

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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THE "HARMONIZING ECLECTIC" METHOD, AND ITS OBVERSE, IN THE STUDY OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE

It is extremely important to consider study techniques in every phase of learning, and the study of the Secret Doctrine is no exception. It so happens that certain methods are faulty for almost all branches of scientific investigation, while other approaches have been almost universally necessary for scientific progress. Let us see if the experience gained can be usefully applied to the problem of Secret Doctrine study.

The method called "harmonizing eclectic" is one where the investigator takes some thesis he wishes to demonstrate and searches hither and yon for proofs, of greater or less directness. Upon accumulating sufficient "harmonizing" data, the investigator then announces that he has "proved" the thesis. But this does not advance the cause of science. To demonstrate what this leads to, we can take a case close to the interests of most readers of *The Canadian Theosophist*.

Suppose a person believes in reincarnation, and wishes to "prove" it, or at least to accumulate data that will sound convincing to others. He hunts around, and, lo, finds a sign in the writings of

such-and-such poet; behold, an indication in the theory of a certain scientist; and, indeed, a corroboration by an "intuitional" philosopher. Thus continuing, he amasses a great deal of "evidence", and announces, with great satisfaction, the "proof" of reincarnation.

Meanwhile, somebody else believes this life is all, and wishes to "prove" it, or at least to accumulate data that will sound convincing to others. He hunts around, and, lo, finds a sign in the writings of such-and-such poet; behold, an indication in the theory of a certain scientist; and, indeed, a corroboration by a "clear-thinking" philosopher. Thus continuing, he amasses a great deal of "evidence", and announces, with great satisfaction, the "proof" that human consciousness is forever lost with physical death.

At this point we should be quite suspicious as to the epistemological merit of this "harmonizing eclectic" method. We doubt that the investigator gets closer to the truth this way, and at least must judge that no scientifically-minded person could accept such "proofs".

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that such compilations may have merit in another direction. We are always glad to know who are our friends, and who the ones who think on similar lines with us. In this sense, some fine applications of the "harmonizing eclectic" method have been made, in one particular case, in a collection on reincarnation. On the other hand, there is sometimes a danger even here, that people will be led to lay too much weight upon such agreements. Henry Ford also believed in reincarnation, and at the same time spread anti-semitism and had underlings take care of the gruesome task of smashing incipient labour unions. The mere fact that somebody seems to concur with us on a particular point does not signify that their fundamental philosophy of life is in accord with ours. Suppose people see "eye to eye" *with* the eye; would they still see "eye to eye" *through* the eye?

Whatever uses the "harmonizing eclectic" method may have in non-scientific realms, it can hardly get the student anywhere in such studies as that of the Secret Doctrine. Unfortunately, this method has often been employed by Theosophists to defend their loving, watchful Personal God in Heaven, and sometimes in attempts to elevate their national and race prejudices, old wives' tales, and "homespun philosophy" into Theosophical principles. We readily admit that if someone wants to demonstrate to his own satisfaction that the Secret Doctrine supports him in a particular philosophical or ethical position, he may easily meet with success in this self-convincing effort; but the Secret Doctrine remains aloof through all this—its "inscrutability" becoming pro-founder all the while.

An alternate method which science found useful was to look squarely at the world, accumulate experimental data, and, finally, to draw conclusions. This

is truly the opposite of our former method. As applied to the Secret Doctrine, this could be said to consist in studying this great work before making conclusions as to what is there. Such a recommendation as this appears so simple, that the efficacy of the method might well be greeted with incredulity. Indeed, have not many persons studied the Secret Doctrine and felt they did not have the metaphysical hammer that would shatter the metaphysical shell? Well, no effort is ever lost—it is taught. We are not in a position to judge what people achieve with their studies. We understand the Secret Doctrine to be a repository of TRUTH, and the student who earnestly and diligently seeks this, can be expected to find it in the Secret Doctrine. But if he seeks something else, he may study this work in vain, for it may never have been intended to reveal the other sought-for thing. All who have not already attained Illumination are faced with the gradual way to this end, and may well afford to let conclusions mature over the years; preconceptions are fatal, because in the latter case, that place in the mind where spiritual help might have incarnated was already occupied by a contrary tenant. Therefore, our recommendation is not so simple after all. To draw conclusions only after mature deliberation is not what most persons are wont to do.

At the same time, it is recognized that each person has his own past experience and training, and must necessarily interpret the Secret Doctrine accordingly. This fact is not in contradiction to our recommendation, but will serve to clarify the position. We are recommending that the student *reserve* his judgments based upon his past experience and training until he has at least surveyed the territory upon which he is going to make judgments, and also after having made them, to have mental provision for altering them if circumstances warrant.

