

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Divine Wisdom

Brotherhood

Occult Science

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A STRONG FOUNDATION

St. Paul, in one of his letters to the little group of seekers after truth in Corinth, wrote, "Wherefor my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast." Another translation of these words is "And so my beloved brothers, you must establish yourselves as on a strong foundation."

It is a habit of some of the elders and middle-aged of each generation to contrast the comparative simplicity and regularity of their youthful lives with the changed conditions which presently confront them and to decide that the world 'has gone to the dogs'. They look out upon a world in which they no longer feel at home and which many of them consider has become inimical to them. Exceptional individuals who have retained an inner vitality and whose chronological age has not submerged the eternal youth of their souls, face changed conditions without conflict, often looking forward with eagerness to the next act in the great drama of human living.

Today, however, it is not only the aged who share the feeling of uncertainty, insecurity and instability. Modern man has been left no outer rock of refuge which he can be assured will

stand firm and unmoving, a safe haven until at least the end of his natural life. Even 'money in the bank', that blessed hope of security, has failed him and has exhibited fluidity in value which has appalled him. Pensions, annuities and other forms of fixed incomes are sinking lower and lower and the capital value of bonds and insurance policies has decreased proportionately. His unchallenged god, 'democracy' has been denied by blasphemers and while he still pays homage at the shrine, the hitherto unthoughtof necessity for defending democracy against contrary ideals has rendered that homage no longer spontaneous and unthinking. He clings to democracy because he fears communism and other forms of totalitarianism, and not because he knows and accepts all the implications of democracy and prefers it above all other systems of social organization. The latest child of social planning, the welfare state, with its 'womb to tomb' legislation has indications of unexpected by-products which have disturbed its well-wishers. It all seemed so completely satisfying, so logical and desirable in aim and principle, that any disclosure of a basic

weakness would cast them adrift on a sea of uncertainty without any alternative object in sight.

Man's sense of insecurity and frustration have been added to by his failure to find a satisfying ethical basis for his life in the outer forms of religion. Orthodox religion, while it does afford an impregnable refuge for those who can 'believe' without thinking, and who either have no doubts or have silenced them, has little to offer the man who is sincerely seeking some strong foundation which will satisfy his ethical nature and his religious aspirations without unmaning his intelligence.

There is a human tendency to long for a state of being in which the outer conditions of life will be so adjusted to man's inner desires that he may rest content and 'enjoy life'. Perhaps this present time of extraordinary maladjustment and tension is a period of unique opportunity, if we can learn from it that that fond and ever-recurring hope of fixed and perfect co-ordination is one that we might just as well put out of our minds—and accept with gratitude those short interludes when the meshes of life outside coincide momentarily with the mesh of the inner life. The Eastern teachers speak of life in this world as *samsara*, a wandering or passing through a succession of events and states of consciousness. There is here no abiding place or state. Seemingly perfect outer conditions whose arrangement or creation was the ideal of years of planning and effort, become burdensome in time—often because the very effort to create them has unfolded a deeper receptivity to new and different ideals.

In India there is the story of a man who by some means had placed Brahma under obligation to him, and to discharge the debt, Brahma offered to fulfill one wish. The man asked for a per-

fectly satisfying life in his next incarnation; a life in which he would be born of a noble family, would enjoy a happy childhood, would marry a woman whom he loved and who loved him. He would inherit a position of leadership among his people; his children would be gentle, noble and wise; no quarrels or misunderstanding would mar his family life, no sickness or death bring anxiety or sorrow. When it came his time to die, he would pass away quietly and without pain, honoured and loved by all his race. Great Brahma sighed and said, "If there were such a life, I would take it myself!"

There are two concepts which are of significance in the problem of one's attitude towards life—first, that outer conditions are always in a state of continuous change, that they are never fixed and for ever enduring, that there is no permanence or perfection in 'name and form'—and second, that in man's being there is an element which is eternally discontent of all sets of outer circumstances and which forever whispers, 'not this, not this'. While these may not conduct us to final wisdom, they do open up an observation point from which new sight lines may be projected.

And today we need new sight lines—or new sights along old lines. Alienation from Life, 'the heresy of separateness' is a predominating characteristic. We do not think of ourselves as part of the great flowing Life of the Universe; we do not acknowledge—for we have forgotten—our kinship with the multitudinous forms of life which surround us. In our relationships with other men, all fellow members of the great host of Man, we have forgotten that ancient oath of loyalty to each other which was sworn on the symbolical Mount of Descent, before the Unity of that Host was divided among the elementary human forms in whom Man took in-

carnation. In our forgetfulness we live unto ourselves alone; our impulses to action are those which relate to our personal security, our own self-satisfaction.

