged "authorities" and social routine.

For what is an "authority" upon any question, after all? No more, really, than a light streaming upon a certain object through one single, more or less wide, chink, and illuminating it, *from one side only*. Such light, besides being

the faithful reflector of the *personal views* of but one man—very often merely that of his special hobby—can never help in the examination of a question or a subject from all its aspects and sides. Thus, the authority appealed to will often prove but of little help, yet the profane, who attempts to present the given question or object under another aspect and in a different light, is forthwith hooted for his great audacity. Does he not attempt to upset solid "authorities," and fly in the face of respectable and time-honoured routine thought?

Friends and foes! Criticism is the sole salvation from intellectual stagnation. It is the beneficent goad which stimulates to life and action—hence to healthy changes—the heavy ruminants called Routine and Prejudice, in private as in social life. Adverse opinions are like conflicting winds which brush from the quiet surface of a lake the green scum that tends to settle upon still waters. If every clear stream of independent thought, which runs through the field of life outside the old grooves traced by Public Opinion, had to be arrested and to come to a standstill, the results would prove very sad. The streams would no longer feed the common pond called Society, and its waters would become still more stagnant than they are. Result: it is the most orthodox "authorities" of the social pond who would be the first to get sucked down still deeper into its ooze and slime.

Things, even as they now stand, present no very bright outlook as regards progress and social reforms. In this last quarter of the century it is women alone who have achieved any

visible beneficent progress. Men, in their ferocious egoism and sex-privilege, have fought hard, but have been defeated on almost every line. Thus, the younger generations of women look hopeful enough. They will hardly swell the future ranks of stiff-necked and cruel Mrs. Grundy. Those who to-day lead her no longer invincible battalions on the war-path, are the older Amazons of respectable society, and her young men, the male "flowers of evil," the nocturnal plants that blossom in the hothouses known as clubs. The Brummels of our modern day have become worse gossips than the old dowagers ever were in the dawn of our century.

To oppose or criticize such foes, or even to find the least fault with them, is to commit the one unpardonable social sin. An Unpopular Philosopher, however, has little to fear, and notes his thoughts, indifferent to the loudest "war-cry" from those quarters. He examines his enemies of both sexes with the calm and placid eye of one who has nothing to lose, and counts the ugly blotches and wrinkles on the "sacred" face of Mrs. Grundy, as he would count the deadly poisonous flowers in the branches of a majestic *mancenillier*—through a telescope from afar. He will never approach the tree, or rest under its lethal shade.

"Thou shalt not set thyself against the Lord's anointed," said David. But since the "authorities," social and scientific, are always the first to break that law, others may occasionally follow the good example. Besides, the "anointed" ones are not always those of the Lord; many of them being more of the "self-anointed" sort.

Thus, whenever taken to task for disrespect to Science and its "authorities," which the Unpopular Philosopher is accused of rejecting, he demurs to the statement. To reject the *infallibility* of

a man of Science is not quite the same as to repudiate his learning. A *specialist* is one, precisely because he has some one specialty, and is therefore less reliable in other branches of Science, and even in the general appreciation of his own subject. Official school Science is based upon temporary foundations, so far. It will advance upon straight lines so long only as it is not compelled to deviate from its old grooves, in consequence of fresh and unexpected discoveries in the fathomless mines of knowledge.

Science is like a railway train which carries its baggage van from one terminus to the other, and with which no one except the railway officials may interfere. But passengers who travel by the same train can hardly be prevented from quitting the direct line at fixed stations, to proceed, if they so like, by diverging roads. They should have this option, without being taxed with libelling the chief line. To proceed *beyond* the terminus on horseback, cart or foot, or even to undertake pioneer work, by cutting entirely new paths through the great virgin forests and thickets of public ignorance, is their undoubted prerogative. Other explorers are sure to follow; nor less sure are they to criticize the newly-cut pathway. They will thus do more good than harm. For truth, according to an old Belgian proverb, is always the result of conflicting opinions, like the spark that flies out from the shock of two flints struck together.

Why should men of learning be always so inclined to regard Science as their own personal property? Is knowledge a kind of indivisible family estate, entailed only on the elder sons of Science? Truth belongs to all, or ought so to belong; excepting always those few special branches of knowledge which should be preserved ever secret, like

those two-edged weapons that both kill and save. Some philosopher compared knowledge to a ladder, the top of which was more easily reached by a man unencumbered by heavy luggage, than by him who has to drag along an enormous bale of old conventionalities, faded out and dried. Moreover, such a one must look back every moment, for fear of losing some of his fossils. Is it owing to such extra weight that so few of them ever reach the summit of the ladder, and that they affirm there is *nothing* beyond the highest rung they have reached? Or is it for the sake of preserving the old dried-up plants of the Past that they deny the very possibility of any fresh, living blossoms, on new forms of life, in the Future?