According to this view, we must deeply regret the lot of many "new-comers" to Theosophy, who are so unfortunate as to be subjected to some lecturer who tells them all about what Theosophy "is", and how everything works. According to a certain theory of Karma which went the rounds, we could look at it this way: That so-called "newcomer" had in a past life similarly lectured to others and was now reaping his bad karma; he had inevitably been attracted to people who, while putting him off the right track, were quite likely feeling that they were accumulating "merit" by their lecturing. Without committing ourselves here to a particular theory of Karma, we must still take note of the monstrous trap into which Theosophists have fallen in their futile attempt to ape the conventional methods of instruction of the Western world. If the unconscious or conscious aim of the lecturer was to harmonize the views of his listeners to his own, he has certainly taken an indefensible position, unless he be an Adept or a Buddha. We learned from the Mahatma Letters that it was the function of the Planetary Spirit to strike the Keynote of Truth at the origin of each new human kind, and the Master explained that this was free from the technique of the Left-hand Forces because the Planetary Spirit was beyond erring. But it is not just paying the rent for some hall, that elevates a speaker to this unerring status. Considering this, it would appear right that those responsible for the conduct of Theosophical meetings bend over backwards to avoid the possibility of supplanting the student's individual initiative and responsibility. That is why Theosophical meetings should, as far as practicable, be discussion, rather than lecturer-audience, groups. In discussion groups, the chairman's ignorance might be more manifest, but at least his conscience, rather than his pride, may then

be satisfied, and he himself will not fall into intellectual stagnation. Then the student may come to realize that at least part of the understanding of a subject is in the effort made to understand it.

Another alluring trap is the suggestion to the student to "put things in his own words". If he didn't understand things before, he will certainly understand them after he puts them in his own words, for he understands his own words! Is this not our "harmonizing eclectic" on a "higher plane"? The doctrine is harmonized to his own poor self. This is a supreme glorification of one's "own words", which much more likely are the words of the lower race mind, although polite and rational excerpts from this drivel of the centuries may create a different impression. Here again, we prefer the scientific method. The scientist attempts to expand his understanding to encompass a greater range of experimentally verifiable facts. Similarly, we would recommend the student of the Secret Doctrine to attempt to expand his consciousness to that of the system delineated in this work, and in this process he must surely humble and mortify his "own words". Remember the words of the Voice of the Silence: "The 'Doctrine of the Eye' is for the crowd"—but the crowd always has its "own words"—"The 'Doctrine of the Heart' for the elect. The first repeat in pride: 'Behold, I know'; the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low confess: 'Thus have I heard'." Why "Thus have I heard"? Perhaps because the word "heard" has here a multiple meaning: on one hand, "heard" with the physical sense; and on the other, with the spiritual, upon devoted and protracted meditation on the teaching. Thus a servile parroting is not at all what is here meant. Rather this is indeed but one's "own words" again; but more elevated words, because one has caused to be one's "own words",

by means of assimilation through meditation, what was formerly not one's "own words". Instead of "putting things in his own words"; he has become a different, and better, "he", with a different set of "own words"; and as his "own words" become "Their words", his lesser self becomes the obedient servant of the greater Selves and then perhaps not so "lesser" after all, since it will be like the Ocean which receives all streams and rivers, and yet feels them not.

We have tried to point out the importance of proper techniques. In pursuance of such practical aims, we should expose at least one actual method of studying the Secret Doctrine, such that, in accordance with our previous recommendations, conclusions are withheld for the time being. First of all, it is incumbent upon the student to gain a comprehension, as far as possible, of the fundamental principles of Theosophy, as outlined in the Proem to the Secret Doctrine, by H. P. Blavatsky. Then, presuming he wishes to investigate a particular subject that appeals to him, let him ascertain as many references and discussions to this topic as he can possibly find in the S.D. The method utilized for finding them and cross-relating them must rest with the student, but let him not be misled into thinking he can find even the major part of these by help of any published index, although the latter has its peculiar value. It is important that he not skip anything that bears particularly upon his subject. He must not take the attitude that such-and-such statements make good "sense" while others are obscure and "blinds", but rather in such a situation admit that he thinks he understands certain statements and knows he doesn't understand others. Having done all this, let him now ask: what is the view that can be taken of this subject, such that all the various relevant statements can be uni-

fied, with consideration of the fundamental principles of the Secret Doctrine. It is this attempt to unify *all* the statements concerning the subject, whether or not at first they seemed reconcilable, that gradually brings the student to see the meaning involved, and simultaneously transforms his consciousness into one closer in harmony with that of the Masters.