The ancient teachers of the race have declared this to be the way to madness; they would say that the psychopathic attitudes of the present day arise, not from the failure of outer securities, but from the failure to discover the resources of the inner Self, that Self which is inseparable from the One Universal Self. In their wisdom they have pointed out a basis upon which a man—a modern man, or a man of any age—may follow St. Paul's admonition and 'establish himself as on a strong foundation'. Very briefly the chief points are these. First a recognition of the unity of all life; the life in whatever form, in birds, flowers, insects, animals is not different in kind from the life in man. It is the common heritage of all, but man differs from the others in the degree of his responsiveness; he has the capacity to know his divine nature—a capacity non-existent in the forms in which mind has not developed. The second point relates to a process of life, reincarnation. Man's life is not confined to one earth life—before birth and after death there stretch the eternities of life, and one incarnation is but a passing through and pausing briefly in one stage of life. The law of Karma which adjusts effects to causes and 'ever moves to righteousness' brings to us in each incarnation the just results of past efforts and opportunities for further unfoldment. And finally there is the idea of the Path which every man may enter upon and in following it, may resolve the age-long conflict of the dual forces within his nature and re-become an integrated being, a master workman, skilled in the science and art of life.

These 'metaphysical' ideas may not appeal to the man who has decided that satisfaction, peace and contentment can

be won only by ordering and controlling the outer circumstances of his life and keeping them always in such balance that they do not disturb him. He of course, will have the support of majority opinion—but there is a small but growing body of men and women who have not accepted the attitude of modern thought and who have realized for themselves that the great problem is not to control outer circumstances, but to achieve an inner poise which cannot be destroyed by any event. They have undergone what the *Dream of Ravan* refers to as 'a change in gnostic polarity'. Instead of always looking outward towards the kaleidoscopic play of samsara, they look inward towards the infinities of the Self. This 'subjective' approach they find, opens doors to more immediate, intimate and purposive relationships with their fellowmen. They find inner resources of wisdom, justice, beauty, nobility, tenderness, reverence, integrity—intangibles truly, but in the pattern of those tenuous intangibles, they discover the secret of living nobly, graciously and creatively in a world of different standards.

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.

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

BY ROY MITCHELL

VI. SPEAKERS

In its capacity of answerer, two great modes of expression are open to the Theosophical Society. One is of speaking, the other of writing. These are its direct means of contact with its generation and require to be used in their highest efficiency—an efficiency for the attainment of which we cannot take too great pains.

The first and readiest, that of speaking, is one which, for insufficient reasons, we have erected into a fetish. Speaking is a great and unusual gift, we say. If we only had speakers how much we could accomplish! And the speech we might use for the carrying on of Theosophical work we waste in regretting the lack of it.

If we are to carry on speaking in terms of true Theosophy, it will be binding upon every chairman to say that the words of the speaker represent his own views and are not to be taken as the voice of the Society. It is then binding on every speaker to go ahead and state those views without fear or favour, erring, for choice—and he must err—on the side of independence of what has already been said on the subject, and great dependence on his own intuitions. He must make up his mind at the beginning that he cannot attain absolute accuracy in his statements. If he did attain complete accuracy he would not be allowed to make the statements, and if he were allowed they would not be understood.

Absolute truth is in another dimension than this; only to be stated in symbol and understood in illumination.

What, therefore, remains for him to do? Better sit down again? No, he is required to say what he thinks and believes about the problems of life in so

fertile and sincere a way as to evoke thought and possibly a measure of illumination in his listeners. He is not there to inform them; he is there to initiate them.

This would seem a very high office for the speaker to aspire to. A fine office, but not out of reach. Trees can initiate us, and flowers, and all living things, because of their intense preoccupation with the specific thing they are doing. So if our speaker will say his own thought with anything like the simplicity and earnestness with which a tree breathes or a flower turns to the sun, he too can initiate.

The first thing then a speaker must do is go inside to his intuitions for his material. If Theosophy means anything it means that the God manifests Himself in man and that every man is potential God; that the God will yield whatever one prays for, and that the man who is blessed is the man who prays for worthy things.

Thus assured he should sit down and turn his subject over in his mind, asking questions about it. It will not matter very much what the subject is, the God is unbelievably powerful in answering questions, if He is intensely asked. The speaker may, if he choose, write down his questions, moving round and round his subject, asking the things he needs to know. He must not pray, "Give me things and I will tell them to these people," but "In behalf of these people I ask these things." This is the difference between a not very good speaker and a fine one. The inferior speaker informs his audience; the great one places himself at the head of them as a pathfinder might, and leads them into a country where, in their behalf, he has ventured a little. The audience may

admire the first; it will love the second, and with the play of its love initiation begins.