Whatever their answer, without such optimistic hope in the ever-becoming, life would be little worth living. What between "authorities," their fear of, and wrath at the slightest criticism—each and all of them demanding to be regarded as infallible in their respective departments—the world threatens to fossilize in its old prejudices and routine. Fogeyism grins its skeleton-like sneer at every innovation or new form of thought. In the great battle of life for the survival of the fittest, each of these forms becomes in turn the master, and then the tyrant, forcing back all new growth as its own was checked. But the true Philosopher, however "unpopular", seeks to grasp the actual life, which, springing fresh from the inner source of Being, the rock of truth, is ever moving onward. He feels equal contempt for all the little puddles that stagnate lazily on the flat and marshy fields of social life.

H. P. B.

\* This article first appeared in *Lucifer* for September, 1892.

## A CATECHISM OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

"Conscious life in Spirit is as difficult for some natures as swimming is for some bodies."—*Mahatma K. H.*

### Chapter I: ON SPIRIT

1. Q. What is the Spirit in Man?  
A. The Spirit in Man is the Eternal Witness within; it is the consciousness of the Innermost Dweller, the source of its WILL and, therefore, the beginning of all *nidānas*.
2. Q. What are *nidānas*?  
A. *Nidānas* are concatenations of causes and effects and are produced through acts of free will. They should not be confused with the 12 Chief Causes of Existence, also called *nidānas* (in Tibetan: *ten-brel cu-ñi*).
3. Q. What is consciousness?  
A. Consciousness is the sum total of the knowledge which a Perceiver is aware of at the instant referred to.
4. Q. What is the relation between consciousness and spirit?  
A. The two are different words for one and the same concept, yet consciousness is often used with reference to a particular moment, while spirit is used in a more abstract way.
5. Q. What is the relation between spirit and matter?  
A. Spirit and matter are the opposite poles of one and the same thing, of the ever unknowable Reality underlying all phenomena, objective as well as subjective. Their relation is that of subject and object of perception.
6. Q. What is ATMA, the Spirit of Humanity?  
A. Just as gravitation is the result of the collective action of numerous particles of matter, so ATMA is the

collective manifestation of the Sun Total of all human consciousnesses.

7. Q. What does it mean to be united with ATMA?

A. Just as all the particles in the Sun participate in the heat and the light of the Sun, so the human Egos, when united to ATMA, participate in ITS GLORY and KNOWLEDGE.

8. Q. What is the ABSOLUTE SPIRIT?

A. The ABSOLUTE SPIRIT is the CAUSELESS CAUSE of all that is, was, or ever will be. It is "an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE, on which all speculation is impossible." (S.D. 1-14).

9. Q. Why is it not also called Omnipotent and Omniscient?

A. Because it would be a metaphysical error to ascribe omnipotence and Omniscience to an ABSOLUTELY ABSTRACT PRINCIPLE. Omnipotence and omniscience are concepts contradictory per se, the fruits of anthropomorphizing Spiritual Principles.

10. Q. Is Spirit the cause of our material Universe?

A. The most complete spiritual or metaphysical abstractions conceivable to the Higher Mind are the cause of our material Universe. "These abstractions become more and more concrete as they approach our plane of existence, until finally they phenomenalize in the form of the material Universe, by a process of conversion of metaphysics into physics." (S.D. I-45).

11. Q. Is there a reason why abstractions are called spiritual, and yet do not refer necessarily to matters of consciousness, or spirit?

A. Yes, this is because an abstraction, like consciousness, has matter, the concrete, as opposite. Besides, in final analysis, Spirit is also an abstraction, and this explains why

the Spirit in Man deals with abstractions and principles directly.

12. Q. What are prototypes and how are they related to spirit?

A. Prototypes are abstract images, or models rather, of concrete things. Prototypes are classified according to their degree of abstraction, or spirituality.

13. Q. What are prototypes per se?

A. They are IDEAS vibrating throughout metaphysical space, called ākāsa by the Occultists. But then there are also individual prototypes, which are the privations of matter, real models, around which, in a suitable matrix, matter consolidates.

14. Q. What is the highest of the abstract prototypes?

A. The highest and most abstract of prototypes is known as the GREAT BREATH.

15. Q. What are the highest individual prototypes?

A. The metaphysical atoms and the Monads.

16. Q. What are the prototypes of Humanity?

A. The Seven Logoi, known also as Kāranātma, Isvara, the Regents or Rectors of the seven sacred Planets, the seven Rishis, the seven Dhyanī Buddhas, etc.