One finds harmony in that unifying point—the upper point of the triangle. So the student must leave the base of the triangle—the plane of physical poles. But if he clings to points along the base—and therefore necessarily rejects others—he cannot attain to that upper point, because from the standpoint of the latter, all the points on the base are alike. To attain that harmony is not to induce other people to agree with oneself: the universe revolves about oneself only in the plane of personality illusion—but rather it is to take refuge in that point which is nowhere, because everywhere, and which cannot be disagreed with, because noisy, uttered speech has no words for it. To harmonize the world to oneself is to become the lower point of the inverted triangle; this is quite the opposite of what the Buddha did: He attained the Truth above all men, and tried to harmonize them to that Truth by pointing out a path to be trod by the individual using his own volition; therefore He was the greatest of men.

Thus the "harmonizing eclectic" method is turned inside out. Instead of the world being made to harmonize with one's personal view, the temporarily isolated fragments of the world—isolated by their own illusion of separateness—harmonize, through individual striving, with the world in its truest sense.

Alex Wayman.

TOWARD REALTY

BY ELIZABETH ROBINSON

Through the long process of evolution, Man is slowly becoming a rational being. This is a truth which each of us must grasp for himself, the apprehension of it being an important individual experience. As we live, examine and observe we gradually come to see and understand that life in the physical body is not reality but actuality. With further observation the actuality appears as an illusion shared by each individual in common with all other potentially rational beings known as homo sapiens existing within the limits of this "three-dimensional time-space consciousness". Although actuality *is* an illusion, as we learn through insight, it is shared commonly, the apparent coincidence and solidarity of the illusion giving to it the "truth of actuality".

It is axiomatic that Man cannot experience in the flesh that which is termed Reality in its absolute sense. Thus truly, as Berkeley states, ultimate Reality is a fiction for Man in that it cannot be known to him by reason, the senses, or any of the ordinary powers given him. Mere speculation about it is useless, and in such speculation a man risks losing himself, severing contact with his fellows, and living in a self-created world. Pursuit of this will o' the wisp can lead the dazzled pursuer into complex and involved investigations of phenomena and mechanisms which conceal rather than reveal that which he originally thought he sought. He who succumbs to the fascination of the complex parts and forgets the simple whole is lost in the "Hall of Learning" mentioned in "The Voice of the Silence". There he dwells in phantasy, forfeiting by his wilful short-sightedness adjustment to and contact with the plane on which he was placed for work.

The man thus carried away into realms of his own creation neglects his most obvious task—that of living, experiencing and learning in this earthly life. If in this stage of evolution Man were meant to function only on "higher planes" or in other spheres of consciousness there would be no need for him to exist in the present one. Indeed, were he not meant to act in the flesh then Karma must have made a mistake in placing him within the limitations of the present incarnation! This, of course, is nonsense. It is a very old occult truth that each of us is always in the right place at the right time, equipped with the appropriate abilities and limitations to learn his lessons. The rate at which one learns, profits by the lessons, and advances depends entirely upon his own stubborn ignorance—the "weed of self-pride".

This quality, self-pride, again rests upon other factors which are beyond the individual's control at the time they limit him. Free will in one incarnation may determine what one may become in future human experiences, but except for minor details it has little effect upon the present one.

Man is free to roam in flights of fanciful curiosity, yes, but these remain that and no more, for eventually the mind and senses are flung inexorably back into the actuality from which they sought to escape. One may struggle against this uncompromising and unyielding pull back to actuality, seeking permanent abode in dream worlds. But again and again the mind is led back until one learns that it is his responsibility and of his nature to work and learn here immersed in material fact.

The spiritual growth of each of us goes on unaided by and is indeed be-

yond, conscious control. Through systems of discipline which enable one to achieve harmony in the outer organism, an encouraging contact may be made with the spiritual essence, but this does not affect its progress. Attempts to interfere with the development of his inherent being or to force its growth are, or may be, not only contrary to the higher laws, but actually a hindrance to the progress it sought to augment. Those who self-consciously try to 'be spiritual' are often attempting to act a part in the material body, not under the stimulation of the higher self but of an emotional conception or delusion.

Man incarnates as a physical entity for the inner being to work with and not that he may work on the inner being. This was expressed by Jesus when he asked, "Is the servant then greater than the master?" Man, in totality, is not merely the inner being nor merely the physical one, but a transitional experience for the inner being. When the experience is complete and he becomes one with the inner being he is no longer Man, and the sense of separateness has disappeared.