As he goes on eliciting what he requires from his own inner self the speaker will find his information leap in to dress his ideas. This is what reading is for. It is not that we should sop up a book or an article and retail it, preoccupied always of the next step, but to read many books, letting them lie in the mind until they become a rich culture from which his new-born idea can choose the elements of its body and come forth sheathed in fact, illuminated by analogy and vivified by the sincerity of the speaker.

It is ironical that we who of all people should believe in the power of the God to instruct us for speech should be anything but successful in producing speakers. Partly it is that in dealing with so great things we think that unless we can say them greatly we should remain silent. Partly also we are troubled by that diffidence which makes us unwilling that others should find out how little we know, and the fault is more marked in those people who give more worship to their earthly heroes than they do to the inner God—the people who feel that liberation is to be attained by outside interference. They think that theosophic enrichment requires some *person*, when what it really needs is some *thing*. They are our dwellers in Macedonia.

The first thing speaking needs then is that the speaker shall regard himself not as the deputy of some person in authority but of a Divine Presence which he shares with his listeners, and having elicited his material in the manner I have indicated he is required to project it vocally through the mechanism of the personality. Here is where his early troubles become most acute, and to save him as much suffering as possible I offer him some suggestions to quiet the

emotions and to uplift the man. They are old and tried rules:

(1) Let him say his prayers just before he begins. Let him also breathe deeply. This is like prayer, because every time we breathe on the physical plane the impulse runs through all planes, right up to the God.

(2) Let him speak: not read. Reading, except with a great reader, does not initiate. Often it scarcely informs.

(3) Let him stand firmly on his feet, resting at any given time more on one than the other, and in the early stages of all lectures and in most stages of early lectures let him tighten all muscles from the waist down. The room will then vibrate with the speaker as the table does with a grounded tuning fork, and his voice will be a part of him instead of seeming a separate entity.

(4) Let him think of his audience as just being contained in a great egg-form, the smaller end of which is at his mouth. If he feels he is just filling this he will be distinctly heard by all his listeners.

(5) Let him remember that his relation to his audience is not as of one against many but as one containing many.

(6) Let him never under any circumstances ask to be allowed to speak, nor under any refuse to speak when he is asked, if it is humanly possible for him to do so.

(7) Let him, whatever goes amiss in his lecture, keep on speaking. The fluent speaker will achieve a rich texture; the speaker who halts and hesitates for the right word will never get fluency—and rarely the right word. All we are required to do is to provide a *vahan* of what words we can for spiritual things. The flow of spiritual things will make perfect words.

(Next—Writers.)

CHILDREN AND OURSELVES

The greatest help that can be given to a young person in relation to questions about "sex" is that which focusses his attention on *why* things are done and *how* they are done, and which aids him to perceive that the essence of morality is actually in attitudes and not in appearances. These approaches will strike an answering chord in a far greater number of adolescents than any argument from tradition or the status quo. What we have to count on in young people, as in all other humans, is a determination to discover the Truth. Young people are fully aware of the stereotypes of conventional pronouncements on good and evil; they sense them if they have not formulated them in words, and, if they desire to think things through for themselves, they will wish to pass above and beyond this unsatisfactory means for coming to terms with one of the most difficult matters in human existence.

Here, as in so many other instances, the parent cannot *give* the child an answer. What he can do is to help the child work out a method of thinking by which he can find answers for himself. But the difficult thing about such a parental attempt is that it must contain no classifications of good or evil which the adolescent understands he simply must accept at the outset. A young person will probably show enthusiasm for discussing problems relating to sex in proportion to the degree he is really allowed to think freely. Generally speaking, our democratic culture encourages the teacher to accompany the child on a *quest for truth*, rather than to impose certain conclusions. But many parents and teachers who have adopted this as the most enlightened method in respect to all else may yet have found it too difficult to actually

apply to the realm of sex; it would entail, for instance, admitting that there have been in the course of history pre-marital involvements under rather unusual conditions, which have greatly served the human race. To adopt this position, even for the purposes of discussion, however, means that the parent has temporarily to overcome some very strong and well-meaning protective instincts toward the child. We can't be surprised by this. It is natural to wish to protect a child, and to try to turn him away from the things which may result in unhappiness or harm. The parent reasons that he has had to forbid many things to protect the child from harm—ergo categorical "bads" are functional. Yet the fact remains that a young person is in an entirely different relation to the problems of sex than he once was to a hot stove, to ant poison, or to overeating candy. The promptings of sexual feelings and allied emotions are an integral part of the adolescent. He needs to understand them, not to fear them.