17. Q. By what process does the Spirit perceive phenomena?

A. By the mysterious interaction between Spirit and its material counterpart. This interaction takes place via the "bridge" or link which must be postulated to exist between Spirit and Matter, subject and object.

18. Q. How is this "bridge" called?

A. FOHAT is the name of the link between Spirit and Matter, in its most abstract form. Many are its manifestations on the more concrete planes, as it is the animating principle electrifying every atom into life.

(Continued on Page 41)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

It was with great pleasure that I received an invitation to speak at Lodge 22, Theosophical Society in America (Covina) in Toledo, Ohio, where I proceeded on Tuesday April 26 and met the officials of that friendly and hospitable lodge. Mr. Winter, the President, and his charming wife ably assisted by Mrs. Eppstein, the Secretary, made me feel thoroughly at home and before and after the meeting I was enabled to meet several friends whom I had known at Conventions and elsewhere. In spite of the inclement weather there was a good turn-out and the audience seemed most interested in the talk I gave on "Theosophy—A Way of Life." It is meetings such as these that bring theosophists of the various denominations closer together and make them realize that the various branches of the Society are really one at heart and all working toward the same goal. It also emphasizes that toleration, a virtue specially advocated in our teachings is, if it means anything at all, something that is extended not only to individual members by allowing them absolute freedom of opinion but by the same token is extended to the adherents of the different branches of the Society and is such that we can be on friendly terms with all, thereby presenting to the world an united front exemplifying in no uncertain manner that brotherhood which we advocate and which is the focal point of all that we stand for.

\* \* \* \*

It was with extreme regret that I learned that our President, Mr. Jinarajadasa had been taken ill at Houston, Texas whilst on tour. This month we were expecting him to visit Canada beginning at Vancouver and then make his way across the continent to Montreal. All that is now in abeyance until such time as we hear the result of a

medical examination which is to take place at Olcott, Wheaton early this month, and should be known by time this in in print. We all wish him a speedy restoration to health and trust that he will be able to resume the itinerary drawn up for him. In the meantime all lodges who have made arrangements for his visit are requested to delay further arrangements and await the verdict of his medical advisers of which they will be notified at the earliest possible moment.

\* \* \* \*

Recently I received from the Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Victoria a harrowing document purporting to have been widely published in Belgium describing the cruelties enacted upon old and decrepit horses exported from Canada to that country where they are eventually transformed into food for humans. Apart from this horrible end to our dearly loved equines we shudder at the account of the cruelty dealt out to them on their final journey. That man can descend to such practises is repulsive in the extreme and shows very plainly to what depths of degradation he will go for the sake of "filthy lucre". I am informed the S.P.C.A. is urging legislation with the Federal Government to stop these practises and I know I need not urge all Theosophists and lovers of animals to do everything they can to further whatever steps that may be taken in this very necessary and laudable work.

E. L. T.

---

### BOOKS ON THEOSOPHICAL SUBJECTS

which have passed the tests of time and use  
Supplied on request. Forty years' experience  
at your service. Let me know your wishes.

**N. W. J. HAYDON,**  
564 PAPE AVE., TORONTO

## THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY  
IN CANADA

Published on the 15th day of every month.

Authorized as second class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.



Subscription: TWO DOLLARS A YEAR

## OFFICERS OF THE T. S. IN CANADA

## GENERAL EXECUTIVE

Dudley W. Barr, 18 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, Ont.  
 N. W. J. Haydon, 564 Pape Ave., Toronto, Ont.  
 Miss M. Hindsley, 745 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ont.  
 George I. Kinman, 46 Rawlinson Ave., Toronto, Ont.  
 Peter Sinclair, 4941 Wellington St., Verdun, Quebec.  
 Washington E. Wilks, 925 Georgia St. W., Vancouver, B.C.  
 Emory P. Wood, 12207 Stony Plain Road, Edmonton, Alta.

## GENERAL SECRETARY

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

## EDITORIAL BOARD, CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

All Letters to the Editor, Articles and Reports for Publication  
 should be sent to The Editor:

Dudley W. Barr, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.

Printed by The Griffin & Richmond Co., Ltd.,  
 29 Rebecca Street, Hamilton, Ontario.

750 Grand Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C. Mrs. Fielding and her fellow-workers are ready to serve all enquirers. We sincerely hope that the change of location will render this valuable Library more readily accessible to a greater number of students.