With development, a man may become conscious that he is more than a physical being. Gradually he may become intensely aware of the entity within. This occurs first through the medium of what we call Conscience, which psychologists tell us is determined by Heredity and Environment. These twin factors—Heredity and Environment—are the karmic mechanism. The student on The Path must accept the mechanism and use it. It has been evolved to suit his particular needs at his specific stage of development. By means of this mechanism one is enabled to learn the Right and Wrong of the life to which he is born by means of its social morals, mores, and cultural customs. Man's physical mechanism and its attendant psychological counterpart contain the

abilities and limitations appropriate to his state of development. He is responsible for exploring his individuality in order to develop his capacities to the best of his ability, and to understand and utilize also his limitations. It is obvious that he cannot exceed his limitations—he must learn to recognize and accept them, and to use them as a guidance to the fuller use of his capacities. By seeking to understand the standards and responsibilities of the life to which he is born, the individual gradually becomes aware of the subtle principles which they represent.

But the important question to the student is not the mechanism—the What—but rather the reason Why he was born into that individual cultural pattern possessing those particular standards and ideals. As understanding of specific standards brings an awareness of the basic principles behind them, there develops within the student an ability to evaluate for himself the world in which he lives. Discernment is the mark of the true student. In groping blindly one is simply following the course of the blind men describing the elephant—each one reaching triumphant conclusions about the whole according to his individual perception of the part within his grasp. The knowing man does not laugh at the limited perceptions of the blind men: Perhaps, if he is able, he will gradually lead them on to another part and then another, until they are able to grasp the idea of the elephant in toto.

In the same way, the student on The Path is progressively led from one aspect of truth to another, each being to him a reality at the time and each, as he grasps it, representing the apex of his knowledge. But if he should become stubborn and full of pride, feeling that his enlarged concept is the whole and the end (because of its relative import-

(Continued on Page 194)

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

A Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive was held on Sunday, January 14th, with the following members in attendance—Miss M. Hindsley, Messrs. Dudley W. Barr, George I. Kinman and the General Secretary. Colonel Thomson spoke feelingly of the demise of Mr. N. W. J. Haydon eulogizing the good work he had done for Theosophy during his long and useful life. The Financial Statement showed a balance better than at this time in previous years. The Editor of the magazine reported a gratifying approval of the Anniversary issue especially from subscribers outside Canada. The Disassociation Resolution as passed at Banaras on December 25 was read and passed to the editor for printing in the magazine as also was "What is meant by Disassociation Policy" as explained by the English General Secretary, Mrs. Doris Groves. Letters from the Chairman of The Theosophical Study Group a lately formed organization by members of the Toronto and Hamilton Lodges for the purpose of distributing free leaflets and sale of books among persons living in scattered areas and isolated from contact with Theosophy were read, considered and approved with the assurance of being helped by the Executive in their endeavours. The question of filling the vacancy on the General Executive left vacant by the death of Mr. Haydon was discussed. The Constitution and the By-laws were consulted but in neither was any provision made for such a contingency. The meeting decided that the matter be left in abeyance until the Annual Election. The next meeting of the Executive will take place on the first Sunday in May.

General Secretary.

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.

AMONG THE LODGES

The annual meeting of the Montreal Lodge was held on January 9th when the following officers were elected for the year 1951:

President: Mrs. A. Ovenden.

Vice-President: Mr. G. W. A. Matsell.

Secretary: Miss M. R. Desrochers.

Treasurer: Mr. Peter Sinclair.

Ass't. Treasurer: Mrs. D. Roth.

Librarian: Mrs. G. I. Leonard.

Among other activities, the study class was well attended throughout the year, with one new member joining the Lodge. The two bazaars which took place proved to be successful.

Miss M. R. Desrochers,

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.

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To whom all payments should be made, and all official communications addressed.

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OFFICE NOTES

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



The great man is one who had never lost the heart of a child.—*Mencius*.

"INASMUCH AS . . ."

In the same year that the Theosophical Society was founded, 1875, a small group of devoted women opened a little hospital for sick children in Toronto. From its small beginning it grew rapidly, and The Hospital for Sick Children became nationally and internationally known. Just after the turn of its 75th anniversary, a new modern building was completed, equipped with every known facility for the needs of its little patients. This \$12,000,000 building has attracted hospital architects from all over the continent and great praise has been given to its careful planning and its many innovations in hospital design and services.

The transfer of patients from the old building to the new on Feb. 4th was the completion of a dream for one member of Toronto Lodge, a dream that was born twenty-three years ago. In 1928 Mr. James Govan, senior member of the firm of architects of the new structure, first began to think about the new building and to plan its many details. On January 15th 1951 he presented to the Chairman of the Hospital Board, a golden key to the noble building whose construction at this time was made possible through donations which flowed in from thousands of men, women and children. Mr. Govan's dream had become a reality, and generations of sick and injured children will be aided on their way back to health and strength by the foresight and careful planning of the Administrator of the Hospital and by Mr. Govan and his associates.