It must, then, be the parent's purpose to encourage *thinking* rather than the acceptance of a certain set of mores; he will help the youth to see that no Act can be called "good" or "bad" on the basis of its external appearance. Any other approach will be inadequate because over-simplified; an apparent agreement of the adolescent with the parents' view will probably mean little and fail to endure. If we cannot rid ourselves of the temptation to attempt indoctrination through asserting that all pre-marital and non-marital contacts are inevitably evil, we obliterate the far more important question of *why* experiences classified in these terms are actually so often destructive. They are not destructive because they may be

statistically labeled as "sexual deviations," but destructive because of failures in attitude, in honesty, in assuming responsibility for one's choices, or failures to seek a goal worthy of human potentiality.

Perhaps the next step in parent-youth discussion would be to try to determine the most constructive uses to which humans can put their energies. Even the child is able to see that the worthiest expenditures of energy are those which result in a deepening feeling of understanding between people. To understand people, we must first respect them, consider them as "ends" in themselves and not merely as means to our ends. Casual sexual experiences, unaccompanied by any real concern for the other's welfare, or for our future association with them, lead to the condition described by Arnold Green (MANAS, 24, 1950) as "embattlement" between the sexes. When men or women—or boys or girls—adopt the position of trying to "get" something from others of the opposite sex they cease to look at members of that other sex as persons. The latter have become means to the end of one's own indulgence. And no one can be happy living a life of being periodically drawn to associate with a sex for which a concealed antagonism is felt. Moreover, the child who adopts a "libertarian" sexual code at an early age will find himself gravitating to a certain type of relationship—the only one he understands because it is the only one with which he is familiar. Often, this in itself prevents boys and girls from later discovering a worthwhile and lasting companionship. So the real problem for the sexually interested adolescent is the problem of determining what sort of human relationships are going to be most important to him, and in recognizing that it is impossible to build two entirely different kinds or *qualities* of relationships

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The Vice-President of the Society Mr. Sidney A. Cook arrived in Canada at the beginning of August and visited our Montreal Lodge on the 5th, where he gave a couple of lectures and then came on to Toronto when he repeated his programme by speaking on two occasions. In spite of vacations and so many members being away at their summer cottages there was an excellent turnout both evenings and Mr. Cook and his wife were very cordially welcomed. On Sunday the General Executive invited both to luncheon at the Guild of All Arts—a place twelve miles out in the country—where after luncheon they viewed the craft shops and the lovely surroundings and later were entertained to tea at my place in the grounds.

* * * *

I have much pleasure in formally welcoming the following new members to the Society:—Miss Ann Heaps; Mr. Roy F. H. Owen; and Mr. George H. Goulding all of the Toronto Lodge.

* * * *

Mrs. Kathleen Marks has been admitted to the Hamilton Lodge where she has been doing much good work by lecturing and forming classes. I feel sure that her presence there as a member will help the lodge in stimulating the Cause in that city.

E. L. T.

at the same time—for in each instance we are building Ourselves as well a mode of conduct in relation to another.

There is one point about the relationships of the sexes which, though hardly a new one, cannot be repeated too often. It is neither a commandment nor a moralistic counsel to state that the essence

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OFFICE NOTES

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

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We are delighted to have the opportunity of presenting an article from *Manas*, a magazine which has been often commended in this column. The section of the magazine 'Children and Ourselves' from which this article is

taken, is a popular one among its readers. The reproduced article which is perhaps more applicable to 'teenagers than to younger children, was discussed further in a later issue of *Manas* in reply to a question raised by a parent. *Manas* is published by Manas Publishing Company, Box 112, El Sereno Station, Los Angeles 22, California. Free sample copies will be sent on request.

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When the policy of the disassociation of the Theosophical Society from the various groups and activities which have grown up beneath its banner is finally settled, we trust that a clear statement will be issued respecting the disassociation of the T.S. and the E.S. The E.S. is now a separate corporate body but its intimate relationship with the members of the Society and its occupancy of premises at the Headquarters at Adyar, would seem to make such a pronouncement desirable.

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Eirenicon reports that Joint White Lotus Day Meetings, attended by members of the Adyar Society and the Covina Society were held in all three districts of the Adyar North Western Federation in England where both Covina and Adyar Lodges are at work. The extraordinary point in this is that it is extraordinary enough to even report. The phenomenon of three main Theosophical Societies and several smaller independent societies, each and all alleged to be devoted to the Universal Brotherhood of humanity without distinction, existing in the same world at the same time, and having little or nothing to do with each other even on White Lotus Day, may not be extraordinary only—it may be unique in the whole Cosmos.