\* \* \*

We acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of a little booklet of the sayings of the late Mohandas K. Gandhi, bearing the title, *Thus Spake the Mahatma*. The quotations have been well selected to convey the spirit of Gandhi's life of practical idealism, "Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well. There is nothing more potent than thought. Deed follows word and word follows thought. The word is the result of a mighty thought and where the thought is mighty and pure the result is always might and pure." "To lose patience is to lose the battle. The greater our patience—another word for suffering—the greater will be our strength."

\* \* \*

## 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.

\* \* \*

We were delighted to receive a note from Mrs. Edith Fielding telling of the re-opening of the H.P.B. Library. It was necessary to move the Library from the home on Foul Bay Road, Victoria, in which it had been carried on for so many years by that devoted servant of Theosophy, Mrs. H. Henderson. The Library has now been re-established at

*Manas* in its issue of April 13th devotes a page and a half to the writings of J. B. Priestley, particularly his latest play, *The Inspector Calls*. Reference is also made to the 'time play' *We Have Been Here Before* and to the play *They Came To A City*. The motion picture version of this latter was shown in Toronto some months ago, but stayed only a few days and was not well attended. An American critic refers to the play as 'a watered-down Shavian satire', with which *Manas* entirely disagrees. "The real question was whether or not the people Mr. Priestley assembled at the portal were fit to live in a Utopia, and he showed that some of them were not, and why. . . Priestley hardly bothered to describe the utopia at all. What was the use, when utopia is first a state of mind, then a pattern of human relation-



ships, and only finally a set of circumstances?" Our own thought on seeing the screen version was that for the first time we had seen the Bodhisattva impulse portrayed on the screen. The hero finds the utopia for which he has worked and searched all his life—and then leaves it, not because he was incapable of living there, but because he must go and tell others of it and encourage them to strive for it. Says the Voice of the Silence: "Buddhas of Compassion . . . who . . . refuse to pass into the Nirvanic state . . . as it would then become beyond their power to assist men even so little as Karma permits. They prefer to remain invisibly . . . in the world, and contribute toward men's salvation by influencing them to follow the Good Law."

### THE THREE TRUTHS

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.—*Idyll of the White Lotus.*

"The man of highest virtue appears lowly. He who is truly pure behaves as though he were sullied. He who has virtue in abundance behaves as though it were not enough. He who is firm in virtue seems like a skulking pretender. He who is simple and true appears as unstable as water."

—Sayings of Lao-Tze.

### A CATECHISM OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

*(Continued from Page 38)*

19. Q. Is FOHAT then the final cause of all actions?

A. In one sense it is, yet it is more correct, metaphysically, to say that all phenomena are produced by the action of Spirit upon Matter, through the agency of Fohat.

20. Q. And where comes the WILL into the picture?

A. WILL is the fohatic force at the disposition of every spiritual entity, and through which it can act from within outwardly, from the subjective Universe upon the objective one.

21. Q. Are there forces independent of spiritual entities?

A. No, of course not. All forces spring from Spirit, hence must originate in spiritual entities of one kind or another, as the existence of spirit separate from matter is as impossible as that of matter devoid of spirit.

22. Q. And what about the universal force of gravitation? Is this not a property of inert matter?

A. The matter you speak about is not really inert. All matter is living and conscious to a degree. Occultism teaches that life is a universally diffused property and that "death" is merely a destruction of form. Gravitation also has its source in spiritual entities, as there are no uncompounded entities but spiritual ones.

23. Q. Does this mean that compounded entities can be non-spiritual?

A. Only in the sense of not having an attraction or aspiration towards things of the Spirit. Even the most material compound has a consciousness of its own, hence must have a spirit aspect. Every compound entity consists of a number of spiritual beings, or lives, united together into

one organization, and causing it to manifest a definite polarity of some kind.

24. Q. What does polarity mean in this case?

A. Polarity means "having poles" meaning with "poles" centres of a particular force. Physics deals only with very simple manifestations of polarities, while in Chemistry the subject of polarity shows already signs of a beginning complexity. Yet, the complexity of polarity on the psychic and mental planes is beyond description.

25. Q. Is the polarity of a complex entity fixed once for all?

A. No, polarities may change in many ways, and the causes may be internal as well as external.

26. Q. Which are the internal causes of change of polarity of complex organizations?

A. The internal causes may be due to:

- (1) The addition of new members,
- (2) The leaving or expulsion of old members,
- (3) The change from active to passive, or vice versa, of the will of one or more constituent members,
- (4) The complete reversal of polarity of one or more of the constituent members,
- (5) The superior will of one co-member.

27. Q. And which are the external causes?

A. The external causes may be due to:

- (1) An incidental change in the ambient,
- (2) A cyclic change in the Laws of differentiated Nature,
- (3) The superior will of an outside entity or group of entities.