If a soldier, or labourer, complain of the hardship of his lot, set him to do nothing.—*Pascal*.

VISIT TO CANADIAN LODGES

To: The General Secretary
and Members of
The Canadian Executive:

After completing a tour of Western Canada and calling on the Lodges and members out there, the writer feels that Theosophy has a firm hold in our country.

The Lodges are not numerous, neither is their membership large,—that which they lack in quantity they more than make up for in quality and the same may be said for the members scattered over the various provinces. The public lectures I understand, are few but their study classes are held regularly and would appear to be proportionately better attended than those held in Toronto,—the general interest is high.

Vancouver and Orpheus Lodges were the first to be contacted, and Mrs. Buchanan and Dr. W. E. Wilks made arrangements for a combined meeting of the Lodges at the Vancouver Lodge Rooms. The title of the talk given at that time was "The Twelve Labours of Hercules" being a study of comparative religion. Many of the correspondences and origins of Christianity were pointed out.

A public meeting was held in the Art Gallery on the following evening, the title of the talk being the rather sweeping one of "Theosophy." This talk touched upon the three objects of the Society and the three types of people those objects attracted. It also dealt with many of the theories that have been advanced to give a better understanding of life as we know it here, Karma, Reincarnation, Evolution, The Masters, and the seven saktis, being outlined. A number of interesting questions were put to the speaker and we trust answered to the satisfaction of the questioners.

Calgary Lodge was the next on our "itinerary". The meeting was held at the home of the President, Mr. E. L. Knechtel, an informal talk was given under the general heading of "Theosophy" and questions dealt with.

At Edmonton Lodge two meetings were arranged for, one at the home of the President, Mr. Emory P. Wood, and the second at the Labour Temple. These were both well attended and keen interest shown.

Upon our return to Winnipeg, we again contacted Mr. L. H. D. Roberts, President of the Wayfarers Lodge, and Mr. P. H. Stokes of the Winnipeg Lodge and a short talk was given at the first meeting of the season of the Wayfarers Lodge.

In addition to the Lodges, members at large were contacted as well as some of those using the Toronto Travelling Library. Time did not permit making all the contacts hoped for, but from those we were able to make we conclude that interest in Theosophy is deeper and more wide-spread than some of our members recognize. "The Canadian Theosophist" is looked forward to, read with avidity, and is a real contact between our members, representing as it does in general their concept and understanding of Theosophy as put forward in modern times by Madame H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters.

The H.P.B. Library, now in North Vancouver, which we visited and our own Toronto Travelling Library are filling the wants of students without Lodge contacts and doing real good work for Theosophy.

In a country as large and as sparsely populated as our own, travelling from a Theosophical point of view is a problem involving time and expense. The personal contact is however, a valuable one and we hope will be of benefit to the Lodges and the Canadian Executive.

G. I. Kinman.

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

BY ROY MITCHELL

X. RHYTHM

In an earlier article I have suggested that the work of our Theosophical Society is a magical one, that it is to lay down on the face of the earth the best projection we can make of such things as we believe to exist on the inner planes of being, and one thing above all others, an inner and compassionate Society pledged to the enlightenment of mankind. Primarily, then, we are incarnating among men—giving such body as we can to—a process for the renewal of a wisdom tradition regarding man's origin, his nature and his destiny.

It is not enough that we enunciate that tradition. If mere enunciation were the purpose, the Masters who make up that Inner Society could do it far better than we. A few books of great power, some appearances in the flesh and a few simple and well attested miracles could convert the world in a year. This kind of conversion of the world is obviously not the immediate purpose of our effort. Not only must we enunciate the ancient tradition, but we must enact such things as we know to be inseparable from it in order that as men living among men, unaided save by that Divine Presence we share with all men, we may make the *Theosophia* a valid and convincing guide to life.

We must incarnate some measure of the brotherhood without which the Inner Society could not live for a moment. We have done rather badly here, perhaps no worse than was expected of us, perhaps somewhat better than might have been expected under the conditions any form of occultism will create in those new to it, or resuming it after a break. In any case there is vast room for betterment, and it is possible that the residuum of members, who, after they have passed through their baptism of fire, remain to be tolerant, instead of

quitting, will increase to a point where a fine nucleus of brotherhood will inhere in the fabric of our Society. That is the hope of the next fifty years.