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"Flying Saucers" which caused such a furore in the newspapers a few months ago and have now dropped out

of the news, are commented upon in the May issue of *The Theosophical Movement* and quotations are given from two articles by Mr. Gerald Heard which appeared in the January and March issues of *Enquiry*. There seems to be factual evidence of some extraordinary appearances which cannot be explained away. The article ends, "The long latent psychic and occult powers in man, once common to all humanity, are again burgeoning, and the number of sensitives receiving impressions of the super-physical is on the increase, especially in the West, so 'collective hallucinations', with which the wiseacres seek to explain away such manifestations, will not long suffice."

LODGE NOTES

Mr. Sidney A. Cook, International Vice-President of the Theosophical Society of Adyar, Madras, India, accompanied by Mrs. Cook, visited the Toronto Theosophical Society on August 12th and 13th. Although it was holiday time and many people were still on vacation, good audiences attended both the lectures given by Mr. Cook. On Saturday evening the topic was "The Ideal in Practical Life" and on Sunday evening "Divine Life".

Toronto Lodge Reception Committee welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Cook at a luncheon held in the Royal York Hotel, where the visitors were staying. Those attending were Mr. and Mrs. G. I. Kinman, Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Dustan, Major and Mrs. L. Anderton, Mrs. E. Cunningham and Miss Laura Gaunt. After the luncheon Mr. and Mrs. Cook were taken for a sight-seeing drive along the shores of Lake Ontario.

Following Mr. Cook's Saturday evening lecture, Toronto Lodge held an informal reception in the Lotus Room at the Hall at which time the members and their friends had an opportunity to

meet the visitors personally. Mrs. E. Cunningham and Mrs. D. W. Barr were hostesses in the tea-room which was bright with baskets and vases of gladioli, cosmos and other seasonal flowers from the gardens of the members. Mrs. J. W. Gaunt and Mrs. Cedric Weaver presided at the tea-table. Out-of-town visitors included Mr. and Mrs. Albert Emsley of London, Ont.; Mrs. H. Sora of Montreal, Mr. and Mrs. C. Bunting, Mrs. A. Hambly, Mrs. G. Miller, Mr. F. Amos, of Hamilton, Ont.

Lieut-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O., General Secretary for Canada of the Theosophical Society, arranged a luncheon on Sunday, August 13th, in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Cook, to meet the local members of the Canadian Executive and their wives. The luncheon was held at the Guild of All Arts, Scarborough. Unfortunately Mr. N. W. J. Haydon, one of the members of the Canadian Executive, was unable to be present on account of illness. The afternoon was spent on the terrace of the Guild Inn and walking about the grounds and later in the afternoon Colonel Thomson entertained the group at afternoon tea in his own apartment there.

After the Sunday evening address at the Theosophical Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Cook entrained for Wheaton from where they will commence another lecture trip through the south and west parts of the United States. The best wishes of Toronto Lodge accompany them on their travels and for a safe return to India in the autumn.

In his talks, Mr. Cook stressed the importance of high ideals and the necessity for persistency in the effort to bring about the fulfillment of such ideals.

"Man," he quoted from Oliver Wendell Holmes, "is endowed not with wisdom but with the power to become wise". Ideals become powers and capacities when expressed in action.

The ideal of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, the concept that we are all sharers in the one universal Life, is presented by the Theosophical Society and in order that this ideal may spread, Theosophists should endeavour to make the concept dominant in their lives. He closed his Sunday night talk with a quotation from Eugene Debs, "While there is a lower class, I am of it; so long as there is one soul in hell I am not free."

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Editor,
Canadian Theosophist.
Sir,—

Let me express my profound gratitude for having given such ample space to Dr. Kuhn's splendid refutation of that muddle-headed thinking which is, I am sorry to say, not an isolated phenomenon in our Society.

There is, however, on p. 74, col. 2, a passage which might give rise to a grave misunderstanding if it be let to stand unchallenged. Dr. Kuhn says: "... as Hindu philosophy asserts, things both are and are not at the same time, that a thing can really *be* and yet be only an illusion and not a reality."

Hindu philosophy does not *deny* the law of the excluded middle when speaking of particular "*things*." What Dr. Kuhn apparently had in mind is that mysterious principle called *Māyā*. It cannot be said of it that it is, or that it is not. *Māyā* lies outside the jurisdiction of logic which is confined to concepts; but *Māyā* is *no* concept, and the law of excluded middle does not apply to it.

It is owing to *Māyā* that the universe is so self-contradictory, everywhere, or

—to use Dr. Kuhn's own expression—"that truth is so astonishingly paradoxical."

Fraternally yours,
Albert M. Fehring.