28. Q. What is the difference between will, desire, and aversion?

A. *Will* is the exercise, by a spiritual entity, of its inherent subjective force.

*Desire* is the attractive force of the Will emanating from outside entities upon the entity which experiences the desire.

*Aversion* is the repulsive force of the Will emanating from outside entities upon the entity which experiences the aversion.

29. Q. When is there free will?

A. There is free will when its exercise is not induced by the will of other entities. In other words, when it is not caused by either desire or aversion. But it should be understood that so-called spiritual desires do not inhibit the exercise of the free will.

30. Q. Why not?

A. Because these desires are induced by the spiritual prototype, the SELF, and the latter is certainly not to be classified as an OUTSIDE entity.

BY MAᅅGALA.

(The above article is not to be reproduced without first obtaining authority so to do through the Editor.)

## GENERAL EXECUTIVE

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive of the Theosophical Society in Canada was held at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto on Sunday, May 1. Members present were Miss M. Hindsley, Messrs. Dudley W. Barr, N. W. J. Haydon, George I Kinman and the General Secretary. By invitation, Professor Ernest Wood who was in Toronto for a series of lectures at the Toronto Lodge, was also present and his advice and comments were greatly appreciated. The business enacted was routine and calls for no special comment. The next meeting was arranged for the second Sunday in July.

# HYPNOTISM—A PSYCHOLOGICAL DEGRADATION

J. HASKEL KRITZER, M.D.

Hypnotism, long held in disrepute, is increasingly being brought to popular attention by sources which tend to shroud it into respectability. It is therefore timely to examine this subject, even though it cannot receive a more lengthy treatment, which it merits.

Hypnotism may be described as a process of artificially producing a negative state of consciousness, in a human being, resembling sleep. By this means a person of determined will plunges another who is submissive into a sort of trance. It is a passive, will-less state in which *only* the powers of discrimination and choice are temporarily suspended, though the faculty of receiving and of carrying out suggestions is markedly increased. It is a dissociation between the higher reasoning centers of the mind and the lower and automatic centers of the brain.

What is now known as Hypnotism—*Hypnos*, a Greek term denoting sleep—is but a perversion of a well-known practice among the ancients, particularly among the Hindus, in healing the sick and afflicted. Thousands of years ago, initiated priests healed diseases by magnetic processes.

This process of magnetic healing was rediscovered by Friederich Anton Mesmer, the famous physician, who was born in Schwaben in 1734 and died in 1815, thought it was known and practiced by Paracelsus, the Van Helmonts and others, centuries before him. Mesmer healed the sick by stroking the affected parts of the body, thus imparting to the sufferers what he called "animal magnetism." This practice subsequently became known as "Mesmerism."

After leaving Vienna, Mesmer settled

in Paris in 1780, and not long after that the whole metropolis from royalty down was at his feet. His great success in healing the sick made him justly famous, but brought him also the antagonism of the then established medical "regulars."

Yet some physicians, after investigating the phenomenon of magnetism, became its supporters. Among those was John Elliotson, leading London physician, who founded and edited the "*Zoist*" in its behalf. Dr. James Esdaile, who lived between 1808 and 1859, established a hospital in Calcutta for that purpose, under government sponsorship. In 1831 a committee of the Academy of Medicine of Paris reported favorably on magnetism as a therapeutic agency. Not long after that, many physicians throughout the European countries began to practice it.

The term hypnotism, however, was first applied by an English surgeon, Dr. James Braid of Manchester, who in 1841 became interested in mesmerism. After having first denounced it, he followed it up with a thorough investigation, and so had re-christened a part of it as "Hypnotism." Under this name it was gradually accepted by the medical profession.

Hypnotism is now employed as a therapeutic agent by psychiatrists, psychologists, and physicians. It has almost become a fad, if not a racket, since it is already being offered in "*A Course Extending over 16 Personal and Private Lessons at a Reasonable Price*"—quoting from a circular received through the mail by this writer in which it is urged to "*Extend Your Mental Control of Your Patients.*"

With the growing popularity of hyp-

notism in recent years, especially with the experiments often conducted in psychology classes in schools and colleges, we may legitimately inquire of the exponents of hypnotism: What do they really know of what is involved in its practice? What sort of force is that by which one person can first catch and immobilize another's attention, then cause a complete dissociation from normal thinking and feeling, thereby causing a definite mental inertia, a suspension of all voluntary thought processes?

Dr. Alexander Cannon (*Time*, July 27, 1936) makes the statement that almost everybody, unless he is confident of being able to resist and does resist, can be hypnotized into the first "light" state; three persons out of four can be brought to the second "deep" state; and one out of two will go into the deepest state of all, the "somnambulistic."