Next in importance in that Inner Society of Adepts, and the element in it that makes it enduring throughout the years is its strict observance of cyclic law, obedience of which is power and denial of which must end in impotence and futility. All Theosophy comes at last to be no more than a realization of the forces of cyclic recurrence. Some measure of this we must also incarnate and here, I think, we have failed worst of all.

For all our talk of the outbreathing and inbreathing, of periodicity in the making and dissipating of worlds, of chains, globes and rounds, of the rise and fall of races, of the descent and withdrawal of souls, the return of seed-time and harvest, of seasons, of nights and days, of the cyclic return of good and evil gifts to the giver, of the play of breath, of the systole and diastole of the heart, of the pulsations of life in the atoms, it has occurred rarely to us that any enduring incarnation of the Inner Society must be also in terms of this repetition of impact which is the all-inclusive law of life.

So we have gone blithely ahead starting with a brave enough step, assuming tasks we knew we could not maintain for long, tiring, stopping, starting again at our good pleasure, doing a few of this and half a dozen of the other, studying when the mood took us, starting a book with a great rush when it was new to us, and never getting beyond a few pages; lecturing a little, then not lecturing at all; setting a night for something, then changing it because somebody could not come that night; running a class for a few weeks at a certain time, then changing to another time and wondering why

the effort petered out; assuming that great movements could be initiated and brought to fruition over-night; spending all our energies on the visit of this or that popular speaker, and then with nothing but debris, a deficit and a corporal's guard of wobbly recruits as souvenirs of his visit, declaring that we lived in a poor town for Theosophy; thinking we could manifest a great and rhythmical power by shifty little expediencies, by votes and resolutions; discarding the cumulative power of old friendships and associations for the first glib stranger who came along; rushing into fads for the renovation of this or the Theosophization of that and wondering why our Theosophy seemed wan and peaked when we went back to it again.

We have been an unsteady flame for the lighting of a world, and if our ray has not carried as far as we think it should have, it is no fault of Theosophy but of our embodiment of it. If we are now to save the Society through the fifty years it has to go we must learn that our greatest force lies in the certainty and endurance of our stride.

We must learn, along with all its implications, that the way to power is not in the intensity of effort but in steadiness of stride; that power is cumulative, to be acquired by rhythmical and repeated use of it, and that a rhythm once established is a precious instrument of work not to be carelessly thrown away.

That any activity, a meeting, a class or a group once allotted its measure of recurrence and allotted its day and hour, should never be disturbed for any but the gravest cause, and then never radically changed but only modified to suit pressing needs, and then allowed to continue its way gathering strength as it goes. Even though by adherence to rhythm it lose the fickle it will matter a great deal that it lay down in that place and at that time the record of its pulsa-

tion. To change it will probably not serve even information; to maintain it against odds will serve magic. It is in terms of magic that our results will be tested. Information is a trivial thing.

That the quest after truth, faithfully returned to at regular intervals and gathering power as it goes will do more for a community than a revival or a campaign, the advent of a practised speaker with a little vaudeville routine of lectures and a hobby to keep him from boredom. All he is likely to do is leave the group a bit worse off by contrast after he goes. We will learn that the business of a visiting lecturer should not be to recruit new members, but to renew the faith of old ones whose task it is to get their own accessions of strength from among those who discern what Theosophy has done for the lives of its exponents near at hand.

We may also be able to persuade our speakers that this conservation of their precious energies for sporadic platform masterpieces is the road to debility and not to power; that a lecture a month is easier and better than a lecture a year, and a lecture a week easier and better than a lecture a month; that each helps the next and each gathers force from the last; that one does not collect material for a lecture but gathers from lecture to lecture the power to prepare a lecture in fewer and fewer minutes until the time will come when he can prepare a lecture in a moment's converse with the God.

We may learn most of all that our duty as Theosophists is to perpetuate something, not merely as saying it but as setting up in *akas* a tradition for the generation that is to say it when we no longer can; that every effort must be for the increasingly forceful transmission of the first ideal.

So perhaps we will come to see ourselves as apprentices to a great Guild, little responsible for results, but greatly for method, which cannot fail of results in time if it be in terms of the whole

Work. I think the realization that we have to do something magical as laying down an ideal would save us a great deal of our present discouragement.

(Next, AMATEURS.)

SEEN IN A MIRROR

Nothing is here but a symbolic space for private

proud projection, that is all—
impinging, intersecting, face to face
five senses shatter self from wall to wall,

even the form most clearly recollected
till all is shattered quite by light phenomenal

and light reflected, and that which is
too bright;

nothing is here but what both time
and space

cannot reject or change, or contrariwise

protectingly embrace;

for here between the eyes is that
which serves

a greater purpose than the optic
nerves.