235 South 2nd East;
Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A.

CHILDREN AND OURSELVES

(Continued from Page 103)

of genuine intimacy between men and women is a mental sharing. Human beings live in their minds, and no amount of physical or emotional excitement can itself give sufficient continuity, or even happiness, in a marriage or involvement. Whenever an adult presumes to counsel an adolescent by suggesting that mutual enthusiasm should be a prerequisite to physical intimacy he is not implying—or at least he need not imply—that the psychic aspect of relationships between the sexes is unimportant. But primacy of mind in all human affairs is demonstrated by the fact that the most transcendent emotions exist only where there is capacity for understanding and constructively using them.

When we finish telling ourselves and our friends not to begin "sex education" by a long list of don'ts and viewings-with-alarm, we can of course recognize that there are many dangers and pitfalls about which our children or our pupils may need to have some intimation. We have here been attempting to indicate, however, that these warnings should neither be the beginning nor the heart of our approach to the matter; however important they might seem, they are incidental to the primary necessity of encouraging the young person to think for himself—to think for himself enough so that he will learn to value the thoughts of others in terms of their reasonableness.

(Reprinted from *Manas*, July 12, 1950 with the kind permission of its Editors)

SOME WORDS ON KARMA

BY ERNEST WOOD

Of late there has been much discussion of Karma, and the revival of a topic which Mr. Oscar Ljungström of Sweden used to treat a great deal in circulars and pamphlets which he sent out frequently to his mailing list throughout the world. I believe I received a set when I was Recording Secretary of the Theosophical Society twenty years ago at Adyar.

The topic in question arises from a foot-note written by H.P.B. in her *Key to Theosophy*, in which she said that people who had suffered through the actions of others, from no fault of their own, would have their reward or recompense in devachan. Mr. Ljungström took this, as some even now do, to mean that, on account of actions initiated by others, a person may receive some suffering in earth life even though he has not in the past produced any suffering for others. It is sometimes said that this is only reasonable, as being consistent with the possibility of individual initiative, for otherwise, it is argued an individual could act only on the initiative of someone else's karma, not on his own account.

Most of us, after considering this statement, nevertheless held to the opinion that H.P.B. did not intend in her footnote to refer to the *law* of Karma, but to the fact that every personality suffers in two ways — one, the immediate results of its own actions in the form of what Mr. A. P. Sinnett called "ready-money karma", and the other, the results of actions done by earlier personalities in the chain of personalities put out by its own reincarnating ego. This second sort of suffering is the kind that H.P.B. was referring to in the foot-note, when she spoke of undeserved suffering.

H.P.B.'s foot-note was really a reply to an adverse criticism which is often levelled against the doctrine of karma, that it is far from justice that anyone should suffer on account of a deed that he does not remember having done. In order to remove this idea that karma involves injustice the statement was made that even with regard to the unremembering personality this much justice at least was to be seen—that the devachanic state of happiness (the word devachan is Tibetan, meaning "state of happiness", equivalent to the Sanskrit *sukhavati*, having happiness), contained ample reward to the personality for any unhappiness of earth-life not immediately produced by itself—indeed, for any suffering at all, whether deserved or underserved. One great argument against any other interpretation than this would be that for undeserved pleasures now received on account of the kind actions of others (which are, by the way, far more numerous than unkind actions) we would have to be punished with an equivalent suffering in devachan, which would be an absurd proposition.

That H.P.B. meant nothing more than this, can, I think be understood from two considerations. One is that the admission of any kind of suffering arising outside the chain of personalities belonging to one ego would nullify the whole Law of Karma entirely. No individual, not even a Master, it is said, can break the chain. The fact is that Karma is not mere action but work; not mere production, but creation. That is to say, the whole world of forms is nothing not a collection of karmas. We work, and we get the result of our work—no more, no less. Each one of us is thus like an artist looking at his own

pictures, or something still closer than that, a person looking at himself in the mirror of his work. Our defects appear in our work. An object can be called a karma, as when an artist takes us into his studio, directs our attention to a picture of his, and says "this is my work". Our work is an indicator of ourselves to ourselves. A statement in the *Shiva Sanhita* declares: "The whole creation is made up of the results of karmas; otherwise it would not exist." The first stanza of Dzyan in the *Secret Doctrine* has a statement implying the same principle, when it says that in the pralaya there was no Universal Mind, because there were no entities (Ah-hi) to contain it. There could not be any manifestation until the beings woke up, so to say, and set their minds working, and thus called all their karmas onto the stage of a new manwantaric cycle. Thus the whole world that we see is a huge collection of the karmas of the hosts of beings in the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms, of which we form a part. We are all pressing closely together, shoulder to shoulder, as it were, and only the elasticity of life itself provides for movement in this concrete mass.