The silver lining in this misty phenomenon is the failure to hypnotize without the willing co-operation of the subject.

What mysterious force is it which enables one person to cause another to lose his identity and assume apparently the identity of another; to execute post-hypnotic suggestions, with clock-like precision, in waking state, days after the suggestions were given while in trance; to do things in the trance state of which he is incapable in the wakeful state; talking unknown languages; assuming all sorts of grotesque positions; crawling on all fours and barking in obedience to the suggestion that the subject is a dog?

We may likewise inquire of the would-be magicians what they know of the source of power in the controlled trance victim that resists destructive suggestions. To explain it by the much abused "subconscious" does not explain what is yet behind the subconscious.

Such and similar questions are lightly disposed of by Milton H. Erickson,

M.D., in "A Brief Survey of Hypnotism" (*Medical Record*, December 5, 1934). Answering his own question, "What Is Hypnotism?" Dr. Erickson states:

" . . . it is a psychological phenomenon as little understood as most psychological phenomena. . . What Hypnosis actually is can be explained as yet only in descriptive terms. . . But any understanding of Hypnosis beyond the descriptive phase is purely speculative."

This is a naive though bold admission of ignorance of a practice, fraught with dangerous possibilities by those who regard themselves as its authoritative exponents. To arrogate to themselves such powers over another, with no more knowledge of the consequences involved than Dr. Erickson admits hypnotists possess, must arouse the deep concern of thoughtful observers.

Another dangerous fallacy which with few exceptions is commonly held by the practitioners of hypnotism is that hypnotism cannot be employed for the commission of crimes. Says Dr. Erickson:

"Suggestions leading to antisocial acts or even to mere improprieties are rejected. . . In unusually co-operative subjects when this is attempted there will be a seeming compliance with the suggestion. . . The subject instructed to stab the first comer will pick up a strip of rubber or some such harmless object and simulate the act. If given a real dagger, the stabbing will be done slowly and carefully in empty space or else not at all."

One speculates: Could Dr. Erickson's "subject" have resisted the suggestion to "stab" had there been a real desire and dominant will in the heart of her hypnotizer, to thus dispose of a dangerous enemy?

And what assurance is there that implanting evil suggestions during the trance state may not germinate and be carried out, when provoked by a real or

fancied grievance at some future time?

In striking contrast is the experience of Dr. J. Luys of La Charite Hospital of Paris, who practiced hypnotism, as quoted by Ernest Hart, formerly Surgeon to the West London Hospital and Ophthalmic Surgeon to St. Mary's Hospital, London, in his book "Hypnotism, Mesmerism and the New Witchcraft."<sup>1</sup>

"At one moment in the passive stage of this condition of lethargy or of catalepsy, he is absolutely defenseless and exposed to any criminal attempt on the part of those who surround him. He can be poisoned and mutilated. Where a woman is concerned she may be violated and even infected with syphilis, or which I have recently observed a painful example in my practice. She may become a mother without any trace existing of a criminal assault and without the patient having the smallest recollection of what has passed after she has awakened. . . . He (the subject) may be induced to become a homicide, an incendiary, or suicide, and all these impulses deposited in his brain during sleep become forces silently stored up which will burst forth at a given moment with the precision, accuracy of performance and automatic impetuosity of acts performed by the really insane." (pp. 137-139).

Prof. Wesley Raymond Wells, of Syracuse University, makes this conclusive statement:

"This investigation has been devoted to the problem whether a hypnotized subject, who is non-criminal in character, can be made to commit real crime. The answer, on the basis of actual experimental results, is emphatically in the affirmative." (*Los Angeles Examiner*, March 5, 1941.)

The following is a clear statement by Lawrence Gould, Consulting Psychologist:

"Can mental disease be cured by hypnotism? Answer: Those who ought to

1. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1896.

know best—the Army psychiatrists, for instance—say, no . . . symptoms like paralysis or blindness can be temporarily relieved by hypnotism, but they usually come back if the feelings which created them are not uncovered and dispelled by a change in the patient's viewpoint. Cures by hypnotic suggestion alone remain what Freud called them on the basis of his own experiments 50 years ago—"impermanent and capricious." (*Los Angeles Examiner*, March 18, 1946.)

The contention that hypnotism cannot be destructively employed is undoubtedly based upon early public experiments by Charcot at the Salpêtrière, where subjects in trance were insensible to being pierced by pins, holding unflinchingly burning coals, and being unaffected by other drastic experiments, yet "would blush scarlet when the professor pretended to make a gesture as if to disarrange her clothes, and wake up spontaneously." (Dr. Axel Munthe, in "The Story of San Michele," p. 322.)