Nothing is here but the familiar form so
unfamiliar

that is all,
precisely fashioned from an unknown
norm

between the seen and yet unseen,
which we recall as being unaccepted
and rejected of the mind,

that which we seek to know
and know we cannot find in a reflection,

unless it be much more than meets the
eye,

and comes of a rejection of that which
was

for that which is to be,
as in a backless mirror held to nature
in its totality;

so taken all in all
nothing is here but incompleteness,
that is all.

H. L. Huxtable.

A TRIBUTE TO MR. HAYDON

108 Balsam Ave. S.,

Hamilton, Jan. 4, 1951.

Mrs. G. I. Kinman,

Secretary,

Toronto Theosophical Society.

Dear Mrs. Kinman,

We of Hamilton Lodge have recently learned that Mr. N. W. J. Haydon passed away in December.

We wish to extend to Toronto Lodge the sympathy of our members in the loss of one of the old and ever faithful workers in the Theosophical field. The few older members of our lodge remember when Mr. Haydon was among those who came over to lecture for us in the very early days (1912?) and of course for many years afterwards whenever called upon. The newer members knew him best through his book agency services.

One by one the pioneers in Theosophy in Canada step behind the veil and leave it to the rest of us to carry on.

Sincerely,

Mabel Carr,
Secretary.

Adyar, Madras 20, India,

September 10, 1950.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Secretary for England has lately visited certain countries of Europe and has found that many have not grasped the correct meaning of the word "disassociation". It certainly is an awkward word, which cannot be translated as one word into French, Italian, Spanish, and probably other languages as well. I have lately substituted for it "non-identification".

Mrs. Groves has sent me a clarification of what Disassociation really means, and as it seems to me excellent I send it to you at once with my cordial approval.

Yours sincerely,
C. Jinarajadasa.

What is Meant by the "Disassociation" Policy

The implications of the word "disassociation," it seems, are not clearly understood by many officials who are considering with their members the import of the resolution passed last December, and which is to be reconsidered by the General Council in December next.

The policy of disassociation means that neither the Society, nor its Sections, nor its Lodges can affiliate themselves to any other organization, however sympathetic they may be to the aims and objects of other movements. For instance, many members of the Society are sympathetic to the aims of the United Nations, the various Societies concerned with the welfare of animals, the Liberal Catholic Church, International Co-Freemasonry, the Save the Children Fund, the New Education Fellowship, and so on. But in order to safeguard the all-inclusive nature of the Society, and to give effect to the policy of Freedom of Thought for every member, which is printed on the front cover of "The Theosophist," the Society, its Sections and Lodges must not identify themselves with, or affiliate to, any of these movements. To identify the Society with any one of the above-named organizations would be to restrict the membership as a whole to this particular expression of Theosophical work.

This is the policy which has been followed from the time of the President-Founder, Col. Olcott, in his work for the revival of Buddhism, by Dr. Besant in her work for Indian Home Rule, and by succeeding Presidents in the activities in which they were particularly interested. The resolution of the General Council passed last December is not a *new* policy; it merely re-affirms the already existing policy of the Society.

The disassociation policy therefore means that members in their individual

capacity may, and indeed should, identify themselves with, and work for, all movements and organizations which they feel are expressions of Theosophical activity in the world, thus following the example of the great leaders of the Society, both past and present. Sections and Lodges are free to invite representatives of these organizations to address their members on their aims and work as they see this to be desirable.

The disassociation policy is not a policy of limitation and restriction; it is one of *freedom*: freedom for the Society as such to maintain its all-inclusiveness; freedom for its members to engage in any activity which in their view is helping to fulfil the ideal of Universal Brotherhood for which the Society stands.

Doris Groves,
General Secretary,
Theosophical Society in England.

Adyar,
6th January, 1951.

To All Members of
The General Council:

Re: Banaras Resolution

Since the Banaras Resolution was passed in December 1949 thirty-eight Members of the General Council have expressed support of it and two against. At the request of two members of the Council, M. Albert Sassi, General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Switzerland and Dr. G. Srinivasa Murthi, Additional Member, the Resolution was discussed at length at the meeting of the Council held on 25th December 1950, and a special committee was appointed to make changes in the phrasing in accord with the views expressed in the Council. The Committee reported back to the second session of the General Council and finally the Resolution was passed without any dissentient voice as follows:

The General Council of the Theosophical Society, taking into consideration the fact that confusion exists among the public in certain countries, and among the Governments and public authorities in them, as regards the relation of the Society to other bodies with activities sometimes regarded as parallel or allied, deems it advisable to make the following declaration:

"The Theosophical Society, while co-operating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such co-operation possible, is and must remain an organization entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title The Theosophical Society.

"Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization."

The Resolution is the same as the Banaras one with only minor changes. The Council wishes to make clear to all that this Resolution does not in any way abridge the constitutional autonomy of the Sections or Lodges.

C. Jinarajadasa.

TOWARD REALITY

(Continued from Page 186)

ance), he places himself in the way of his own progress. As awareness and knowledge of the inner being develop, the man may spend life after life in exploring the realities of the various "astral worlds", gain contact with powers, and perhaps be envied and wor-

shipped by his fellow men. Eventually the realization comes that although the material and powers of functioning differ on different planes, *exactly the same basic laws govern throughout*. For centuries teachers of Esoteric Knowledge have stressed this point in the axiom "As above, so below". But the real implications and meaning are much too simple and perhaps too unexciting for most people to grasp and to accept.

Powers come with advancement. An analogy to this may be drawn in picturing one of the blind men finding the trunk of the elephant, climbing up onto its back, and riding down the road to rejoin his brothers who have painfully and wearily walked the distance. After practice and experiment, in his blind way, he may find that he can cause other phenomena of strength and power to occur—to the awe and wonder of his neighbours and usually unfortunately, to his own pride and confusion. If he becomes engrossed in the power rather than in its source and significance he fails to find out what it is, attributing it to supernatural powers caused by his own merit and advancement.

Just as the elephant concept slowly developed for the blind man through a series of partial perceptions, so "psychic phenomena" may give students glimpses or hints about other states of consciousness or planes of existence. If, in order to understand the world, the student were required to examine and know everything therein — raindrops to oceans, grains of sand to mountain ranges, bacteria to man—he would surely have gathered a vast store of knowledge and information . . . but how much understanding and how much wisdom? If the attainment of enlightenment necessitated the mastery of all trades and all fields of information there would be no hope for achievement, for mankind's body of factual knowledge is ever in a state of flux. Even

were such attainments possible, the student would be no closer to the reality of his search. With so vast a store he might be a genius of knowledge, a master of learning, but what else? The mere accumulation of information does not bring with it understanding or the discriminating capacity to evaluate the knowledge. There is a wide gap between the apprehension of the existence of a fact and its application as a significant part of a greater pattern. A fact in itself—or a series of facts—is of value only in relation to the principle behind it which makes it a part of the total scheme. Shakespeare spoke with insight about "sermons in stones", and so it is with the interesting knowledge of astral phenomena.

The student may begin to feel that there is something more than mere existence—something more, even, than this ever-developing inner being which periodically gathers unto itself a body and for a time limits its power for its own advancement. There is a hint, an echo, of something above the astral plane on which the inner being moves in freedom between incarnations, and on which the Yogi or Mystic may work for a limited time during trance state or meditation. Yet at the close of each meditation he is inexorably returned to actuality. It was according to the Law that he incarnated, and it is within the incarnation that he must work. He is responsible for his own job in this life of actuality. He has abilities and limitations and is responsible for the use he makes of them. His job is here—that is why he is here. The lessons he learns through experiences and investigations are only to increase his efficiency in doing his job, to increase his understanding of the total plan. Always a balance will be struck in the equation of privilege and responsibility.

Let the student take thought of what he is, and he may find to his disappoint-

ment that he is sure of only two things: firstly, that he is living and acting as a physical man in a world of material actuality; secondly, that there is something—a state of consciousness—that produces no phenomena or excitement, and that state is as real as his own Self.

In his awareness of this state the student will have rent the "painted veil of illusion", in however small a measure, and will have reached beyond the sense of separateness. Let the student seek THAT in his own way, nor ever deceive himself that he has achieved IT. With full understanding of this he will truly have conquered illusion, and will be free to become a rational being, able to act in the world of actuality without fear of punishment or hope of reward.

CORRESPONDENCE

Feb. 3, 1951.

To the Editor:

Congratulations on the publication of *Our Father-Mother God* and many thanks to the author. I have read and reread this brilliant exegesis of a difficult subject with great pleasure.

The tendency in much Theosophical exposition is to stress philosophical idealism and rightly so for such emphasis is sadly needed to counterbalance the dread materialism of the age. But the occult teachings are not strictly idealistic.

Sankhya is regarded as realistic and if we carry the postulates of this now nascent Indian philosophy back to the esoteric teachings which must have accompanied its origin we arrive at a system of thought which may be called—if I may coin a term—meta-realism. In other words, we arrive at the postulates of the Secret Doctrine itself, as expounded with so much insight and clarity by Mrs. Alberta Jean Rowell.

Yours faithfully,

Cecil Williams.

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