With the opening up of the karmas in the manwantaric cycle time process arises. This is easy to understand, if we look at it psychologically, and begin with the example of any particular act of mind. The beginning of each act of our minds is the coming out of a timeless condition of durational existence—which is memory—by an act of concentration, which is an occlusion of memory—not of all memory, but all memories except one group now being attended to. For example, a carpenter comes into his workshop in the morning and, before he begins to work, reviews in his mind all the things he could do. He might set to work to make a chair, a table, a book-case, and so on. Then

he decides to make only one of these, let us say a chair, and promptly puts out of his mind all the other things— forgets all about tables, book-cases, etc. This is concentration. That concentration results in action in the time-world, and then the chair is formed, for better for worse, and there it is, the carpenter's karma, standing there and having a use of some kind, directly or indirectly, for the carpenter or others. In our collective world the use is more for others than for the carpenter; which means that karma is a kind of trading in which cheating, thieving, lying, etc., are not encouraged.

If we consider only a person thinking, there is the same sequence of concentration, etc.; when we think of a flower, we shut out the thought of a cow, a cat, and an infinity of other things in the timeless storehouse of our being.

In the manwantaric cycle we can represent the process by a circle, divided into arcs; An evolutionary process begins with an act of concentration, which is attention to one segment and the occlusion of others. A concentration is thus an obstruction, and *obstruction is the nature of karma.*

I want to make it quite clear that the law of karma relates only to our obstructive environment, the sphere of creation, which is obstruction, not to the lives which are making the karmas. Karma never touches the creators. We meet the obstructions of our own creation, and what we accept from others in exchange for our own. Thus the maker of an uncomfortable chair, if he exchanges it for a shirt, will get an uncomfortable shirt, to put the matter in a nutshell. No one else discomforts us. The play of life between creators of karma is love and hate (really all love, but that is another story), so, what brings specific people together in successive lives is their affection for each other, not their karma. In other words,

my cruelty to A can be paid back to me by B, but not my love. Love makes no karma.

The second consideration of the two mentioned above, is that the same man, the same consciousness, is present in every incarnation, though not the same personality, so the karma is deserved, and there is no undeserved karma. It is the same being who is here again. The lady who, while walking along a street, suddenly lost the memory of "who she was", that is, of her name, where she came from, and what happened previously in her life, remained nevertheless the same sufferer and enjoyer as before. In this life a person has a different idea of himself than he had in his last life, but he is the same sufferer and enjoyer; he is the same "I". So there is no injustice really. It is only the seeming injustice that is spoken of as being recompensed in devachan. The person under consideration gets nothing more in devachan than he would have got if the specific suffering had not occurred; the joy of devachan lies in the further unfoldment of life-releases (called powers, objectively) already begun on earth, earth-life being the formation of the bud, and devachan its opening into flower.

I would like in this place to make a comment on suffering in relation to Karma. Karma is obstruction; whether we *suffer* in consequence depends upon ourselves. The philosopher can take experiences calmly — even pain — which would greatly distress a non-philosopher. So, we do not learn by suffering. Yet karma benefits us by its obstructiveness because it provides a condition for us in which we have to exercise and thus open up powers of our nature which we would otherwise neglect. That is, it provides us with conditions or environment, but we must not let it condition us.

To make this clear, let me tell a true story about an old blind and poor yogi whom I knew while in India. This gentleman was living in a very poor cottage which had been erected for him on a piece of waste land by kindly villagers, who also provided him with simple food. On the second occasion on which I visited him and stayed in his house a large number of the villagers were engaged in digging a well for him. There was an old woman who came and cooked for him, and a boy who out of kindness of heart used often to lead him out into the neighbouring fields. When I expressed sympathy with him in his unhappy condition, he told me the following story:

On account of his practice of meditation he had attained to the ability to remember his previous life, which had been lived about 700 years before, and in which he had been, he said, a very rich, arrogant and cruel man. As a result of his actions in that life he was now in a state of poverty and blindness. That state was an obstruction (for the time being) to any further arrogance and cruelty. This obstruction had, however, brought him into intimate contact with the villagers nearby, which had developed into personal affection and love for individuals and mankind in general. If he had gone on being a rich and powerful man, he argued, he would have gone on being arrogant and cruel, but now he had learned to love—a matter which he had neglected before—and all on account of his karma.

I have seen that karma operates in this way in many other cases, in ordinary life, in many countries. It points to the fact that *we do not grow by suffering, but we grow by happiness*. In the case mentioned, the happiness of the new friendships was greater than any pleasure of pride which my yogi friend had enjoyed in his previous life as a rich, arrogant and cruel man. It will be

noticed, of course, that the beneficial operation of karmic law would have gone on just the same even if he had not had any memory of his previous lives. Such memory might, in fact, spoil the full effect of the experience, if it produced a consoling theory. The value of the knowledge of reincarnation and karma to an intelligent person is that it assures him that the door is open before him for the fullness of life, and environment is not to be despised but to be lived in. The unintelligent believer, on the other hand, will talk about bad karma, punishment, etc., and will not live fully now, but look for "a better opportunity" or wait for "the clouds to roll by". But we grow not by opportunity, but by using the opportunity, by relationships—thought in relation to things, love in relation to persons, will in relation to ourselves.