Similar experiments are unfortunately conducted in our educational institutions. The deceptive classroom results obviously leave the experimenting professors in blissful ignorance of the unpredictable potentialities of subtle impressions stored in the memory of the student-subject. Something for parents to reflect.

That hypnotism tends to increase suggestibility and that those who possess this feature (suggestibility) most abundantly are just as prone to accept unfavourable as favourable suggestions is borne out by H. H. Hart, M.D., Columbia University, in charge of The Neurological Clinic of the Vanderbilt Institute, who states:

"If they are not controlled by constructive suggestion and the authority of the physician, they are just as apt to fall a prey to destructive suggestions on

2 F. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., New York, 1930.

the part of relatives, friends and popular nostrums of the day." (*Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, November, 1931.)

It is an enlightening statement. Granting rare merits of hypnosis in isolated instances, those prompted by unquestioned altruistic motives, the chastity and knowledge of the physician, there is still the question of what will protect the victim after repeated hypnotization from falling prey to destructive suggestions once the door is open. Surely not the self-acclaimed authority of the physician, who disclaims knowledge of what is involved in hypnotism—and knowledge alone confers authority.

There is also the risk of unconscious communication, of the hypnotizer's own psychic miasm to the receptive victim, defenseless during hypnotic trance, owing to the close rapport between operator and subject.

Considering the mental and psychological hazards of hypnotism we present an impressive summary by William S. Sadler, M.D., Chief Psychiatrist and Director, the Chicago Institute of Research and Diagnosis. In his book "Theory and Practice of Psychiatry":

"Hypnotism is basically wrong as a method of strengthening the intellect, educating the will, or unifying the personality, in that it leads its victims to depend more and more upon the operator" (p. 960).

"*Hypnosis necessitates the surrender of the mind and will in a peculiar way to the influence of another personality. I regard these procedures as in the highest degree subversive of individual strength and stamina of character. The removal of disease symptoms by hypnosis is only transient, not in any sense curative. . . Hypnotism has been enthusiastically tried and been found woefully wanting*" (p. 961).

Consulting now those who have studied the ancients—since hypnotism is an ancient subject—we find the following item thought-provoking. It is from an article entitled: "Black Magic in Science," published in *Lucifer* in 1890 by H. P. Blavatsky:

" . . . this century will not have passed away before they have undeniable proofs that the idea of a crime suggested for experiment's sake is not removed by a reversed current of the will as easily as it is inspired. They may learn that if the outward expression of the idea of a misdeed 'suggested' may fade out at the will of the operator, the active living germ artificially implanted does not disappear with it; that once dropped into the seat of the human—or, rather, the animal—passions, it may lie dormant there for years sometimes, to become suddenly awakened by some unforeseen circumstance into realization. Crying children frightened into silence by the suggestion of a monster, a devil standing in the corner, by a foolish nurse, have been known to become insane twenty or thirty years later on the same subject. There are mysterious, secret drawers, dark nooks and hiding places in the labyrinth of our memory, still unknown to physiologists, and which open only once, rarely twice, in man's lifetime, and that only under very abnormal and peculiar conditions. But when they do, it is always some heroic deed committed by a person the least calculated for it, or—a terrible crime perpetrated, the reason for which remains forever a mystery." (See also "Isis Unveiled," by H. P. Blavatsky.)

There is, then, a wide abyss separating the healing process by the use of animal magnetism as applied by Anton Mesmer, the physician, and its present-day perversion called hypnotism.

The former relaxes, is life-and-health giving, as can testify those who either had received its benefits or ministered to others. Every mother who instinc-

3 The C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis, 1936.

tively places her hand on her crying babe's abdomen unconsciously practices "Magnetic" healing by transmitting her electro-magnetic fluid to the aching body of her offspring, even as lovers do, holding hands. There is no tampering with the person's mind or will. Both remain free, while hypnotism contracts to a point of cataleptic rigidity, and worse still, degrades Man, the Thinker, who relinquishing his will, subjects himself to an outside master.