Another question recently brought to the fore is: does karma also operate from the future into the present, or, in other words, is there *design* in karmic law? The answer to this is, "No." Karma is passive. It is the "great passive principle." A chain of karmas is started by a process of concentration,

an act which converts the timeless into time. Any moment of time is a piece of timelessness taken, by concentration, out of the all-timelessness. Then thought comes in and that piece is modified, replaced by another piece; but thought belongs to the *man*, not to the karma. The mind gives shape to the new moment, or, looking at it objectively, converts a future into a present. Where does it get its leading? From the divine archetype which is the full man, the whole man, the complete man, the perfect man. It is as though the tree-to-be were calling to the seedling to become its full self. That future belongs to the *dharma*, the operation of the life, present always; not to the karma, the form which the life uses, as a child plays with toys, as a little girl plays with a rag doll, which has no intrinsic value and does not teach the little girl, who only has teaching from herself, unfolding by use of it. Or, karma is like dumb-bells to the athlete. The dumb-bells do not tell him to pick them up and rhythmically move his arms. Hence the constant advice to us, in the occult philosophy, to realize that nothing out of the eternal can carry us upward in its arms.

Circular from the HIMALAYAN ESOTERIC T.S.

OBJECTS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

1. Theosophy teaches an unselfish love for all creatures and particularly fellowmen, and the entire devotion of the mind to its highest conceptions of wisdom, goodness and love. Hence Theosophy aims at:—

- (a). The formation of a Universal Brotherhood;
- (b). The union of the individual Monad with the Infinite and the Absolute;
- (c). The subjugation of the passions;

(d). The study of the hidden mysteries of nature, and the development of the psychical powers latent in man.

2. These objects are not new; they have been recognized ever since the dawn of the human race, and they are coeval with religion which is the lien (sic) uniting the spirit of man with the Universal Spirit.

3. The Theosophical Society does not give preference to any form of religion.

It admits on a common platform, and without distinction, members of all religious creeds, of all races and castes, and of both sexes.

4. It is under the special care of one General Council, and of the President, its founder.

5. As the Society extended through widely separated countries and cities, it became necessary, for administrative purposes, to divide it into local branches, except when so requested by the Parent Society.

6. Within such limits, the different branches select one or more of the above-mentioned objects for their special study.

7. Simla possesses two branch Societies, one of which is the "Electric (sic) Branch" and the other the "Himalayan Esoteric Branch".

GENERAL RULES APPERTAINING TO THE HIMALAYAN ESOTERIC BRANCH

1. The Himalayan Esoteric Branch is formed with the special object of promoting the study of Oriental philosophy and sciences, as a means to the investigation of the occult laws of nature and to the development of the psychical powers latent in man.

2. Persons of every race and creed, and of either sex, are eligible as members.

3. The necessary conditions for admission are:—

- a. That the candidate is already a Fellow of the Theosophical Society;
- b. That he is imbued with an earnest desire to be in active sympathy with the object of this branch; and
- c. That he bears a good moral character.

4. Applications for admission should be made in form A, and must be supported by at least two fellows.

5. In view of the specific object of this Branch, no one will be admitted who:—

- a. Is actuated by motives of idle curiosity;
 - b. Has not received a fair amount of education and is not fairly intelligent;
 - c. Is lacking in mental energy; or
 - b. Is known to be wanting in stability of character and mental reserve.
6. As the prime object of the Society is Universal Brotherhood which can only be secured by *absolute* purity of life, the members pledge themselves, as far as compatible with their respective states or conditions in life:—

- a. To lead pure, chaste and moral lives;
 - b. To abstain from the habitual use of intoxicant (sic) liquors and narcotics; and—
 - c. To be abstemious in the use of animal food.
7. Membership will terminate:—
- a. On cessation of active sympathy with the object of this Branch;
 - b. On the desire to sever connection being signified by writing; and—
 - c. By conviction of any crime involving moral turpitude or by any scandalous irregularity of life.

(The above is reprinted from the Official Reports in the Supplement to *The Theosophist* of October, 1883, and reproduced for its historic interest.)

Were an Asiatic to ask me for a definition of Europe, I should be forced to answer him: It is that part of the world which is haunted by the incredible delusion that man was created out of nothing, and that his present birth is his first entrance into life.—*Schopenhauer*.

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