Exploring further the ancient ideas, we find in an article entitled "Hypnotism" the apparent missing link, which may help to understand the forces and dangers involved in hypnotism. The article was written for the *New York World* in 1894 by William Q. Judge, a profound thinker and student of the ancient philosophies and literature, who had translated into the English language the five-thousand-year-old *Bhagavad-Gita* and similar works:

"One theory for use in explaining and prosecuting hypnotic research is about as follows. Man is a soul who lives on thoughts and perceives only thoughts. Every object or subject comes to him as a thought, no matter what the channel or instrument, whether organ of sense or mental center, by which it comes before him. These thoughts may be words, ideas, or pictures. The soul-man has to have an intermediary or connecting link with Nature through and by which he may cognize and experience. This link is an ethereal double or counterpart of his physical body, dwelling in the latter; and the physical body is Nature so far as the soul-man is concerned. In this ethereal double (called astral body) are the sense-organs and centers of perception. The physical outer organs being only the external channels or means for concentrating the physical vibrations so as to transmit them to the astral organs and centers where the soul perceives them

as ideas or thought . . . When the hypnotic process—or subjugation, as I call it—is submitted to, a disjunction is made between the soul-man and the astral body, which then is for the time deprived of will, and is the sport of any suggestion coming in unopposed, and those may and do sometimes arise outside of the mind and intention of the operator. . . . The process of hypnotizing is as yet unknown in respect to what does happen to the molecules. We claim that those molecules are pressed from periphery to center instead of being expanded from the inside to the surface. This contraction is one of the symptoms of death, and therefore hypnotizing is a long step toward physical and moral death."

The foregoing helps to explain the difficulty faced by the physician in rehabilitating hypnotic subjects. To reawaken their paralyzed will-power, self-reliance and sense of discrimination requires herculean efforts, as it does in salvaging "seance mediums." This writer's experiences with such unfortunates, in institutional and private practice, have matured the conviction that hypnotism, like "spiritualism," constitutes a danger little suspected.

In times like these when the very atmosphere is charged with a sort of mass-hypnosis of totalitarian ideologies, political demagoguery, pseudo-religious revivalism and salesmanship psychologies, sober and independent thinking is more vital than ever. Hypnotism, as was seen, impairs the exercise of higher faculties. Its path is strewn with despairing human wreckage in hysteria wards and insane asylums. The hunted look in the eyes of hypnotized subjects betrays an irreparable psychological maladjustment. The innate, natural misgiving, even revulsion in normal beings to being hypnotized, is the ever reliable counsel of the "Voice of the Silence" against this pernicious practice.

But this popular distrust of hypnotism may succumb to the cleverly designed propaganda through books, journals, magazines and newspapers, extolling the benefits of hypnotism in the name of science, while carefully omitting mention of its injurious effects when not deliberately denying them.

By placing the stamp of scientific approval on hypnotic practice it glamorizes it into respectability and modernity.

It is especially appealing to those who, tired, mentally and physically, are apathetic to self-initiated effort and thus accept "help" the easy hypnotic way. But there is neither a short cut to health nor a substitute for the exercise of one's will-power in overcoming mental, emotional or other disturbances.

Alluring as the prospect of relief through hypnosis may be, it is but temporary, though too costly an exchange for the moral degradation involved in subjection to the will of another.

A more constructive and enduring help which can legitimately be given is to encourage and activate the individual's dormant will by patient, reasoning counsel, and by enlightenment respecting the true nature of man and his innate divine powers.

Attention must also be paid to the rebuilding of the physical body with wholesome foods in their natural state, and through recreation in the fresh air and sunshine and any other natural means, musical and occupational therapy included.

The result of such psychosomatic efforts is mental and physical strength, fearlessness, emotional and moral stability, qualities not often found in those once hypnotized, for their will-power has been weakened through hypnosis.

(This article originally appeared in the Journal of the National Medical Society.)

## THE WEB

We have woven a web for a pastime  
that glitters with gems of the earth,  
'tis a form that is false, every last time  
a labyrinth from birth unto birth;  
each spider as old as emotion  
suspended twixt moon and the sun  
is twin-born of dust and devotion,  
of needs and deeds that are done.

We have woven a web by our labour  
and drank of the dew in our bower,  
forgotten our brothers and neighbour  
till sorrows are timed to the hour;  
each spider so like unto mortal,  
a center of cause and effect  
is poised on the outermost portal  
deciding—reject or reflect.

We have woven a web say the sages,  
with sorrow, with pain and with  
tears,  
'tis the web of all error long ages  
have tied over earth and the years;  
but note now that nothing or neither  
seems out of place or is wrong,  
neither the web nor the spider,  
both may respond to a song.

O what have we woven to bind us  
spider of Spirit entire,  
unravel the web and so find us  
woven of essence of fire!

H. L. Huxtable.

---

## ORIGINAL AND UP-TO-DATE THEOSOPHY

We lend freely by mail all the comprehensive literature of the Movement. Catalogue on request. Also to lend, or for sale at 10c each post free, our ten H.P.B. Pamphlets, including early articles from **LUCIFER** and Letters from the Initiates.

**THE H. P. B. LIBRARY**  
750 GRAND BOULEVARD  
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.